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BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

ON

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY

C. F. KEIL, D.D., AND F. DELITZSCH, D.D..

PROFESSORS OF THEOLOGY.

VOLUME IV.

JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY THE

REV. JAMES MARTIN, B.A.,

NOTTINGHAM.

EDINBURGH:

T. AND T. CLARK, 38, GEORGE STREET.

LONDON: HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO. DUBLIN: JOHN ROBERTSON & CO.

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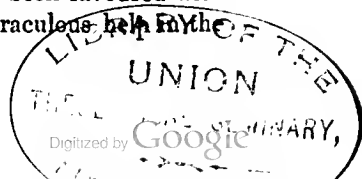
INTRODUCTION

TO

THE PROPHETICAL HISTORIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE *thorah*, or five books of Moses, which contains an account of the founding of the Old Testament kingdom of God, and the laws which were given through Moses, is followed in the Hebrew canon by the writings of the "earlier prophets," נביאים ראשונים, *prophetæ priores*. This collective name is given to the four historical books of *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Samuel*, and *Kings*, which trace, in the light of divine revelation, and of the gradual unfolding of the plan of salvation, the historical development of this kingdom of God from the death of Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, or from the entrance of the people of Israel into the land of Canaan promised to their fathers, till the dissolution of the kingdom of Judah, and the Babylonian captivity; the whole embracing a period of nearly nine hundred years. The names given to these books are taken from the men whom the God-king of Israel called and appointed at different times as the leaders and rulers of His people and kingdom, and indicate, very suitably on the whole, the historical periods to which the books refer.

The book of *Joshua* describes the introduction of the people of Israel into the promised land of Canaan, through the conquest effected by Joshua, and the division of the land among the tribes of Israel. As Joshua only completed what Moses had commenced but had not been permitted to carry out, on account of his sin at the water of strife (Num. xx. 12); and as he had not only been called by the Lord, and consecrated by the laying on of the hands of Moses, to accomplish this work, but had also been favoured with direct revelations from God, and with His miraculous help in the



execution of it; the book which is named after him, and contains the account of what he did in the power of the Lord, is more closely related to the Pentateuch, both in its form and contents, than any other book of the Old Testament. In this respect, therefore, it might be regarded as an appendix, although it was never actually joined to it so as to form part of the same work, but was from the very first a separate writing, and simply stood in the same dependent relation to the writings of Moses, as that in which Joshua stood to Moses himself, of whom he was both the servant and successor.

The book of *Judges* embraces the period of 350 years, from the death of Joshua to the rise of Samuel as a prophet of the Lord; that is to say, the time appointed to the people of Israel to establish themselves in the complete and sole possession of the land that had been given them for an inheritance, by fighting against the Canaanites who remained in the land and exterminating them, and, when settled in this inheritance as the congregation of the Lord, to set up the covenant concluded with God at Sinai, and to maintain and build up the kingdom of God according to the principles and ordinances, the laws and rights, prescribed by Moses in the law. The Lord had promised His help to the covenant nation in carrying on the conflict with the remaining Canaanites, on condition that they adhered with fidelity to His covenant, and willingly obeyed His commandments. It was but very imperfectly, however, that the tribes of Israel observed these conditions, which had been earnestly impressed upon their hearts, not only by Moses, but also by Joshua before his death. They soon grew weary of the task of fighting against the Canaanites and destroying them, and contented themselves with making them merely tributary; in fact, they even began to form friendships with them, and worship their gods. As a punishment for this, the Lord gave them over to their enemies, so that they were repeatedly oppressed and deeply humiliated by the Canaanites, and the nations that were living round about Canaan. But whenever they repented and turned again in their distress to the Lord their God, He raised up helpers and deliverers for them in the persons of the judges, whom He filled with the power of His Spirit, so that they smote the enemy, and delivered both the people and the land from their oppression. But inasmuch as in every instance the judge was no sooner dead than the people fell into idolatry again, they sank deeper and deeper into bondage to the heathen, the theocratic constitution fell more and more into decay, and the life of the nation as a religious community was rapidly

coming to an end. This constant alternation, of apostasy from the Lord to the Canaanitish Baals and Astartes and the consequent punishment by deliverance into the power of their enemies on the one hand, and of temporary return to the Lord and deliverance by the judges out of their bondage on the other, which characterizes the post-Mosaic period of the Israelitish history, is clearly set forth in the book of Judges, and placed distinctly before the eye in separate pictures of the various oppressions and deliverances of Israel, each one being complete in itself, and the whole arranged in chronological order. Whilst the book of Joshua shows how the Lord fulfilled His promise to Israel with a mighty arm, and led His people into the land promised to the fathers, the book of Judges shows how Israel continually broke the covenant of its God in the land which He had given it for an inheritance, and thus fell into bondage to its foes, out of which the judges were not able to secure it a permanent deliverance; so that the Lord was obliged to create a new thing in Israel, in order to carry out His purpose of salvation, and to found and erect His kingdom in Canaan, through the medium of the children of Israel. This new thing consisted in the institution of prophecy as promised by Moses, or rather in the introduction of it into the political and national life, as a spiritual power by which it was henceforth to be pervaded, guided, and controlled; as neither the judges, nor the priests as custodiers of the sanctuary, were able to uphold the authority of the law of God in the nation, or turn the idolatrous nation to the Lord. It is true we meet with certain prophets as early as the times of the judges; but the true founder of the Old Testament prophecy (*prophetenthums*, prophet-hood) was Samuel, with whom the prophets first began their continuous labours, and the prophetic gift was developed into a power which exerted an influence, as strong as it was salutary, upon the future development of the Israelitish state.

The books of *Samuel* contain the history of Israel from the appearance of Samuel as a prophet to the end of the reign of David, and include the renewal of the theocracy by the labours of Samuel, and the establishment of the earthly monarchy by Saul and David. At the close of the period of the judges, when the ark of the covenant had fallen into the hands of the Philistines, and the removal of this visible symbol and substratum of the presence of God from the tabernacle had caused the central sanctuary of the congregation to lose all its significance as the place where God manifested himself, and when the judgments of God had even fallen upon the

members of the high-priesthood itself, in the death of Eli and his worthless sons, when the word of Jehovah was dear, and there was little prophecy to be found (1 Sam. iii. 1),—the Lord raised up Samuel, the son of the pious Hannah, who had been asked for of the Lord and consecrated to His service from his mother's womb, to be His prophet, and appeared to him continually at Shiloh; so that all Israel acknowledged him as the prophet appointed by the Lord, and through his prophetic labours was converted from dead idols to serve the living God. In consequence of this conversion, the Lord gave to the Israelites, in answer to Samuel's prayer, a complete and wondrous victory over the Philistines, by which they were delivered from the heavy oppression they had endured for forty years at the hands of these foes. From that time forward Samuel judged all Israel. But when he had grown old, and his sons, who had been appointed by him as judges, failed to walk in his steps, the people desired a king to judge them, to go before them, and to conduct their wars. In accordance with the command of God, Samuel chose Saul the Benjamite as king, and then laid down his own office as judge. He continued, however, to the very end of his life to labour as a prophet, in and through the schools of the prophets, which he had called into existence for the strengthening and confirmation of Israel in its fidelity to the Lord; and not only announced to King Saul his rejection by God, on account of his frequent resistance to the divine command, as made known to him by the prophet, but anointed David to be his successor as king over Israel. He died at the close of the reign of Saul, and did not live to see the accession and reign of David, with which the second book of Samuel is occupied. The reason why the name of Samuel is given to both these books, which form, both in style and contents, an indivisible whole, is in all probability therefore, that Samuel not only inaugurated the monarchy in Israel by anointing Saul and David, but exerted so decided an influence upon the spirit of the government of both these kings, through his prophetic labours, that even the latter may be regarded in a certain sense as the continuation of that reformation of the Israelitish state which the prophet himself began. It was in David that the true king of the kingdom of God under the Old Testament arose,—a mighty warrior in conflict with the enemies of Israel, and yet at the same time a pious servant of the Lord,—a man of true humility and faithful obedience to the word and commandment of God, who not only raised the state to a lofty height of earthly power and glory,

through the strength and justice of his rule, but who also built up the kingdom of God, by reviving and organizing the public worship of God, and by stimulating and fostering the true fear of God, through the cultivation of sacred song. When God had given him rest from all his enemies round about, he wished to build a temple to the Lord. But God did not grant him this desire of his heart : He gave him a promise, however, instead, viz. that He would build him a house, and establish the throne of his kingdom for ever ; and that He would raise up his seed after him, who would build a house to the name of the Lord (2 Sam. vii.). This promise formed not only the culminating point in the life and reign of David, but the indestructible basis for the further development of the Israelitish state and kingdom, and was not only a sure pledge of the continuance of the Davidic monarchy, but a firm anchor of hope for the covenant nation in all time to come.

Lastly, the books of *Kings* carry on the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God through a period of 450 years, viz. from the accession of Solomon to the Babylonian captivity, and furnish the historical proof that the promise given by the Lord to His servant David was stedfastly fulfilled. Notwithstanding the attempt of Adonijah to usurp the throne, He preserved the whole of the kingdom of David to his son Solomon, who had been chosen as his successor, and at the very commencement of his reign renewed His promise to him, so that Solomon was able to carry out the work of building the temple ; and under his wise and peaceful government in Judah and Israel every one could sit in safety under his own vine and fig-tree. But when Solomon allowed himself to be drawn away by his foreign wives to turn from the Lord and worship idols, the Lord chastened him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men ; but His mercy did not depart away from him, as He had promised to David (2 Sam. vii. 14, 15). After Solomon's death, the ten tribes, it is true, revolted from the house of David, and founded a kingdom of their own under Jeroboam ; but one tribe (Judah along with Benjamin) remained with his son Rehoboam, and along with this tribe the capital, Jerusalem, and the temple. During the whole time that this one brother-nation was divided into two distinct kingdoms, which were frequently engaged in hostility with one another, the Lord preserved the throne to the seed of David ; and the kingdom of Judah survived the kingdom of the ten tribes of Israel 134 years, having as firm a political foundation in the unbroken suc-

cession of the royal family of David, as it had a strong spiritual foundation in the capital Jerusalem, with the temple which had been sanctified by the Lord as the dwelling-place of His name. In the kingdom of the ten tribes, on the other hand, Jeroboam introduced the germ of what eventually led to its destruction, by establishing as the state religion the unlawful worship of the golden calves. The destruction of his house was at once foretold to him on account of this sin (1 Kings xiv. 7); and this threat was carried out in the person of his son (1 Kings xv. 28 sqq.). As the kings of Israel who followed did not desist from this sin of Jeroboam, but, on the contrary, the dynasty of the house of Omri attempted to make the worship of Baal the leading religion of the kingdom, and the king and people gave no heed to the voice of the prophets, and did not return with sincerity of heart to the Lord, He gave up the sinful kingdom and people to the consequences of their sins, so that one dynasty overthrew another; and after the lapse of 250 years, the kingdom, which was already shattered by the frequently recurring civil wars, fell a prey to the Assyrians, by whom the whole land was conquered, and its inhabitants were led into captivity. The kingdom of Judah was also hard pressed by this powerful empire, and brought to the very verge of destruction; but in answer to the prayer of the pious king Hezekiah, it was delivered and preserved by the Lord for His own and His servant David's sake, until at length the godless king Manasseh filled up the measure of its sins, so that even the good king Josiah could only suspend the destruction for a certain time, but could not ward it off altogether. A short time after his death the judgment fell upon Judah and Jerusalem on account of the sins of Manasseh (2 Kings xxiii. 26, 27, xxiv. 3), when King Nebuchadnezzar came from Babylon, conquered the land, and laid it waste; and having taken Jerusalem, led away Jehoiachim to Babylon, with a considerable portion of the people. And when even Zedekiah, who had been raised by him to the throne, rebelled against him, the Chaldeans returned and put an end to the kingdom of Judah, by destroying Jerusalem and burning the temple, Zechariah himself being deprived of his sight, and led away into captivity with a large number of prisoners. Yet even when Judah and its king were rejected and scattered among the heathen, the Lord did not leave His servant David without any light shining; but after Jehoiachim had been in prison for thirty-seven years, paying the penalty of his own and his father's sins, he was released from his imprisonment by Evil-merodach, the king of

Babylon, and his seat was placed above the seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon (2 Kings xxv. 27-30). This joyful turn in the destinies of Jehoiachim, with which the books of Kings are brought to a close, throws the first gleam into the dark night of the captivity of that better future which was to dawn upon the seed of David, and through it upon the people of Israel when they should be delivered out of Babylon.

These four historical writings have been very justly called *prophetical books of history*: not, however, because they all, but more especially the books of Samuel and the Kings, give very full accounts of the labours of the prophets in Israel; nor merely because, according to the early Jewish tradition, they were written by prophets; but rather because they describe the history of the Old Testament covenant nation and kingdom of God in the light of the divine plan of salvation, setting forth the divine revelation, as it was accomplished in the historical development of Israel, or showing how the Almighty God and Lord of the whole earth continued as King of Israel uninterruptedly to fulfil the covenant of grace which He had concluded with the fathers and had set up at Sinai, and built up His kingdom, by leading the people whom He had chosen as His own possession, notwithstanding all the opposition of their sinful nature, further and further onwards towards the goal of their divine calling, and thus preparing the way for the salvation of the whole world. These books, therefore, do not contain a general history of the natural development of the Israelitish nation from a political point of view, but trace the history of the people of God, or Israel, in its theocratic development as a covenant nation, and as the channel of that salvation which was to be manifested to all nations in the fulness of time. Their authors, therefore, by virtue of prophetic illumination, have simply selected and described such events and circumstances from among the rich and plentiful variety contained in the accounts handed down by tradition, whether relating to families, tribes, or the nation as a whole, as were of importance to the history of the kingdom of God; that is to say, in addition to the divine revelations in word and deed, the wonders wrought by God, and the prophetic declarations of His counsel and will, they have recorded chiefly such points in the life and conduct of the nation and its more prominent members as affected advantageously or otherwise the development of the divine kingdom in Israel. Whatever had no inward connection with this higher aim and peculiar calling of Israel, was, as a rule, passed over altogether, or, at all

events, was only touched upon and mentioned so far as it served to exhibit the attitude of the nation generally, or of its rulers and leaders, towards the Lord and His kingdom. This will help to explain not only the apparent inequality in the treatment of the history, or the fact that here and there we have long periods merely referred to in a few general remarks, whereas, on the other hand, the adventures and acts of particular individuals are depicted with biographical minuteness, but also another distinctive peculiarity, viz. that the natural causes of the events which occurred, and the subjective motives which determined the conduct of historical personages, are for the most part left unnoticed, or only briefly and cursorily alluded to, whilst the divine interpositions and influence are constantly brought into prominence, and, so far as they were manifested in an extraordinary manner, are carefully and circumstantially described.

In all these respects the prophetic histories are so intimately connected with the historical narrative in the books of Moses, that they may be regarded as a simple continuation of those books. This not only applies to the book of Joshua, but to the other prophetic histories also. Just as the book of Joshua is linked on to the death of Moses, so the book of Judges is linked on to the death of Joshua; whilst the books of Kings commence with the termination of the reign of David, the point to which the history of David is brought in the books of Samuel. These books, again, are connected just as closely with the book of Judges; for, after giving an account of the high-priesthood of Eli, and the birth and youth of Samuel, which forms the introduction to the labours of Samuel, they describe the continuance and close of the subjugation of Israel by the Philistines, the commencement and prolongation of which are related in the last section of the book of Judges, although in this case the link of connection is somewhat hidden by the appendices to the book of Judges (chap. xvii.-xxi.), and by the introduction to the history of Samuel (1 Sam. i.-iii.). This close connection between all the writings in question, which is still further strengthened by their evident agreement in the selection and treatment of the historical materials, does not arise, as some suppose, from the fact that they received a last finish from the editorial hand of some one man, by whom this harmony and the so-called theocratic pragmatism which is common to them all was stamped upon the history; but it arose from the very nature of the historical facts themselves, i.e. from the fact that the history of Israel was not the result of a

purely natural development, but was the fruit and result of the divine training of the covenant nation. The prophetic character, by which these works are distinguished from the other sacred histories of the Israelites, consists in the fact that they do not trace the theocratic history from an individual point of view, but according to its actual course, and in harmony with the successive steps in the development of the divine counsels of salvation; and thus furnish their own proof that they were written by prophets, to whom the Spirit of the Lord had given a spiritual insight into the divine law of the kingdom.

With regard to the *origin* of the prophetical books of history, and the *date of their composition*, all that can be determined with certainty is, that they were all composed some time after the last event which they record, but were founded upon written contemporaneous accounts of the different events referred to. Although no sources are mentioned in the books of Joshua, of the Judges, and of Samuel, with the exception of the "book of Jasher" (Josh. x. 13, and 2 Sam. i. 18), from which the poetical extracts contained in the passages have been taken, there can be no doubt that the historical materials even of these books have been obtained, so far as everything essential is concerned, either from public documents or private writings. In the books of Kings we meet for the first time with the original sources regularly cited at the close of each king's reign; and, judging from the titles, "book of the Acts of Solomon" (1 Kings xi. 41), and "book of the Chronicles (or 'daily occurrences,' i.e. contemporaneous history) of the Kings of Israel and Judah" (1 Kings xiv. 19, 29, etc.), they were in all probability fuller annals to which reference is made, as containing further accounts of the acts and undertakings of the several kings. We find a similar work cited in the books of the Chronicles under different titles, whilst certain prophetic works are referred to for the history of particular kings, such as words of Samuel the seer, Nathan the prophet, and Gad the seer (1 Chron. xxix. 29); of Shemaiah the prophet, and Iddo the seer (2 Chron. xii. 15), and others; also the prophecies (vision) of Isaiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 32), and words of Jehu the prophet (2 Chron. xx. 34), both of which are expressly said to have been received into the book of the kings of Israel (or of Judah and Israel). It is obvious from these statements, not only that prophetic writings and collections of oracles were incorporated in the more comprehensive annals of the kingdom, but also that the prophets themselves were engaged in various

ways in committing the history of Israel to writing. The foundation for this occupation had no doubt been laid in the companies or schools of the prophets, which had been called into existence by Samuel, and in which not only sacred music and sacred song were cultivated, but sacred literature also, more especially the history of the theocracy. Consequently, as *Oehler* supposes, in all probability the foundation was laid even in the *cænobium* at Ramah (1 Sam. xix. 19 sqq.) for that great historical work, which was composed by prophets during the following centuries and is frequently referred to in the books of Kings, and which certainly lay before the writer of the Chronicles, though possibly in a revised form. The task of writing down the history of the theocracy was very closely connected with a prophet's vocation. Called as they were to be watchers (*zophim* or *mezappim*: *vid.* Micah vii. 4; Jer. vi. 17; Ezek. iii. 17, xxxiii. 7) of the theocracy of the Lord, it was their special duty to test and judge the ways of the nation and its rulers according to the standard of the law of God, and not only to work in every possible way for the recognition of the majesty and sole glory of Jehovah, to bear witness before both high and low against every instance of apostasy from Him, against every violation of His ordinances and rights, and to proclaim judgment upon all who hardened themselves against the word of God and salvation and deliverance to the penitent and desponding; but also to set forth the guidance of Israel in the light of the saving purpose of God, and the inviolable rule of divine retribution,—to pass sentence upon the past circumstances of the nation, particularly the life and conduct of its kings, according to the standard of the law,—and to exhibit in their fate the reality of the divine promises and threats; and through all this to hold up, in the past history of the fathers, a mirror for the warning and comfort of future generations. With all these facts before us, we are fully warranted in assuming, that the prophetic works of history were employed as sources even in the composition of the books of Samuel. But this is not a probable supposition so far as the times of the judges are concerned, as we can find no certain traces of any organized prophetic labours by which the national life could be at all deeply influenced, notwithstanding the fact, that beside the prophetess Deborah (Judg. iv. 4), there is a prophet mentioned in Judg. vi. 7 sqq., and 1 Sam. ii. 27. But even if the author of our book of Judges could not avail himself of any prophetic writings, we must not on that account deny that he may have made use of other written statements and accounts,

handed down by contemporaries of the events. In the book of Joshna it is almost universally admitted, that at all events the geographical portions have been taken from public documents.—For further remarks upon this subject, see the introductions to the different books.

The employment of written sources, from living auditors or eye-witnesses of the events, in all the prophetic books of history, is evident as a general fact from the contents of the books, from the abundance of genuine historical details which they contain although many of them extend over very long periods of time; from the exactness of the geographical *data* connected with the different accounts, and the many genealogical as well as chronological particulars; and, in fact, from the clearness and certainty of the descriptions given of circumstances and occurrences which are often very complicated in their character. But this is still more obvious from the style in which the different books are written, where the gradual development of the language, and the changes which occurred in the course of centuries, are unmistakeably apparent. For whilst the books of Kings, which date from the time of the captivity, contain many words, forms, and phrases that indicate that corruption of the Hebrew through Aramæan idioms, which commenced with the invasions of Israel and Judah by the Assyrians and Chaldeans, there are no certain traces of the decline of the language to be found in the books of Samuel and Judges, but the style throughout is the pure style of the age of David and Solomon; whilst in the book of Joshua, as a whole, we still find the old forms of the Mosaic times, although the actual archaisms of the Pentateuch have already disappeared. This difference in the words employed in the different books cannot be satisfactorily explained from the simple fact, that the sources used, and from which extracts were made, were written in different ages. To quote but one example, since the fuller discussion of this point belongs to the introduction to the separate books, this is perfectly obvious from the use of the word מִלִּי, in connection with Solomon's governors, in 1 Kings x. 15; since the author of our books of Kings cannot possibly have taken this word from his original sources for the history of Solomon's reign, as it was not till the time of the Chaldean and Persian dominion that this foreign word was adopted into the Hebrew language.

The peculiarities in the language of the different prophetic books of history do furnish decisive evidence, however, against the hypothesis propounded by *Spinoza*, and lately revived by *Stahelin* and

Bertheau, viz. that "in the historical books, from Gen. i. to 2 Kings xxv., in the form and connection in which we possess them now, we have not several historical works which have been composed independently of one another, but rather a connected treatment of the history from the beginning of the world to the time of the captivity" (*Bertheau*), or "one work, which owes its present form to one man, or at any rate to one age" (*Stähelin*). The arguments adduced in support of this are all very weak. "The close connection in which these writings stand to one another, so that each book in succession is closely connected with the one before it, and presupposes all that the latter contains, and none goes back to an earlier period than that at which the previous book closes" (*Stähelin*), does prove indeed that they have not been written independently of one another; but it by no means proves that they belong to one author, or even to one age. Nor can we infer that they have been composed or finally revised by one man, from the fact, "that very often, in some one writing, as it has come down to us, we not only find two different styles, or a totally different mode of description, so that we can with certainty conclude that the work is founded upon two different sources, but these sources run through writings that are separated from one another, and are frequently ascribed to entirely different ages." For the circumstance, that a writing is founded upon two sources, is no proof at all that it is nothing more than a portion of a larger work; and the proof which *Stähelin* adduces of his assertion, that the same source runs through several of the works in question, is much too weak and untenable to be regarded as an established fact, not to mention that, according to the first rules of logic, what applies to *several* cannot therefore be predicated of *all*. The actual root of this hypothesis is to be found in the naturalistic assumption of modern critics, that the theocratic spirit, which is common to all the prophetic histories, was not to be found in the historical facts, but was simply the "theocratic pragmatism" of the historians themselves, which had at the most a certain subjective truth, but no objective reality. From such an assumption, however, it is impossible to come to a correct conclusion with regard to either the contents or the origin of the prophetic histories of the Old Testament.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

INTRODUCTION.

CONTENTS, DATE, AND CHARACTER OF THE BOOK.



THE book of Joshua derives its name, יהושע, *Ἰησοῦς Ναυή* or *υἱὸς Ναυή* (LXX.), not from its author, but from its contents, viz. the history of the guidance of Israel into the land of Canaan, the land promised to the fathers, by Joshua the son of Nun. It commences immediately after the death of Moses, with the command addressed by the Lord to Joshua, to lead the children of Israel over the Jordan into Canaan, and not only to take possession of this land, but to divide it among the tribes of Israel (chap. i. 1-9), and closes with the death and burial of Joshua and his contemporary, the high priest Eleazar (chap. xxiv. 29-33). The contents may be divided into two parts of nearly equal length,—the conquest of Canaan (chap. i.-xii.), and the division of it among the tribes of Israel (chap. xii.-xxiv.); chap. i. 1-9 forming the introduction, and chap. xxiv. 29-33 the conclusion. After the introductory notice, that when Moses was dead the Lord commanded Joshua, who had been called to be the leader of Israel in his stead, to carry out the work entrusted to him, and encouraged him by the promise of His omnipotent help in the completion of it (chap. i. 1-9), the history opens in the *first part*, (1) with the preparations made by Joshua for advancing into Canaan; viz. (a) the command of Joshua to the people to prepare for crossing the Jordan, the summons to the two tribes and a half to help their brethren to conquer Canaan (chap. i. 10-18), and the despatch of spies to Jericho (chap. ii.); (b) the crossing of the river, which had been laid dry by a divine miracle (chap. iii. and iv.); and (c) the preparation of Israel for the conquest of the land, by the performance of circumcision and the

passover at Gilgal (chap. v. 1-12). Then follow (2) the conquest and subjugation of Canaan; viz. (a) the commencement of it by the miraculous fall of Jericho (chap. v. 13-vi. 27), the attack upon Ai, and capture of that town, after the expiation of the guilt that had been brought upon the congregation through the sin of Achan against the ban (chap. vii.-viii. 29), and the solemn act of setting up the law in the land on Ebal and Gerizim (chap. viii. 30-35). (b) the further conquest of the land through the subjugation of the Gibeonites, who had succeeded surreptitiously in obtaining a treaty from Israel which guaranteed their safety (chap. ix.); the two great victories over the allied kings of Canaan in the south (chap. x.) and north (chap. xi.), with the capture of the fortified towns of the land; and lastly, at the close of the first part, the list of the conquered kings (ch. xii.).—The *second part* commences with the command of God to Joshua to divide the whole land among the nine tribes and a half for a possession, although several parts of it still remained unconquered; as two tribes and a half had already received from Moses their inheritance on the eastern side of the Jordan, the boundaries and towns of which are then described (chap. xiii.). Accordingly Joshua, with the heads of the people appointed for the purpose, proceeded to the distribution of the land, first of all (a) in the camp at Gilgal, where Caleb was the first to receive his inheritance (chap. xiv.), and then, according to the lot, the tribes of Judah (chap. xv.) and Joseph, i.e. Ephraim and (half) Manasseh (chap. xvi. and xvii.); and afterwards (b) at Shiloh, where the tabernacle was first of all erected, and a description of the land to be divided written down (chap. xviii. 1-10), and then the rest of the tribes—Benjamin (chap. xviii. 11-28), Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan (chap. xix.)—received their inheritance, after which the cities of refuge were selected (chap. xx.), and forty-eight cities were given up by the twelve tribes for the Levites to occupy (chap. xxi.); and finally, (c) the warriors belonging to the tribes beyond Jordan were sent back by Joshua to their own inheritance (chap. xxii.). To this there is appended, in the next place, an account of what Joshua did towards the end of his life to establish the tribes of Israel securely in their inheritance: viz. (a) an exhortation to the heads of the tribes, who were gathered round him, to carry out their calling with fidelity (chap. xxiii.); and (b) the renewal of the covenant at the diet at Shechem (chap. xxiv. 1-28). This is followed by an account of the close of Joshua's life, and the conclu-

sion of the whole book (chap. xxiv. 29-33). Thus the two parts or halves of the book correspond exactly to one another, both in form and in contents. As the events described in ch. i. 10-v. 12 were preparatory to the conquest of Canaan, so the diets held by Joshua after the distribution of the land by lot (chap. xxiii.-xxiv. 28) had no other object than to establish the covenant people firmly in the inheritance bestowed upon them by God, by exhorting them to be faithful to the Lord. And just as chap. xii. rounds off the first part, as a kind of appendix which completes the history of the conquest of the land, so chap. xxii. is obviously an appendix to the distribution of the land among the tribes, which brings to a close the dismissal of the people to the separate portions of their inheritance.

The book of Joshua is not intended merely as a continuation of the history of Israel from the death of Moses to the death of Joshua, still less as a description of the acts of Joshua only. The purpose of the book is rather to show how, after the death of Moses, the faithful covenant God fulfilled to the children of Israel, whom He had adopted as His people of possession through the mediation of His servant, the promise which He had made to the patriarchs; how the Canaanites were destroyed, and their land given to the tribes of Israel for an hereditary possession through the medium of Joshua, the servant of Moses, whom he had consecrated as leader of the people through the laying on of hands and by putting some of his honour upon him. As the servant of Moses treading in his footsteps, Joshua finished the work which Moses was not allowed to bring to a conclusion on account of his sin at the water of strife, viz. the planting and establishment of Israel in Canaan, the land of its inheritance, which the Lord had selected for His dwelling (Ex. xv. 17) and chosen as the nursery ground of His kingdom. As Joshua simply carried on in this respect, and brought to completion, the work which Moses had begun, arranged, and set on foot, the book of Joshua is naturally connected very closely with the books of Moses, though without forming an integral part, or the last portion of it, and without being written by Joshua himself.

The *origin* of the book of Joshua is involved in obscurity, as we can neither find out its author, nor determine with certainty the date of its composition. Whereas, on the one hand, the historical account bears throughout the mark of having been written by an eye-witness, and even by one who had taken part in the events described, and the description given of the possessions allotted to

the different tribes according to their respective boundaries and the cities which they contained is unquestionably founded upon contemporaneous writings, and in one passage the writer actually classes himself with those who crossed over Jordan into Canaan under the guidance of Joshua (chap. v. 1, "until we were passed over"); on the other hand we find a number of historical statements in the book, which point beyond the life of Joshua and are opposed to the idea that it was written by Joshua himself. We do not include in these either the closing accounts of the death of Joshua and Eleazar (chap. xxiv. 29, 33), or the allusion to the "book of the righteous" (chap. x. 13): for these accounts might have been appended to a writing of Joshua's by a later hand; just as in the case of the Pentateuch; and the book of the righteous is not a work that was composed after the time of Joshua, but a collection of odes in praise of the acts of the Lord in Israel, which were composed by pious minstrels during the conquest of the land, and were added one by one to this collection. Even the frequent repetition of the statement that this or the other has continued "to this day," furnishes no certain proof that the book was not written in the closing years of Joshua's life, when we consider the purely relative signification of the formula, which is sometimes used in connection with things that only lasted a few years. Apart from such passages as chap. xxii. 3, 17, and xxiii. 8, 9, in which no one has discovered any allusion to a later time than that of Joshua, we find the formula "to this day" in chap. iv. 9, v. 9, vi. 25, vii. 26, viii. 28, 29, ix. 27, xiii. 13, xiv. 14, xv. 63, and xvi. 10. But if the remark made in chap. vi. 25 with regard to Rahab, "she dwelleth in Israel unto this day," was certainly written during her lifetime, such statements as that the first encampment of Israel in Canaan "is called Gilgal unto this day," on account of the circumcision of the people that took place there, and that the valley in which Achan was stoned is called Achor "unto this day" (chap. v. 9, vii. 26), or that the memorial stones set up in the bed of the Jordan (chap. iv. 9), and the heaps of stones raised upon the bodies of Achan and the king of Ai (chap. vii. 26, viii. 29), remain "unto this day;" that "unto this day" Ai remains an heap (chap. viii. 28), the Gibeonites are hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation (chap. ix. 27), and Hebron is the inheritance of Caleb (chap. xiv. 14); that the Geshurites and Maachathites have not been expelled (chap. xiii. 13), nor the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Gezer (chap. xv. 63, xvi. 10), but dwell among and by the side of Israel "unto this day,"

may be just as easily understood, if they were made ten or fifteen years after the conquest and division of Canaan, as if they were made after an interval of eighty or a hundred years. For even in giving names, the remark that the new name has remained to this day is of greater significance at the end of ten years than after an interval of a century, since its permanence would be fully secured if it made its way to general adoption during the first ten years. The formula "to this day" proves nothing more than that the written record was not quite contemporaneous with the events; but it does not warrant us in concluding that the book itself was written several generations, or even centuries, after the settlement of Israel in Canaan.

It is different with the accounts of the conquest of Hebron by Caleb, Debir by Othniel, and Leshem by the Danites (chap. xv. 13-19 and xix. 47). Considered by themselves, these conquests could no doubt have taken place before the death of Joshua, as he lived for some time after the distribution of the land and the settlement of the different tribes in the possessions allotted to them (compare chap. xix. 50 and xxiii. 1, with chap. xxii. 4 and xxi. 43, 44). But if we compare these accounts with the parallel accounts of the same conquests in Judg. i. 10-16 and xviii., there can be no doubt that it was after Joshua's death that the places mentioned were taken permanently from the Canaanites, and came into the actual and permanent possession of the Israelites. For, according to Judg. i. 1-15, the Israelites inquired of the Lord, after the death of Joshua, who should begin the war with the Canaanites, *i.e.* with those who had not yet been destroyed, and received this reply, "Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand;" whereupon Judah and Simeon smote the Canaanites at Bezek, then advanced against Jerusalem, took this city and set it on fire, and "afterward" (ver. 9) proceeded against the Canaanites on the mountains and in the south, and took Hebron and Debir. From this account it is evident at once that even the capture of Jerusalem did not take place till after the death of Joshua, and that even then the Jebusites were not driven out of Jerusalem, but continued to dwell there by the side of the Benjamites (Judg. i. 21), so that the same statement in Joshua xv. 63 also points beyond the death of Joshua. It is equally evident from Judg. xviii. that the Danites of Zorah and Eshtaol did not enter upon the expedition against Leshem or Laish till after Joshua's death. This also applies to the other statements concerning the failure to expel

the Canaanites out of different districts and towns, which are common to this book and the book of Judges (compare chap. xiii. 2-5, xvi. 10, and xvii. 11, 12, with Judg. iii. 3, i. 29, and i. 27, 28), so that we might infer from every one of these passages that this book of Joshua was not written till after Joshua's death, and therefore that the closing accounts of his death in chap. xxiv. 29-33 formed a part of the original work.

If we endeavour to determine the date of composition more exactly, we have first of all to bear in mind the fact, that the wars and conquests just referred to cannot have occurred a very long time after Joshua's death; for, in the first place, it was in the very nature of things, that when the different tribes of Israel proceeded into their different possessions, even if they did not commence the attack upon the remaining Canaanites immediately, they would certainly do so very soon, in order that they might obtain complete and undisputed possession of the land. Moreover, when the division of the land by lot took place, Caleb was eighty-five years old; and yet he lived to see the capture of Hebron and Debir, and even took part in it, inasmuch as he not only promised but was able to give his daughter to the conqueror of Debir for a wife (chap. xv. 13-19; Judg. i. 11 sqq.). It was no doubt shortly after these wars, in which Judah took possession of the mountains, but was unable to destroy the Canaanites who dwelt in the valley, because of their possessing iron chariots (Judg. i. 19), that the Danites felt obliged to go northwards to conquer Leshem, and take it for a possession, on account of the inheritance assigned them by lot between Judah and Ephraim being too small for them, because the Canaanites had not been expelled. And whilst all these occurrences, which are mentioned in the book of Joshua, fell within the period immediately succeeding the death of Joshua, we can find distinct evidence in the book itself that it was not written after, but before, the establishment of the monarchy in Israel. According to chap. xvi. 10, the Canaanites were still dwelling in Gezer; yet they were destroyed at the close of David's reign, or the commencement of that of Solomon, when Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, conquered the town (1 Kings ix. 16). According to chap. xv. 63, the Jebusites had not yet been driven out of Jerusalem; but this was accomplished by David at the beginning of his reign over all the tribes of Israel (2 Sam. v. 3, 6-9). According to chap. ix. 27, the place for the temple had not yet been chosen, but this was done in the time of David (2 Sam. xxiv. 18 sqq.; 1 Chron. xxi. 16 sqq.). And the

Gibeonites were still hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation for the altar of the Lord, by virtue of the treaty which Joshua and the elders had made with them; whereas this treaty was violated by Saul, who endeavoured to destroy the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 1 sqq.). If we add to this, that our book shows no traces whatever of later times and circumstances either in its style or contents, but that it is closely connected with the Pentateuch in the language as well as in its peculiar stand-point,—for example, when the only Phœnicians mentioned are the Sidonians, and they are reckoned as belonging to the Canaanites who were to be destroyed (chap. xiii. 4-6), whereas in the time of David we find the circumstances entirely changed (2 Sam. v. 11; 1 Kings v. 15; 1 Chron. xiv. 1); and again when Sidon is referred to as the chief city of Phœnicia, and the epithet “great” is applied to it (chap. xi. 8, xix. 28), whereas Tyre had outstripped Sidon even in the days of David,—the conclusion becomes an extremely probable one, that the book was written not later than twenty or twenty-five years after the death of Joshua, in all probability by one of the elders who crossed the Jordan with Joshua, and had taken part in the conquest of Canaan (*vid.* chap. v. 1, 6), but who survived Joshua a considerable time (chap. xxiv. 31; Judg. ii. 7).

But even if the book of Joshua was not composed till some time after the events recorded (and the authorship cannot be determined with certainty), this does not affect its *historico-prophetic character*; for both the contents and form of the book show it to be an independent and simple work composed with historical fidelity, and a work which is as thoroughly pervaded with the spirit of the Old Testament revelation as the Pentateuch itself. However closely it is connected with the Pentateuch both in language and contents, there is no tenable ground for the hypothesis set up in various forms by modern critics, that it has arisen, just like the Pentateuch, from the fusion of two or three earlier writings, and was composed by the so-called “Deuteronomist.” For, even if we leave altogether out of sight the fact that this hypothesis is unfounded and untenable in the case of the Pentateuch, the supposed community of authorship between the book of Joshua and that of Deuteronomy, as well as the rest of the Pentateuch, in the revised form in which it has come down to us, is founded chiefly upon the opinion that the death of Moses, with which the Pentateuch closes, “does not form a fitting conclusion for a work which commenced with the creation, and treated the earlier history in the manner in which this is done

in the Pentateuch;" because "it is hardly conceivable that a historical work, which was written at any rate some time after the conquest of the land of Canaan by the Israelites, should describe all the preparations that were made for the conquest of the land, and then break off without including either the capture of the land, or the division of it among the remaining tribes" (*Bleek's Einleitung, Stähelin*, and others). But, in the first place, it is to be observed that the Pentateuch was not written "some time after the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites," and is not to be regarded as a historical work in the sense intended by these critics. It is the law book of the Old Testament, to which, as even *Bleek* admits, the book of Deuteronomy forms an appropriate close. And, in the second place, although the book of Joshua is closely connected with the Pentateuch, and carries on the history to the conquest of the promised land by the Israelites, there is evidence that it is an independent work, in the fact that it repeats the account of the conquest of the land on the east of Jordan, and its distribution by Moses among the two tribes and a half, and also of the cities of refuge which Moses had already appointed in that part of the land, for the purpose of giving a full and complete account of the fulfilment of the promise made by God to the patriarchs, that their seed should receive the land of Canaan for a possession; and still more in the peculiarities of language by which it is obviously distinguished from the books of Moses. In the book of Joshua not only do we find none of the archaisms which run pretty uniformly through all the books of the Pentateuch, such as *הָיָה* for *וַיְהִי*, *נָעַר* for *נַעֲרָה*, *הָאֵל* for *הָאֱלֹהִים*, and other words which are peculiar to the Pentateuch; but we find, on the other hand, words and expressions which never occur in the Pentateuch, *e.g.* the constant form *יָרַח* (chap. ii. 1-3, etc., in all twenty-six times) instead of the form *יָרַח*, which is quite as uniformly adopted in the Pentateuch (Num. xxii. 1, xxvi. 3, etc., in all eleven times): also *מַמְלָכִית* for the kingdom of Sihon and Og (chap. xiii. 12, 21, 27, 30, 31), instead of *מַמְלָכָה* (Num. xxxii. 33; Deut. iii. 4, 10, etc.); *קָנוֹא* (chap. xxiv. 19) instead of *קָנָא* (Ex. xx. 5, xxxiv. 14; Deut. iv. 24, v. 9, etc.); *שָׁמַע*, *fama* (chap. vi. 27, ix. 9), for *שָׁמַע* (Gen. xxix. 13, etc.); *יָרָא* (chap. xxii. 25) for *יָרָא* (Deut. iv. 10, v. 26, etc.); and lastly, *בְּבוֹרֵי הַחַיִּל* (chap. i. 14, vi. 2, viii. 3, x. 7) for *בְּנֵי חַיִּל* (Deut. iii. 18); *נָאֹר*, a bottle (chap. ix. 4, 13), for *חֶמְתָּה* (Gen. xxi. 14, 15, 19); *הָצִיתָ*, to set on fire or burn (chap. viii. 8, 19); *צָנָה*, to spring down (chap. xv. 18); *רָצָן*, a prince or leader (chap. x. 24); *שָׁקַט*, to rest (chap. xi. 23,

xiv. 15); and other words besides, which you seek for in vain in the Pentateuch, whereas they frequently occur in the later books.¹

Whilst the independence of the book of Joshua is thus placed beyond all doubt, its internal unity, or the singleness of the authorship, is evident in general from the arrangement and connection of the contents, as shown above, and in particular from the fact, that in the different parts of the book we neither meet with material differences or discrepancies, nor are able to detect two different styles. The attempt which was formerly made by *De Wette*, *Hauff*, and others, to show that there were material discrepancies in the different parts, has been almost entirely given up by *Bleek* and *Stähelin* in their introductions. What *Bleek* still notices in this respect, in chaps. iii. and iv., viii. 1-20 and other passages, will be examined in our exposition of the chapters in question, along with the arguments which *Knobel* employs against the unity of the book. The many traces of different modes of thought which were adduced by *Stähelin* in 1843, have been dropped in his special introduction (1862): the only one that he insists upon now is the fact, that the way in which Joshua acts in chap. xviii. 1-10 is very different from chap. xiv. sqq.; and that in the historical sections, as a rule, Joshua is described as acting very differently from what would be expected from Num. xxvii. 21, inasmuch as he acts quite independently, and never asks the high priest to give him an answer through the Urim and Thummim. This remark is so far correct, that throughout the whole book, and not merely in the historical sections, Joshua is never said to have inquired the will of the Lord through the medium of the Urim and Thummim of the high priest, and Eleazar is not mentioned at all in the historical portions. But it does not follow from this that there is any such difference in the mode of thought as would point to a difference of authorship. For,

¹ How completely the hypothesis that the book of Joshua was written by the Deuteronomist is wrecked on these differences in language, is evident even from the attempts which have been made to set them aside. For example, when *Stähelin* observes that the later editor retained the form יָרָא in the Pentateuch as he found it in the original work, whereas in the book of Joshua he altered the original work into the form he commonly used, this assumption is just as incredible as the hitherto unheard of assertion that the archaistic use of הָיָא as a feminine instead of הָיָה is traceable to a later form. What can have induced the later editor, then, to alter the form מַלְכֵּת, which he so commonly uses in Deuteronomy, into מַלְכֵּת in Joshua? The "reliable" *Bleek* prefers, therefore, to take no notice of these differences, or at least to express no opinion about them.

on the one hand, Joshua is blamed in chap. ix. 14 for having made a treaty with the Gibeonites, without asking at the mouth of Jehovah, and in this there is evidently a gentle allusion to Num. xxvii. 21; and on the other hand, even Num. xxvii. 21 by no means implies that God would only make known His will to Joshua through the Urim and Thummim: so that when Joshua is there referred to the high priest for instructions, all other communications, such as those which he received directly from the Lord with regard to the conquest and division of Canaan, are thereby precluded. If the Lord made known to him what he was to do in this respect, partly by the direct communication of His will, and partly by His angel (chap. v. 13 sq.), there was no occasion at all for Eleazar to be mentioned in the historical portion of the book, since the direction of the army to fight battles and conquer towns did not form part of the official functions of the high priest, even if he did accompany Joshua in his campaigns. In the geographical portion, however, Eleazar is only mentioned in connection with the committee of heads of the nation appointed according to the law in Num. xxxiv. 17 sq. for the distribution of the land (chap. xiv. 1, xix. 51, xxi. 1); and even here he does not stand out with any peculiar prominence, as Joshua was still at the head of the whole nation when this was performed (chap. xiii. 1, 7). Consequently, not only did Caleb apply to Joshua with the request for the inheritance promised him by the Lord (chap. xiv. 6 sq.); but even in other cases, where there was no reason for enumerating the different members of the commission for dividing the land, Joshua is mentioned as appointing and superintending the casting of the lots (chap. xviii. 3-10, xx. 1). The proofs adduced of the "double style" of the book are equally weak. The principal ones are the fact, that the word generally used for tribe in the historical sections is *shebet*, whereas *matteh* is the word employed in the geographical sections, and that in the latter the word *machaloketh* is altogether wanting (chap. xi. 23, xii. 7). But the interchange of *shebet* and *matteh* may be fully explained from the difference in the meaning of these two words, *shebet* denoting the tribe as a political corporation, possessing independence and power, and *matteh* having simple regard to its genealogical aspect,—a distinction which is not overthrown by the assurance, that "in chap. vii. 14, 16, 18, and xxii. 1, as compared with chap. xiii. 29, and in chap. iii. 12, as compared with Num. xxxiv. 18, the charge is perfectly arbitrary." But whether it be involuntary or carefully considered, there is no ground for inferring that there have been

two writers engaged upon the work, for the simple reason that both words occur in the historical as well as the geographical sections,—sometimes, in fact, in the very same verse, *e.g.* chap. xiii. 29 and Num. xviii. 2, where we cannot possibly imagine a fusion of different documents to have taken place. (For further remarks, see at chap. vii. 1.) The word *machaloketh*, however, is not synonymous with *mishpachah*, as *Stähelin* supposes, but denotes the various subdivisions of the tribes into families, fathers' houses and families; and this also not only occurs in chap. xi. 23 and xii. 7, but in the geographical portion also, in chap. xviii. 10. The other remark, viz. that “in the place of the *רָאשֵׁי אֲבוֹת*, who are the leading actors in the *geographical* sections, we find the elders, judges, heads *רָאשִׁים* and *שֹׁטְרִים* in the *historical*, or else simply the *shoterim* (chap. i. 10, iii. 2, viii. 33, xxiii. 2, xxiv. 1), or the elders,” is neither quite correct, nor in the least degree conclusive. It is incorrect, inasmuch as even in the geographical portion, namely chap. xvii. 4, the *נְשִׂאִים* are mentioned instead of the *רָאשֵׁי אֲבוֹת*, along with Eleazar and Joshua. But the notion upon which this argument is founded is still more erroneous, viz. that “the *נְשִׂאִים*, *רָאשֵׁי אֲבוֹת*, *זִקְנִים*, *שֹׁטְרִים* and *שֹׁטְרִים* are all the same, as we may clearly see from Deut. i. 15;” for the identity of the terms elders and heads with the terms judges and officers (*shoterim*) cannot possibly be inferred from this passage, in which the judges and *shoterim* are said to have been chosen from the elders of the nation. Even the “heads of the fathers' houses” (see at Ex. vi. 14) were only a section of the princes and heads of the nation, and those mentioned in the book of Joshua are simply those who were elected as members of the distribution committee, and who are naturally referred to in connection with the division of the land by lot; whereas the judges and *shoterim* had nothing to do with it, and for this very reason are not mentioned at all in the geographical sections.—And if, instead of confining ourselves to the words, we turn our attention to the facts, all the peculiarities that we meet with in the different parts of the book may be explained in this way, and the seeming differences brought into harmony. In a work which embraces two such different subjects as the forcible conquest and the peaceable distribution of the land of Canaan, the same ideas and expression cannot possibly be constantly recurring, if the words are to be at all in conformity with the actual contents. And not the smallest conclusion can be drawn from such differences as these with regard to the composition of the book; much less can they be adduced as proofs of diversity of authorship. Moreover, the

unity of authorship is not to be overthrown by proving, or showing it to be probable, that the author made use of written documents for some of the sections—such, for example, as the official records prepared for the distribution of the land by lot—in his description of the possessions of the different tribes.

Lastly, the historical fidelity of the book of Joshua cannot justly be called in question; and so far as all the narratives and descriptions are concerned, which lie within the sphere of the ordinary laws of nature, this is generally admitted. This applies not only to the description of the possessions of the different tribes according to their boundaries and towns, which are almost universally acknowledged to have been derived from authentic records, but to such historical passages as the words of Caleb (chap. xiv. 6 sqq.), the address of Phinehas, and the reply of the two tribes and a half (chap. xxii.), the complaint of the children of Joseph on account of the smallness of the possessions that had fallen to their lot, and Joshua's answer (chap. xvii. 14 sqq.), which are so thoroughly original, and so perfectly appropriate to the persons and circumstances, that their historical credibility cannot be disputed.¹ It is chiefly at the miraculous occurrences that the opponents of the biblical revelation have taken offence: partly therefore because of the miracles themselves, and partly because the statement that God commanded the destruction of the Canaanites is irreconcilable with correct (?) views of the Godhead, they deny the historical character of the whole book. But the miracles recorded in this book do not stand alone; on the contrary, they are most intimately connected with the great work of divine revelation, and the redemption of the human race; so that it is only through unscriptural assumptions as to the character of God, and His operations in nature and the world of men, that they can be pronounced unreal, or altogether denied. And the objection, that the destruction of the Canaanites, as an act commanded by God, "cannot be reconciled even with only half correct notions of the Deity," as *Eichhorn* maintains, rests upon totally unscriptural and irrational views of God and the divine government, which

¹ Even *Eichhorn*, for example, says in his Introduction, "The words of Caleb, in chap. xiv. 1 sqq., in which he asks for the inheritance that had been promised him, bear too strongly the characteristics of an appeal from the mouth of an old man of eighty years of age, and breathe too thoroughly in every word his spirit, and age, and peculiar situation, for it to be possible that it should be merely the composition of a later writer, who placed himself in imagination in his situation, and put the words into his mouth."

deny *a priori* all living influence on the part of the "Deity" upon the earth and its inhabitants. But the true God is not a Deity who can neither help nor injure men (Jer. x. 5); He is the almighty creator, preserver, and governor of the world. This God was Jehovah, who chose Israel for His own people, "a living God, an everlasting King" (Jer. x. 10); who not only fixed for the nations the bounds of their habitations, but their appointed times as well, that they should seek Him, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him (Deut. xxxii. 8; Acts xvii. 26, 27); who, because He has given to every nation upon earth life and being, property and land, to be rightly used, and to promote their own happiness through the glorification of the name of God, possesses both the power and the right to deprive them of all their possessions, and wipe out every trace of them from the earth, if they dishonour and disgrace the name of God by an obstinate abuse of the blessings and gifts entrusted to them. Thus the only true God, who judges the earth in eternally unchangeable wisdom and righteousness, and manifests His wrath in great judgments, as well as His mercy in innumerable blessings to all the children of men, had promised to Abraham that He would give him the land of Canaan for a possession for his seed the children of Israel, when the iniquity of the Amorites, who possessed it at that time, was full, *i.e.* had reached its full measure (Gen. xii. 7, xv. 13-16). The expulsion of the Canaanites, therefore, from possessions which they had no doubt rightfully held, but to which they had forfeited their right through the misuse they had made of them, is to be regarded quite as decidedly as an act of penal justice on the part of God, as the presentation of this land to Israel was an act of His free grace; and the destruction of the Canaanites by the Israelites, as well as their capture of the possession which the Canaanites had forfeited through their sins (*vid.* Lev. xviii. 24-28; Deut. xii. 29-31), was perfectly justifiable, if, as our book affirms, the Israelites were only acting as instruments in the hands of the Lord. It is true they were not warranted in carrying on a war of extermination against the Canaanites simply because the land had been given them by God, any more than David was warranted in putting Saul to death and wresting the kingdom from him, although he had been rejected by the Lord, simply because Samuel had promised him the kingdom by the command of God, and had even anointed him king over Israel. But the Israelites did not proceed from Egypt to Canaan of their own accord, or by their own power; they were brought out of this land of their

bondage by the God of their fathers with a mighty arm, and led by Him through the wilderness into the promised land. Joshua acted, as Moses had done before him, by the immediate command of God; and the fact that this command was real and well-founded, and not a mere fancy, is proved by the miraculous signs through which God accredited the armies of Israel as the servants of His judicial righteousness, who were fighting in His name and by His command, when the Lord of the whole earth divided the waters of Jordan before them, threw down the walls of Jericho, filled the Canaanites with fear and despair, killed them with hailstones at Gibeon, and brought to nought all their plans and endeavours to resist the advance of Israel, so that Joshua smote great and mighty nations, and no one could stand before him. Hence the Psalmist was able to write, "Thou didst drive out the heathen with Thy hand, and plantedst them (the Israelites); Thou hast destroyed nations, and cast them out. For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm help them; but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them" (Ps. xlv. 2, 3).—And whilst the Israelites were thus proved to be the executors of the penal judgments of God, they acted in perfect accordance with this vocation by the manner in which they carried out the judgment entrusted to them. They submitted cheerfully and obediently to all the appointments of Joshua; they sanctified themselves by the circumcision of all who had remained uncircumcised in the desert and by keeping the passover at Gilgal; they set up the law of the Lord upon Ebal and Gerizim; they executed the ban upon the Canaanites, as the Lord had commanded, and punished Achan and his house for transgressing this ban, that they might expunge the sin from their midst; they vowed, in the most solemn manner, that when they had come into peaceable possession of the promised inheritance, they would renounce all idolatry, would serve Jehovah their God alone, and would hearken to His voice, to renew the covenant with the Lord; and they served the Lord as long as Joshua lived, and the elders after him, who knew all the works of the Lord which He had done for Israel.—(For further remarks upon this subject, see *Hengstenberg's* *Dissertations on the Pentateuch*, vol. ii. pp. 387–417, Eng. trans., Art. "On the Right of the Israelites to Palestine.")

Thus the contents of the book have their higher unity and their truth in the idea of the justice, holiness, and grace of God, as they were manifested in the most glorious manner in the great historical

event which forms the subject of the whole. Whilst justice was revealed in the case of the Canaanites, and grace in that of the Israelites, the holiness of the Almighty God was manifested in both,—in the Canaanites, who were liable to judgment, through their destruction; and in the Israelites, who were chosen to fellowship with the Lord, through the sanctification of their lives to the faithful performance of the duties of their vocation, both to the honour of God and the glory of His name.

The different views that have been expressed as to the time when the book was written are given more fully in *Keil's Commentary on Joshua* (1847, Eng. trans. 1857), where the exegetical aids are also given.

EXPOSITION.

THE PREAMBLE.

CHAP. I. 1-9.

AFTER the death of Moses the Lord summoned Joshua, the servant of Moses, whom He had appointed as the leader of Israel into Canaan, to go with all the people across the Jordan, and take the land which had been promised to the fathers on oath, assuring him at the same time of His powerful aid, on condition that he observed the law of Moses faithfully. This summons and promise of God form the preamble to the whole book, which is linked on to the conclusion of the Pentateuch by the introductory words, "And it came to pass after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord," though it is not so closely connected as to warrant the conclusion that the two works have been written by the same author.—Ver. 1. The imperfect with *vav consec.*, the standing mode of expressing a continued action or train of thought, "simply attaches itself by the conjunction 'and' to a completed action, which has either been mentioned before, or is supposed to be well known" (*Ewald*, § 231, b.). "After the death of Moses," i.e. after the expiration of the thirty days of general mourning for him (*vid.* Deut. xxxiv. 8). "Servant of Jehovah" is a standing epithet applied to Moses as an honourable title, and founded upon Num. xii. 7, 8 (*vid.* Deut. xxxiv. 5; 1 Kings viii. 56; 2 Kings xviii. 12; Ps. cv. 26, etc.).

On "*Joshua, Moses' minister*," see at Ex. xvii. 9 and Num. xiii. 16. *Minister (meshareth)*, as in Ex. xxiv. 13, etc. Although Joshua had already been called by the mouth of the Lord to be the successor of Moses in the task of leading the people into Canaan (Num. xxvii. 15 sqq.), and had not only been presented to the people in this capacity, but had been instituted in this office by the Lord, with the promise of His help (Deut. xxxi. 3-7 and 23), the word of the Lord came to him a second time after the death of Moses, with the command to enter upon the office to which he had been called, and with the promise that He would help him to fulfil its duties, as he had already helped His servant Moses. "Because even some of the bravest men, although fully prepared beforehand, either stand still or hesitate when the thing has to be done: this exhortation to Joshua, to gird himself at once for the expedition, was by no means superfluous; though his call was ratified again not only for his own sake, but in order that the people might not hesitate to follow him with their minds collected and calm, when they saw that he took no step without the guidance of God" (*Calvin*).—Joshua received this word of the Lord by a direct address from God, and not through the intervention of the Urim and Thummim of the high priest; for this appointed medium for the revelation of the will of God, to which he had been referred on the occasion of his first call (Num. xxvii. 21), whenever difficulties should arise in connection with his office, was not sufficient for the renewal and confirmation of his divine calling, since the thing required here was not merely that the will of God should be made known to him, but that he should be inspired with courage and strength for the fulfilment of it, *i.e.* for discharging the duties of his office, just as he afterwards was when in front of the fortified town of Jericho which he was directed to take, where the angel of the Lord appeared to him and assured him of its fall (chap. v. 13). Moreover, the conquest of Canaan formed part of the work which the Lord entrusted to His servant Moses, and in which therefore Joshua was now Moses' successor. Consequently the Lord would be with him as He had been with Moses (ver. 5); and for this reason He revealed His will directly to him, as He had done to Moses, though without talking with him mouth to mouth (Num. xii. 8).—Ver. 2. As Moses had died without having brought the Israelites to Canaan, Joshua was to arise and go with all the nation over *this* Jordan (*i.e.* the river then before him) into the land which the Lord would give them.—Ver. 3. "*Namely, every place that the sole of your foot shall tread*"

upon," *i.e.* I have given you the whole land, not excepting a single foot's breadth. The perfect, "*I have given*," refers to the counsel of God as having been formed long before, and being now about to be carried into execution. These words, which are connected with Deut. xi. 24, so far as the form is concerned, rest upon the promise of God in Ex. xxiii. 30, 31, to which the words "as I said unto Moses" refer.—Ver. 4. The boundaries of the land are given as in Deut. xi. 24, with the simple difference in form, that the boundary line from the desert (of Arabia) and Lebanon, *i.e.* from the southern and northern extremity, is drawn first of all towards the east to the great river, the Euphrates, and then towards the west to "the great sea, toward the going down of the sun," *i.e.* the Mediterranean; and then between these two *termini ad quem* the more precise definition is inserted, "all the land of the Hittites;" whereas in Deuteronomy the southern, northern, and eastern boundaries are placed in anti-thesis to the western boundary, and the more precise definition of the country to be taken is given by an enumeration of the different tribes that were to be destroyed by the Israelites (ver. 23). On the oratorical character of these descriptions, see at Gen. xv. 18. The demonstrative pronoun "this," in connection with Lebanon, may be explained from the fact that Lebanon, or at all events Antilibanus, was visible from the Israelitish camp. The expression "*the Hittites*" (see at Gen. x. 15) is used here in a broader sense for Canaanites in general, as in 1 Kings x. 29; 2 Kings vii. 6; Ezek. xvi. 3. The promise in ver. 5a is adopted from Deut. xi. 25, where it was made to the whole nation, and specially transferred to Joshua; and ver. 5b is repeated from Deut. xxxi. 8, as compared with ver. 6.—Vers. 6-9. The promise is followed by the condition upon which the Lord would fulfil His word. Joshua was to be firm and strong, *i.e.* well-assured, courageous, not alarmed (*vid.* Deut. xxxi. 6). In the first place (ver. 6), he was to rely firmly upon the Lord and His promise, as Moses and the Lord had already told him (Deut. xxxi. 7 and 23), and as is again repeated here, whilst at the same time the expression, "*thou shalt divide for an inheritance*," recalls to mind Deut. i. 38, iii. 28; and in the second place (vers. 7, 8), he was to strive to attain and preserve this firmness by a careful observance of the law. "*Observe to do*," etc., as Moses had already impressed upon the hearts of all the people (Deut. v. 29, cf. xxviii. 14 and ii. 27). The suffix in וְעָשָׂה is to be explained on the supposition that the speaker had the book of the law in his mind. The further expansion, in ver. 8, is not only attached

to the exhortations, with which Moses urges upon all the people in Deut. vi. 6, 7, and xi. 18, 19, an uninterrupted study and laying to heart of the commandments of God, but even more closely to the directions to the king, to read every day in the law (Deut. xvii. 19). "*Not to depart out of the mouth,*" is to be constantly *in the mouth*. The law is in our mouth, not only when we are incessantly preaching it, but when we are reading it intelligently for ourselves, or conversing about it with others. To this there was to be added meditation, or reflection upon it both day and night (*vid.* Ps. i. 2). הִתְחַלֵּץ does not mean theoretical speculation about the law, such as the Pharisees indulged in, but a practical study of the law, for the purpose of observing it in thought and action, or carrying it out with the heart, the mouth, and the hand. Such a mode of employing it would be sure to be followed by blessings. "*Then shalt thou make thy way prosperous,*" *i.e.* succeed in all thine undertakings (*vid.* Deut. xxviii. 29), "*and act wisely*" (as in Deut. xxix. 8).—Ver. 9. In conclusion, the Lord not only repeats His exhortation to firmness, but the promise that He gave in vers. 5 and 6. "*Have I not*" (*nonne*) is a rhetorical mode of saying, "Behold, I have," the assurance being clothed in the form of an affirmative question. On the words "*be not afraid,*" etc., see Deut. xxxi. 6 and 8.

I.—THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN.

CHAP. I.—XII.

PREPARATIONS FOR ENTERING CANAAN.—CHAP. I. 10—II. 24.

In consequence of the divine command (chap. i. 2–9), Joshua began without delay to make the necessary preparations for carrying out the work appointed him; *first* of all by issuing instructions to the people to make ready for crossing the river (i. 10, 11); *secondly*, by reminding the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh of their promise to help the other tribes to conquer Canaan, and calling upon them to fulfil it (vers. 12–18); and *thirdly*, by sending two spies to Jericho, to explore the land, and discover the feelings of its inhabitants (chap. ii.).

Chap. i. 10–18. PREPARATIONS FOR CROSSING THE JORDAN.

—Vers. 10, 11. For the purpose of carrying out the commands of the Lord, Joshua first of all directed the officers of the people (*shoterim*: see at Ex. v. vi.), whose duty it was, as the keepers of the family registers, to attend not only to the levying of the men who were bound to serve in the army, but also to the circulation of the commands of the general, to issue orders to the people in the camp to provide themselves with food, so that they might cross the Jordan within three days, and take the land that was promised them by God. By *zedah*, provision for a journey (Gen. xlii. 25, etc.), we are not to understand manna, for that had already ceased (see at chap. v. 12), but simply the natural produce of the inhabited country. The expression "*in three days*," i.e., as we may see from comparing Gen. xl. 13, 19, with ver. 20, on the third day from the publication of the command, "*will ye go over the Jordan*," is not to be regarded as a prediction of the time when the crossing actually took place, but to be taken as the latest time that could be allowed to the people to prepare for crossing: viz. in this sense, "Prepare you victuals for crossing over the Jordan within three days," i.e. that you may be able to leave Shittim within that time, to cross over the Jordan, and commence the conquest of Canaan. If we understand the words in this way, they are in perfect harmony with chap. ii. and iii. According to chap. ii., Joshua sent out spies from Shittim to Jericho, who were obliged to hide themselves for three days in the mountains after their flight from that city (chap. ii. 22), before they could return to the Israelitish camp; so that they were absent three or four days at any rate, and came back at the earliest in the evening or night of the fourth day after they had been sent out. It was not till the morning after this that the Israelites left Shittim and proceeded to the Jordan, where they halted again. Then, three days afterwards, they went across the river (chap. iii. 1, 2), so that at least $4 + 1 + 3$, i.e. eight whole days must have intervened between the day when the spies were sent out and the day on which the people crossed the river. Joshua no doubt intended to proceed to the Jordan and cross it within three days after despatching the spies; he therefore sent the spies to Jericho on the same day on which he issued the command to the people to prepare for crossing within three days, so that he might reasonably hope that they would fulfil their commission and return in two or three days. But as they were compelled to hide themselves for three days in the mountains, in consequence of the unexpected discovery of their arrival in Jericho, and the despatch of men in

pursuit of them, Joshua could not remove with the people from Shittim and proceed to the Jordan till the day after their return; and even then he could not cross the river at once, but waited three days after reaching the bank of the river before he crossed to the other side (*vid.* chap. iii. 1 sqq.).¹

Vers. 12-18. Joshua's appeal to the two tribes and a half, to remember the condition on which Moses gave them the land on the east of the Jordan for an inheritance, and to fulfil it, met with a ready response; so that these tribes not only promised to obey his commandments in every respect, but threatened every one with death who should refuse obedience. In recalling this condition to the recollection of the tribes referred to, Joshua follows the expressions in Deut. iii. 18-20, where Moses himself recapitulates his former command, rather than the original passage in Num. xxxii. The expression "*this land*" shows that the speaker was still on the other side of the Jordan. חֲסִישִׁים, *with the loins girded, i.e. prepared for war*, synonymous with חֲלָצִים in Deut. iii. 18 and Num. xxxii. 32 (see at Ex. xiii. 18). כָּל־יְבוֹרֵי חַיִּל, *all the mighty men of valour, i.e. the brave warriors* (as in chap. vi. 2, viii. 3, x. 7, and very frequently in the later books), is not common to this book and Deuteronomy, as *Knobel* maintains, but is altogether strange to the Pentateuch (see p. 9). The word "*all*" (ver. 14, like Num. xxxii. 21, 27) must not be pressed. According to chap. iv. 13, there were only about 40,000 men belonging to the two tribes and a half who crossed the Jordan to take part in the war; whereas, according to Num. xxvi. 7, 18, 34, there were 110,000 men in these tribes who were capable of bearing arms, so that 70,000 must have remained behind for the protection of the women and children and of the flocks and herds, and to defend the land of which they had taken possession. On ver. 15 see Deut. iii. 18; and on the more minute definition of "*on this side (lit. beyond) Jordan*" by "*toward the sun-rising,*"

¹ In this way the different statements in the three chapters harmonize perfectly well. But the majority of commentators have arranged the order of succession differently and in a very arbitrary way, starting with the unwarrantable assumption that the time referred to in this verse, "*within three days,*" is identical with that in chap. iii. 2, "*it came to pass after three days.*" Upon the strength of this groundless assumption, *Knobel* maintains that there is great confusion in the order of succession of the events described in chap. i.-iii., that chap. i. 11 is irreconcilable with chap. iii. 1-6, and that accounts written by three different authors have been mixed up together in these chapters. (For the different attempts to reconcile the accounts, see *Keil's Commentary* on Joshua, pp. 72-75, note, Eng. trans. Clark, 1857.)

compare the remarks on Num. xxxii. 19. The answer of the two tribes and a half, in which they not only most cheerfully promise their help in the conquest of Canaan, but also express the wish that Joshua may have the help of the Lord (ver. 17 compared with ver. 4), and after threatening all who refuse obedience with death, close with the divine admonition, "*only be strong and of a good courage*" (ver. 18, cf. ver. 6), furnishes a proof of the wish that inspired them to help their brethren, that all the tribes might speedily enter into the peaceable possession of the promised inheritance. The expression "*rebel against the commandment*" is used in Deut. i. 26, 43, ix. 23, 1 Sam. xii. 14, to denote resistance to the commandments of the Lord; here it denotes opposition to His representative, the commander chosen by the Lord, which was to be punished with death, according to the law in Deut. xvii. 12.

Chap. ii. TWO SPIES SENT OVER TO JERICHO.—Ver. 1. Although Joshua had received a promise from the Lord of His almighty help in the conquest of Canaan, he still thought it necessary to do what was requisite on his part to secure the success of the work committed to him, as the help of God does not preclude human action, but rather presupposes it. He therefore sent two men out secretly as spies from Shittim the place of encampment at that time (see at Num. xxv. 1), to view, *i.e.* explore, the land, especially Jericho, the strongly fortified frontier town of Canaan (chap. vi. 1). The word "*secretly*" is connected by the accents with "*saying*," giving them their instructions secretly; but this implies that they were also sent out secretly. This was done partly in order that the Canaanites might not hear of it, and partly in order that, if the report should prove unfavourable, the people might not be thrown into despair, as they had been before in the time of Moses. The spies proceeded to Jericho, and towards evening they entered the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there, *lit.* laid themselves down, intended to remain or sleep there. Jericho was two hours' journey to the west of the Jordan, situated in a plain that was formerly very fertile, and celebrated for its palm trees and balsam shrubs, but which is now quite desolate and barren. This plain is encircled on the western side by a naked and barren range of mountains, which stretches as far as Beisan towards the north and to the Dead Sea on the south. Every trace of the town has long since passed away, though it evidently stood somewhere near, and probably on the northern side of, the miserable and dirty village of

Riha, by the Wady Kelt (see *Robinson*, Pal. ii. pp. 279 sqq., 289 sqq.; v. *Raumer*, Pal. pp. 206 sqq.). *Rahab* is called a *zonah*, i.e. a *harlot*, not an innkeeper, as *Josephus*, the *Chaldee* version, and the *Rabbins* render the word. Their entering the house of such a person would not excite so much suspicion. Moreover, the situation of her house against or upon the town wall was one which facilitated escape. But the Lord so guided the course of the spies, that they found in this sinner the very person who was the most suitable for their purpose, and upon whose heart the tidings of the miracles wrought by the living God on behalf of Israel had made such an impression; that she not only informed the spies of the despondency of the Canaanites, but, with believing trust in the power of the God of Israel, concealed the spies from all the inquiries of her countrymen, though at the greatest risk to herself.

Vers. 2-6. When the king of Jericho was informed of the fact that these strange men had entered the house of Rahab, and suspecting their reason for coming, summoned Rahab to give them up, she hid them (*lit. hid him*, i.e. each one of the spies: for this change from the plural to the singular see *Ewald*, § 219), and said to the king's messengers: *יֵזְ, recte*, "It is quite correct, the men came to me, but I do not know where they were from; and when in the darkness the gate was at the shutting (i.e. ought to be shut: for this construction, see Gen. xv. 12), they went out again, I know not whither. Pursue them quickly, you will certainly overtake them." The writer then adds this explanation in ver. 6: she had hidden them upon the roof of her house among stalks of flax. The expression "*to-night*" (*lit. the night*) in ver. 2 is more precisely defined in ver. 5, viz. as night was coming on, before the town-gate was shut, after which it would have been in vain for them to attempt to leave the town. "*Stalks of flax*," not "cotton pods" (*Arab., J. D. Mich.*), or "tree-flax, i.e. cotton," as *Thenius* explains it, but flax stalks or stalk-flax, as distinguished from carded flax, in which there is no wood left, *λινοκαλάμη, stipula lini* (LXX., *Vulg.*). Flax stalks, which grow to the height of three or four feet in Egypt, and attain the thickness of a reed, and would probably be quite as large in the plain of Jericho, the climate of which resembles that of Egypt, would form a very good hiding-place for the spies if they were piled up upon the roof to dry in the sun. The falsehood by which Rahab sought not only to avert all suspicion from herself of any conspiracy with the Israelitish men who had entered her house, but to prevent any further search for them in her house, and to

frustrate the attempt to arrest them, is not to be justified as a lie of necessity told for a good purpose, nor, as *Grotius* maintains, by the unfounded assertion that, "before the preaching of the gospel, a salutary lie was not regarded as a fault even by good men." Nor can it be shown that it was thought "allowable," or even "praiseworthy," simply because the writer mentions the fact without expressing any subjective opinion, or because, as we learn from what follows (vers. 9 sqq.), Rahab was convinced of the truth of the miracles which God had wrought for His people, and acted in firm faith that the true God would give the land of Canaan to the Israelites, and that all opposition made to them would be vain, and would be, in fact, rebellion against the Almighty God himself. For a lie is always a sin. Therefore even if Rahab was not actuated at all by the desire to save herself and her family from destruction, and the motive from which she acted had its roots in her faith in the living God (Heb. xi. 31), so that what she did for the spies, and thereby for the cause of the Lord, was counted to her for righteousness ("justified by works," James ii. 25), yet the course which she adopted was a sin of weakness, which was forgiven her in mercy because of her faith.¹

Vers. 7-14. Upon this declaration on the part of the woman, the king's messengers ("the men") pursued the spies by the road to the Jordan which leads across the fords. Both the circumstances themselves and the usage of the language require that we should interpret the words in this way; for *עַל הַמַּעְבְּרוֹת* cannot mean "as far as the fords," and it is very improbable that the officers should have gone across the fords. If they did not succeed in overtaking the spies and apprehending them before they reached the fords, they certainly could not hope to do this on the other side of the river in the neighbourhood of the Israelitish camp. By "*the fords*" with the article we are to understand the ford near to Jericho which was generally used at that time (Judg. iii. 22; 2 Sam. xix. 16 sqq.); but whether this was the one which is commonly used now at the

¹ *Calvin's* estimate is also a correct one: "It has often happened, that even when good men have endeavoured to keep a straight course, they have turned aside into circuitous paths. Rahab acted wrongly when she told a lie and said that the spies had gone; and the action was acceptable to God only because the evil that was mixed with the good was not imputed to her. Yet, although God wished the spies to be delivered, He did not sanction their being protected by a lie." *Augustine* also pronounces the same opinion concerning Rahab as that which he expressed concerning the Hebrew midwives (see the comm. on Ex. i. 21).

mouth of Wady *Shaib*, almost in a straight line to the east of Jericho, or the more southerly one, *el Helu*, above the mouth of Wady Hesban (*Rob. Pal.* ii. p. 254), to the south of the bathing-place of Christian pilgrims, or *el Meshra* (*Lynch*, p. 155), or *el Mocktaa* (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 320), it is impossible to determine. (On these and other fords near Beisan, and as far up as the Sea of Galilee, see *Rob.* ii. p. 259, and *Ritter Erdk.* xv. pp. 549 sqq.) After the king's messengers had left the town, they shut the gate to prevent the spies from escaping, in case they should be still in the town. אָחֲרֵי כֵּן אָשֶׁר for אָחֲרֵי אָשֶׁר is uncommon, but it is analogous to אָחֲרֵי כֵּן אָשֶׁר in Gen. vi. 4.—Vers. 8 sqq. Notwithstanding these precautions, the men escaped. As soon as the officers had left Rahab's house, she went to the spies, who were concealed upon the roof, before they had lain down to sleep, which they were probably about to do upon the roof,—a thing of frequent occurrence in the East in summer time,—and confessed to them all that she believed and knew, namely, that God had given the land to the Israelites, and that the dread of them had fallen upon the Canaanites (“us,” in contrast with “you,” the Israelites, signifies the Canaanites generally, and not merely the inhabitants of Jericho), and despair had seized upon all the inhabitants of the land. The description of the despair of the Canaanites (ver. 9) is connected, so far as the expressions are concerned, with Ex. xv. 15 and 16, to show that what Moses and the Israelites had sung after crossing the Red Sea was now fulfilled, that the Lord had fulfilled His promise (Ex. xxiii. 27 compared with Deut. ii. 25 and xi. 25), and had put fear and dread upon the Canaanites.—Ver. 10. The report of the drying up of the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 15 sqq.), of the defeat of the mighty kings of the Amorites, and of the conquest of their kingdoms, had produced this effect upon the Canaanites. Even in the last of these occurrences the omnipotence of God had been visibly displayed, so that what the Lord foretold to Moses (Deut. ii. 25) had now taken place; it had filled all the surrounding nations with fear and dread of Israel, and the heart and courage of the Canaanites sank in consequence.—Ver. 11. “*When we heard this*”—Rahab proceeded to tell them, transferring the feelings of her own heart to her countrymen—“*our heart did melt*” (it was thus that the Hebrew depicted utter despair; “the hearts of the people melted, and became as water,” chap. vii. 5), “*and there did not remain any more spirit in any one:*” i.e. they lost all strength of mind for acting, in consequence of their fear and dread (*vid.* chap. v. 1, though in 1 Kings x. 5 this phrase is used to signify being out of

one's-self from mere astonishment). "*For Jehovah your God is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath.*" To this confession of faith, to which the Israelites were to be brought through the miraculous help of the Lord (Deut. iv. 39), Rahab also attained; although her confession of faith remained so far behind the faith which Moses at that time demanded of Israel, that she only discerned in Jehovah a Deity (*Elohim*) in heaven and upon earth, and therefore had not yet got rid of her polytheism altogether, however close she had come to a true and full confession of the Lord. But these miracles of divine omnipotence which led the heart of this sinner with its susceptibility for religious truth to true faith, and thus became to her a savour of life unto life, produced nothing but hardness in the unbelieving hearts of the rest of the Canaanites, so that they could not escape the judgment of death.—Vers. 12-14. After this confession Rahab entreated the spies to spare her family (father's house), and made them promise her on oath as a sign of their fidelity, that on the capture of Jericho, which is tacitly assumed as self-evident after what had gone before, they would save alive her parents, and brothers and sisters, and all that belonged to them (*i.e.*, according to chap. vi. 23, the children and families of her brothers and sisters), and not put them to death; all of which they promised her on oath. "*A true token,*" *lit.* a sign of truth, *i.e.* a sign by which they guaranteed the truth of the kindness for which she asked. This sign consisted in nothing but the solemn oath with which they were to confirm their assurance, and, according to ver. 14, actually did confirm it. The oath itself was taken in these words, "*our soul shall die for you,*" by which they pledged their life for the life of Rahab and her family in this sense: God shall punish us with death if we are faithless, and do not spare thy life and the lives of thy relations. Though the name of God is not really expressed, it was implied in the fact that the words are described as swearing by Jehovah. But the spies couple their assurance with this condition, "*if ye utter not this our business,*" do not betray us, *sc.* so that we should be pursued, and our life endangered; "*then will we show thee mercy and truth*" (cf. Gen. xxiv. 27).

Vers. 15-24. Rahab then let them down by a rope through the window, namely, into the open country; for her house stood against or upon the town wall, so that she lived upon the wall, and advised them to get to the mountains, that they might not meet the men who had been sent out in pursuit of them, and to hide themselves there for three days, when the pursuers would have returned.—

Vers. 17-20. In conclusion, the spies guarded against any arbitrary interpretation and application of their oath, by imposing three conditions, on the non-fulfilment of which they would be released from their oath. הָיָה for הָיָאָה is to be explained in ver. 17 from the fact that the gender is often disregarded in the use of the pronoun (see *Ewald*, § 183, a.), and in ver. 18 from the fact that there the gender is determined by the *nomen rectum* (see *Ewald*, § 317, d.).—Ver. 18. The *first* condition was, that when the town was taken Rahab should make her house known to the Israelites, by binding “the cord of this crimson thread,” i.e. this cord made of crimson thread, in the window from which she had let them down. The demonstrative “this” leads to the conclusion adopted by *Luther* and others, that “this cord” is the rope (חבל) mentioned in ver. 15, as no other cord had been mentioned to which they could refer; and the fact that nothing has been said about the sign in question being either given or received, precludes the idea that the spies gave the cord to Rahab for a sign. The crimson or scarlet colour of the cord (שָׁנִי = שָׁנִי; see at Ex. xxv. 4), as the colour of vigorous life, made this cord an expressive sign of the preservation of Rahab’s life and the lives of her relations. The *second* condition was, that when the town was taken, Rahab should collect together her parents, and her brothers and her sisters, into her own house.—Ver. 19. Whoever went outside the door, his blood should be upon his own head; i.e. if he was slain outside by the Israelitish soldiers, he should bear his death as his own fault. But every one who was with her in the house, his blood should fall upon their (the spies’) head, if any hand was against them, i.e. touched them or did them harm (*vid.* Ex. ix. 3). The formula, “his blood be upon his head,” is synonymous with the legal formula, “his blood be upon him” (Lev. xx. 9). The *third* condition (ver. 20) is simply a repetition of the principal condition laid down at the very outset (ver. 14).—Ver. 21. When Rahab had accepted all these conditions, she let the men go, and bound the red cord in the window. It is not to be supposed that she did this at once, but merely as soon as it was necessary. It is mentioned here for the purpose of bringing the subject to a close.—Ver. 22. The spies remained three days in the mountains, till the officers returned to the town, after searching for them the whole way in vain. The mountains referred to are probably the range on the northern side of Jericho, which afterwards received the name of *Quarantana* (Arab. *Kuruntul*), a wall of rock rising almost precipitously from the plain to the height of 1200 or

1500 feet, and full of grottoes and caves on the eastern side. These mountains were well adapted for a place of concealment; moreover, they were the nearest to Jericho, as the western range recedes considerably to the south of Wady Kelt (*vid. Rob. ii. p. 289*).—Vers. 23, 24. After this they returned to the camp across the Jordan, and informed Joshua of all that had befallen them, and all that they had heard. On ver. 24, see ver. 9.

PASSAGE THROUGH THE JORDAN.—CHAP. III. AND IV.

The following morning, after the return of the spies into the camp, Joshua proceeded with the people from Shittim to the bank of the Jordan, to complete the necessary preparations there, and then cross the river and enter Canaan (chap. iii. 1). The crossing of this boundary river of Canaan, or rather the passage through the bed of the river, which had been dried up by a miracle of divine omnipotence at the place of crossing, is narrated in these two chapters in the following manner: first (chap. iii. 1b-6), the final preparations for crossing; and then the passage through the bed of the river, and the erection of stones as a permanent memorial of this miracle. This is arranged in three parts: viz. vers. 7-17, the commencement of the crossing; chap. iv. 1-14, its further progress; and chap. iv. 15-24, its close. The account is also arranged upon the following plan: in every one of these three sections the command of God to Joshua is mentioned first (cf. chap. iii. 7, 8, iv. 2, 3, iv. 15, 16); then the communication of this command to the people by Joshua; and finally its execution (chap. iii. 9-17, iv. 4-13, iv. 17-20). This arrangement was adopted by the author for the purpose of bringing distinctly out to view, not only the miracle itself, but also the means with which God associated the performance of the miracle, and also of impressing deeply upon the memory of the people both the divine act and the end secured. In doing this, however, some repetitions were inevitable, in consequence of the endeavour, so peculiar to the Hebrew mode of writing history, to mark and round off the several points in the occurrences described, by such comprehensive statements as anticipate the actual course of events. It is to this arrangement and dovetailing of the different points that we must attribute the distribution of the revelation and commands which Joshua received from God, over the several portions of the history; and consequently we are not to suppose, that at each separate point during the passage God revealed

to Joshua what he was to do, but must rather assume that He actually revealed and commanded whatever was requisite all at once, on the day before the miraculous passage.¹

Chap. iii. 1-6. *Arrangements for the Passage through the Jordan.*—When they reached the Jordan, the Israelites rested till they passed over. *לָלַי*, to pass the night; then in a wider sense to tarry, Prov. xv. 31; here it means to rest. According to ver. 2, they stayed there three days. “At the end (after the expiration) of three days” cannot refer to the three days mentioned in chap. i. 11, if only because of the omission of the article, apart from the reasons given in the note upon chap. i. 11, which preclude the supposition that the two are identical. The reasons why the Israelites stayed three days by the side of the Jordan, after leaving Shittim, are not given, but they are not difficult to guess; for, in the first place, before it could be possible to pass into an enemy’s country, not only with an army, but with all the people, including wives, children, and all their possessions, and especially when the river had first of all to be crossed, it must have been necessary to make many preparations, which would easily occupy two or three days. Besides this, the Jordan at that time was so high as to overflow its banks, so that it was impossible to cross the fords, and they were obliged to wait till this obstruction was removed. But as soon as Joshua was assured that the Lord would make a way for His people, he issued the following instructions through the proper officers to all the people in the camp: “When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and (see) the Levitical priests bear it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it: yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it; that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way yesterday and the day before.” On the expression “the Levitical priests,” see at Deut. xxxi. 25, as compared with ver. 9 and xvii. 9. *לֵוִיִּם*, both here and in chap. viii. 11, should probably be pointed *לֵוִיִּם* (vid. Ewald, § 266, a.). This command referred simply to the march from the last resting-place by the Jordan into the river itself, and not to the passage through the

¹ The assertion made by Paulus, Eichhorn, Bleek, Knobel, and others, that the account is compounded from two different documents, is founded upon nothing else than a total oversight of the arrangement explained above and doctrinal objections to its miraculous contents. The supposed contradictions, which are cited as proofs, have been introduced into the text, as even Hauff acknowledges (*Offenbarungsgl.* pp. 209, 210).

river, during which the priests remained standing with the ark in the bed of the river until the people had all passed through (vers. 8 and 17).¹ The people were to keep about 2000 cubits away from the ark. This was not done, however, to prevent their going wrong in the unknown way, and so missing the ford, for that was impossible under the circumstances; but the ark was carried in front of the people, not so much to show the road as to make a road by dividing the waters of the Jordan, and the people were to keep at a distance from it, that they might not lose sight of the ark, but keep their eyes fixed upon it, and know the road by looking at the ark of the covenant by which the road had been made, *i.e.* might know and observe how the Lord, through the medium of the ark, was leading them to Canaan by a way which they had never traversed before, *i.e.* by a miraculous way.—Vers. 5, 6. Joshua then issued instructions (a) to the people to sanctify themselves, because on the morrow the Lord would do wonders among them; and (b) to the priests, to carry the ark of the covenant in front of the people. The issuing of these commands with the prediction of the miracle presupposes that the Lord had already made known His will to Joshua, and serves to confirm our conclusions as to the arrangement of the materials. The sanctification of the people did not consist in the washing of their clothes, which is mentioned in Ex. xix. 10, 14, in connection with the act of sanctification, for there was no time for this; nor did it consist in merely changing their clothes, which might be a substitute for washing, according to Gen. xxxv. 2, or in abstinence from connubial intercourse (Ex. xix. 15), for this was only the outward side of sanctification. It consisted in spiritual purification also, *i.e.* in turning the heart to God, in faith and trust in His promise, and in willing obedience to His commandments, that they should lay to heart in a proper way the miracle of grace which the Lord was about to work in the midst of them and on their behalf on the following day. “*Wonders:*” those miraculous displays of the omnipotence of God for the realization of His covenant of grace, which He had already promised in connection

¹ *Knobel* maintains that this statement, according to which the Israelites were more than 2000 cubits from the place of crossing, is not in harmony with ver. 1, where they are said to have been by the Jordan already; but he can only show this supposed discrepancy in the text by so pressing the expression, they “came to Jordan,” as to make it mean that the whole nation was encamped so close to the edge of the river, that at the very first step the people took their feet would touch the water.

with the conquest of Canaan (Ex. xxxiv. 10). In ver. 6, where the command to the priests is given, the fulfilment of the command is also mentioned, and the course of events anticipated in consequence.

Vers. 7-17. *Commencement of the Crossing*.—First of all (in vers. 7 and 8), the revelation made by God to Joshua, that He would begin this day to make him great, *i.e.* to glorify him before the Israelites, and the command to the priests who bore the ark of the covenant to stand still in the river, when they came to the water of the Jordan; then (vers. 9-13) the publication of this promise and command to the people; and lastly (vers. 14-17), the carrying out of the command. וְהָיָה, I will begin to make thee great. The miraculous guidance of the people through the Jordan was only the beginning of the whole series of miracles by which the Lord put His people in possession of the promised land, and glorified Joshua in the sight of Israel in the fulfilment of his office, as He had glorified Moses before. Just as Moses was accredited in the sight of the people, as the servant of the Lord in whom they could trust, by the miraculous division of the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 31), so Joshua was accredited as the leader of Israel, whom the Almighty God acknowledged as He had His servant Moses, by the similar miracle, the division of the waters of Jordan. Only the most important points in the command of God to the priests are given in ver. 8. The command itself is communicated more fully afterwards in the address to the people, in ver. 13. When they came with the ark to the end of the waters of Jordan,—*i.e.* not to the opposite side, but to the nearest bank; that is to say, as soon as they reached the water in the bed of the river,—they were to stand still (*vid.* ver. 15, and chap. iv. 11), in order, as we see from what follows, to form a dam as it were against the force of the water, which was miraculously arrested in its course, and piled up in a heap. Moses divided the waters of the Red Sea with his *rod*; Joshua was to do the same to the Jordan with the *ark of the covenant*, the appointed symbol and vehicle of the presence of the Almighty God since the conclusion of the covenant. Wherever the ordinary means of grace are at hand, God attaches the operations of His grace to them; for He is a God of order, who does not act in an arbitrary manner in the selection of His means.—Vers. 9, 10. The summons to the children of Israel, *i.e.* to the whole nation in the persons of its representatives, to draw near (קָרָב for קָרְבָּן, as in 1 Sam. xiv. 38; Ruth ii. 14) to hear the words of the Lord its God, points to the importance of the following announcement, by which Israel was to learn that there was a

living God in the midst of it, who had the power to fulfil His word. Jehovah is called a "living God," in contrast with the dead gods of the heathen, as a God who proved himself to be living, with special reference to those "divine operations by which God had shown that He was living and watchful on behalf of His people; just as His *being in the midst* of the people did not denote a naked presence, but a striking degree of presence on the part of God in relation to the performance of extraordinary operations, or the manifestation of peculiar care" (*Seb. Schmidt*). The God of Israel would now manifest himself as a living God by the extermination of the Canaanites, seven tribes of whom are enumerated, as in Deut. vii. 1 (see the remarks on this passage). Joshua mentions the destruction of these nations as the purpose which God had in view in the miraculous guidance of Israel through the Jordan, to fill the Israelites with confidence for their entrance into the promised land.¹—Vers. 11-13. After this inspiring promise, Joshua informed the people what the Lord intended to do first: "*Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of the whole earth will go before you into Jordan.*" אֲרֹן הַבְּרִית is a genitive dependent upon אֲרֹן, the strict subordination of the construct state being loosened in this case by the article before the *nomen regens*. The punctuators have therefore separated it from the latter by *sakeph-katon*, without thereby explaining it as in opposition or giving any support to the mistaken exposition of *Buxtorff* and *Drusius*, that "the ark of the covenant is called the ruler of the whole earth." The description of Jehovah as "Lord of the whole earth," which is repeated in ver. 13, is very appropriately chosen for the purpose of strengthening confidence in the omnipotence of the Lord. This epithet "exalted the government of God over all the elements of the world, that the Israelites might have no doubt that as seas and rivers are under His control, the waters, although liquid by nature, would become stable at His nod" (*Calvin*). The expression, "*passeth over before you into Jordan,*" is more precisely explained in the course of the narrative:

¹ "He extends the force of the miracle beyond their entrance into the land, and properly so, since the mere opening of a way into a hostile country, from which there would be no retreat, would be nothing but exposure to death. For they would either easily fall, through being entangled in difficulties and in an unknown region, or they would perish through want. Joshua therefore foretold, that when God drove back the river it would be as if He had stretched out His hand to strike all the inhabitants of the land, and that the proof which He gave of His power in their crossing the Jordan would be a certain presage of victory, to be gained over all the tribes."

the ark of the covenant went (was carried) before the people into the river, and then stood still, as the bulwark of the people, till the passage was completed; so that the word "before" indicates the protection which it would afford.—Ver. 12. *"And take to you (i.e. appoint) twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, one for each tribe."* For what purpose is not stated here, but is apparent from what follows (chap. iv. 2 sqq.). The choice or appointment of these men was necessarily commanded before the crossing commenced, as they were to stand by the side of Joshua, or near the bearers of the ark of the covenant, so as to be at hand to perform the duty to be entrusted to them (chap. iv. 3 sqq.). Joshua then concludes by foretelling the miracle itself: *"It will come to pass, that when the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the Lord shall settle down in the water of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off; namely, the waters flowing down from above, and shall stand still as one heap."* *"Shall be cut off,"* so as to disappear; namely, at the place where the priests stand with the ark of the covenant. This took place through the waters standing still as a heap, or being heaped up, at some distance above the standing-place. *יָרַד אֶתְּךָ* is an accusative of more precise definition. The expression is taken from the song of Moses (Ex. xv. 8).

The event corresponded to the announcement.—Vers. 14–16. When the people left their tents to go over the Jordan, and the priests, going before with the ark of the covenant, dipped their feet in the water ("the brim of the water," ver. 15, as in ver. 8), although the Jordan was filled over all its banks throughout the whole time of harvest, the waters stood still: the waters flowing down from above stood as a heap at a very great distance off, by the town of Adam, on the side of Zarthan; and the waters flowing down to the salt sea were entirely cut off, so that the people went through the dried bed of the river opposite to Jericho. Vers. 14–16 form one large period, consisting of three protases (vers. 14, 15), the first and third of which are each of them more precisely defined by a circumstantial clause, and also of three apodoses (ver. 16). In the protases the construction passes from the infinitive (*יָבִיאוּ* and *יָבִיאוּ*) into the finite verb (*יָבִיאוּ*),—a thing of frequent occurrence (see *Ewald*, § 350). The circumstantial clause (ver. 15b), *"and the Jordan was filled over all its banks all the days of harvest,"* brings out in all its fulness the miracle of the stoppage of the water by the omnipotence of God. Every attempt to explain the miracle as a natural occurrence is thereby prevented; so that *Eichhorn*

pronounces the clause a gloss, and endeavours in this manner to get rid of it altogether. על־כֶּל־גְּדֻחָיו might mean full against all its banks, flowing with its banks full, or "full to the brim" (*Robinson*, Pal. ii. p. 262, according to the LXX. and *Vulg.*); but if we compare chap. iv. 18, "the waters of Jordan returned to their place, and went over all its banks as before," with the parallel passage in Isa. viii. 7, "the river comes up over all its channels and goes over all its banks," there can be no doubt that the words refer to an overflowing of the banks, and not merely to their being filled to the brim, so that the words must be rendered "go over the banks." But we must not therefore understand them as meaning that the whole of the Ghor was flooded. The Jordan flows through the Ghor, which is two hours' journey broad at Beisan, and even broader to the south of that (see at Deut. i. 1), in a valley about a quarter of an hour in breadth which lies forty or fifty feet lower, and, being covered with trees and reeds, presents a striking contrast to the sandy slopes which bound it on both sides. In many places this strip of vegetation occupies a still deeper portion of the lower valley, which is enclosed by shallow banks not more than two or three feet high, so that, strictly speaking, we might distinguish three different banks at the places referred to: namely, the upper or outer banks, which form the first slope of the great valley; the lower or middle banks, embracing that strip of land which is covered with vegetation; and then the true banks of the river's bed (see *Burckhardt*, Syr. pp. 593 sqq., and *Robinson*, Pal. ii. pp. 254 sqq., and *Bibl. Researches*, pp. 333 sqq.). The flood never reaches beyond the lower line of the Ghor, which is covered with vegetation, but even in modern times this line has sometimes been overflowed. For example, *Robinson* (Pal. ii. p. 255, compared with p. 263) found the river so swollen when he visited it in 1838, that it filled its bed to the very brim, and in some places flowed over and covered the ground where the bushes grew. This rise of the water still takes place at the time of harvest in April and at the beginning of May (see at Lev. xxiii. 9 sqq.), and therefore really at the close of the rainy season, and after the snow has been long melted upon Hermon, as it is then that the lake of Tiberias reaches its greatest height, in consequence of the rainy season and the melting of the snow, so that it is only then that the Jordan flows with its full stream into the Dead Sea (*Robinson*, ii. p. 263). At this time of the year the river cannot of course be waded through even at its shallowest fords, whereas this is possible in the summer season, when the water

is low. It is only by swimming that it can possibly be crossed, and even that cannot be accomplished without great danger, as it is ten or twelve feet deep in the neighbourhood of Jericho, and the current is very strong (*vid. Seetzen*, R. ii. pp. 301, 320-1; *Rob.* ii. p. 256). Crossing at this season was regarded as a very extraordinary feat in ancient times, so that it is mentioned in 1 Chron. xii. 15 as a heroic act on the part of the brave Gadites. It may possibly have been in this way that the spies crossed and recrossed the river a few days before. But that was altogether impossible for the people of Israel with their wives and children. It was necessary, therefore, that the Lord of the whole earth should make a road by a miracle of His omnipotence, which arrested the descending waters in their course, so that they stood still as a heap "very far," *sc.* from the place of crossing, "by the town of Adam" (בְּאֵדָם must not be altered into בְּאֵדָם, from Adam, according to the *Keri*), "which is by the side of Zarthan." The city of Adam, which is not mentioned anywhere else (and which *Luther* has erroneously understood as an appellation, according to the Arabic, "people of the city"), is not to be confounded with *Adamah*, in the tribe of Naphtali (chap. xix. 36). The town of Zarthan, by the side of which Adam is situated, has also vanished. *Van de Velde* and *Knobel* imagine that the name Zarthan has been preserved in the modern Kurn (Horn) Sartabeh, a long towering rocky ridge on the south-west of the ford of Damieh, upon which there are said to be the ruins of a castle. This conjecture is not favoured by any similarity in the names so much as by its situation. For, on the one hand, the mountain slopes off from the end of this rocky ridge, or from the loftiest part of the horn, into a broad shoulder, from which a lower rocky ridge reaches to the Jordan, and seems to join the mountains on the east, so that the Jordan valley is contracted to its narrowest dimensions at this point, and divided into the upper and lower Ghor by the hills of Kurn Sartabeh; and consequently this was apparently the most suitable point for the damming up of the waters of the Jordan (see *Robinson*, *Bibl. Researches*, pp. 293-4). On the other hand, this site tallies very well with all the notices in the Bible respecting the situation of the town of Zarthan, or Zeredetha (1 Kings vii. 46, compared with 2 Chron. iv. 17): viz. at 1 Kings iv. 12, where Zarthan is said to have been by the side of the territory of Bethshean; also at 1 Kings vii. 46, where Zarthan and Succoth are opposed to one another; and at Judg. vii. 22, where the reading should be צִרְדָּתָה, according to the Arabic and Syriac versions.

Hence *Knobel* supposes that *Adam* was situated in the neighbourhood of the present ford *Damieh*, near to which the remains of a bridge belonging to the Roman era are still to be found (*Lynch, Expedition*). The distance of Kurn Sartabeli from Jericho is a little more than fifteen miles, which tallies very well with the expression "very far." Through this heaping up of the waters coming down from above, those which flowed away into the Dead Sea (the sea of the plain, see Deut. iv. 49) were completely cut off (וַיִּקַּח אֶת הַבָּרָד are to be taken together, so that וַיִּקַּח merely expresses the adverbial idea wholly, completely), and the people went over, probably in a straight line from Wady Hesbân to Jericho.—Ver. 17. But the priests stood with the ark of the covenant "*in the midst of Jordan*," i.e. in the bed of the river, not merely by the river, "*upon dry ground*," וַיַּחֲזִק, lit. *firmando*, i.e. *with a firm foot*, whilst all Israel went over upon dry ground, "*till all the people were passed over*." This could easily have been accomplished in half a day, if the people formed a procession of a mile or upwards in breadth.

Chap. iv. 1-14. *Crossing the River*.—In the account of the crossing, the main point is their taking twelve stones with them from the bed of the river to the opposite side to serve as a memorial. To set forth the importance of this fact as a divine appointment, the command of God to Joshua is mentioned first of all (vers. 2, 3); then the repetition of this command by Joshua to the men appointed for the work (vers. 4-7); and lastly, the carrying out of the instructions (ver. 8). This makes it appear as though God did not give the command to Joshua till after the people had all crossed over, whereas the twelve men had already been chosen for the purpose (chap. iii. 12). But this appearance, and the discrepancy that seems to arise, vanish as soon as we take the different clauses, —which are joined together here by *vav consec.*, according to the simple form of historical composition adopted by the Hebrews, "*and Jehovah spake, saying*," etc. (vers. 2, 3); "*and Joshua called the twelve men*," etc. (ver. 4),—and arrange them in logical order, and with their proper subordination to one another, according to our own modes of thought and conversation, as follows: "Then Joshua called the twelve men,—as Jehovah had commanded him, saying, 'Take you twelve men out of the people,' etc.,—and said to them,"¹

¹ So far as the meaning is concerned, *Kimchi*, *Calvin*, and many others, were perfectly correct in taking vers. 1b-3 as a parenthesis, and rendering וַיִּקַּח as a pluperfect, though, grammatically considered, and from a Hebrew point of view, the historical sense with *vav consec.* does not correspond to our pluperfect, but

etc.—Vers. 1 sqq. When all the people had crossed over Jordan,¹ Joshua issued to the twelve men who had been appointed by the twelve tribes the command given to him by God: “Go before the ark of Jehovah into the midst of Jordan, and take every man a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites,” or, as it is expressed in the fuller explanation in the divine command in ver. 3, “from the standing-place of the priests, the setting up of twelve stones (סִבְיָה is an infinitive used as a substantive, or else it should be pointed as a substantive), and carry them over with you, and lay them down in the place of encampment where ye shall pass the night.”—Vers. 6, 7. This (viz. their taking the twelve stones with them and setting them up) was to be a sign in Israel; the stones were to serve as a memorial of the miraculous crossing of the Jordan to all succeeding generations. For the expression “if your children ask to-morrow (in future),” etc., see Ex. xiii. 14, xii. 26, 27, and Deut. vi. 20, 21.—Ver. 8. The children of Israel carried out these instructions. The execution is ascribed to the “children of Israel,” i.e. to the whole nation, because the men selected from the twelve tribes acted in the name of the whole nation, and the memorial was a matter of equal importance to all. יָנְחִיִּם does not signify that they set up the stones as a memorial, but simply that they laid them down in their place of encampment. The setting up at Gilgal is mentioned for the first time in ver. 20. In addition to this, Joshua set up twelve stones for a memorial, on the spot where the feet of the priests had stood as they bore the ark of the covenant, which stones were there “to this day,” i.e. the time when the account was written. There is nothing to warrant our calling this statement in question, or setting it aside as a probable gloss, either in the circumstance that nothing is said about any divine command to set up these stones, or in the opinion that such

always expresses the succession either of time or thought. This early Hebrew form of thought and narrative is completely overlooked by *Knobel*, when he pronounces vers. 1b–3 an interpolation from a second document, and finds the apodosis to ver. 1a in ver. 4. The supposed discrepancy—namely, that the setting up of the memorial is not described in vers. 5 sqq. as a divine command, as in vers. 8, 10—by which *Knobel* endeavours to establish his hypothesis, is merely a deduction from the fact that Joshua did not expressly issue his command to the twelve men as a command of Jehovah, and therefore is nothing more than an unmeaning *argumentum e silentio*.

¹ The *piska* in the middle of ver. 1 is an old pre-Masoretic mark, which the Masorites have left, indicating a space in the midst of the verse, and showing that it was the commencement of a *parashah*.

a memorial would have failed of its object, as it could not possibly have remained, but would very speedily have been washed away by the stream. The omission of any reference to a command from God proves nothing, simply because divine commands are frequently hinted at but briefly, so that the substance of them has to be gathered from the account of their execution (compare chap. iii. 7, 8, with iii. 9-13, and iv. 2, 3, with iv. 4-7); and consequently we may assume without hesitation that such a command was given, as the earlier commentators have done. Moreover, the monument did not fail of its object, even if it only existed for a short time. The account of its erection, which was handed down by tradition, would necessarily help to preserve the remembrance of the miraculous occurrence. But it cannot be so absolutely affirmed that these stones would be carried away at once by the stream, so that they could never be seen any more. As the priests did not stand in the middle or deepest part of the river, but just in the bed of the river, and close to its eastern bank, and it was upon this spot that the stones were set up, and as we neither know their size nor the firmness with which they stood, we cannot pronounce any positive opinion as to the possibility of their remaining. It is not likely that they remained there for centuries; but they were intended rather as a memorial for the existing generation and their children, than for a later age, which would be perpetually reminded of the miraculous help of God by the monument erected in Gilgal.—Vers. 10, 11. Whilst Joshua was carrying out all that Jehovah had commanded him to say to the people, according to the command of Moses,—that is to say, whilst the people were passing through the Jordan before the ark, and the twelve men were carrying over the stones out of the river to the resting-place on the other side, and Joshua himself was setting up twelve stones in Jordan for a memorial,—during all this time, the priests stood with the ark in the bed of the river; but after all the people, including the twelve men who took the stones out of the Jordan, had finished crossing, the ark of the Lord passed over, with the priests, before the people: that is to say, it stationed itself again, along with the priests, at the head of the people. The words “*according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua*” do not refer to any special instructions which Moses had given to Joshua with reference to the crossing, for no such instructions are to be found in the Pentateuch, nor can they be inferred from Num. xxvii. 23, Deut. iii. 28, or xxxi. 23; they simply affirm that Joshua carried out all the commands which the Lord had

given him, in accordance with the charge which he received from Moses at the time when he was first called. Moses had called him and instructed him to lead the people into the promised land, in consequence of a divine command; and had given him the promise, at the same time, that Jehovah would be with him as He had been with Moses. This contained *implicite* an admonition to Joshua to do only what the Lord should command him. And if this was how Joshua acted, the execution of the commands of God was also an observance of the command of Moses. The remark in ver. 10*b*, "*and the people hastened and passed over*," i.e. passed hastily through the bed of the river, is introduced as an explanation of the fact that the priests stood still in the bed of the river the whole time that the crossing continued. As the priests stood in one spot whilst all the people were passing over, it was necessary that the people should hasten over, lest the strength of the priests should be exhausted. This reason for hastening, however, does not preclude the other,—namely, that the crossing had to be finished in one day, before night came on. The statement in ver. 11, that when all the people had passed over, the ark of the Lord also passed over with the priests, is so far anticipatory of the actual course of the events, that up to this time nothing has been said about the fighting men belonging to the two tribes and a half having passed over (vers. 12, 13); nor has the command of God for the ark to pass over been mentioned (vers. 15 sqq.), though both of these must have preceded the crossing of the ark in order of time. It is to be observed, that, in the words "*the ark of the Lord passed over, and the priests*," the priests are subordinate to the ark, because it was through the medium of the ark of the Lord that the miracle of drying up the river had been effected: it was not by the priests, but by Jehovah the Almighty God, who was enthroned upon the ark, that the waters were commanded to stand still. "*Before the people*" (*Eng. Ver.* "in the presence of the people") has the same signification in ver. 11 as in chap. iii. 6, 14.—Vers. 12, 13. The account of the fighting men of the tribes on the east of the Jordan passing over along with them, in number about 40,000, is added as a supplement, because there was no place in which it could be appropriately inserted before, and yet it was necessary that it should be expressly mentioned that these tribes performed the promise they had given (chap. i. 16, 17), and in what manner they did so. The words *וַיַּעֲבֹרוּ אַחֲרָיו* do not imply that these 40,000 men crossed over behind the priests with the ark, which would not only be at variance with the fact so expressly

stated, that the ark of the covenant was the medium of the miraculous division of the water, but also with the distinct statement in ver. 18, that when the priests, with the ark, set their feet upon the dry land, the waters filled the river again as they had done before. The imperfect with *vav consec.* here expresses simply the order of thought, and not of time. "*Arboth Jericho*," the steppes of Jericho, were that portion of the Arabah or Ghor which formed the environs of Jericho, and which widens here into a low-lying plain of about three and a half or four hours' journey in breadth, on account of the western mountains receding considerably to the south of the opening of the Wady Kelt (*Rob. Pal. ii. pp. 263 sqq.*).—In ver. 14 the writer mentions still further the fact that the Lord fulfilled His promise (in chap. iii. 7), and by means of this miracle so effectually confirmed the authority of Joshua in the eyes of Israel, that the people feared him all the days of his life as they had feared Moses. "This was not the chief end of the miracle, that Joshua increased in power and authority; but since it was a matter of great importance, so far as the public interests were concerned, that the government of Joshua should be established, it is very properly mentioned, as an addition to the benefits that were otherwise conferred, that he was invested as it were with sacred insignia, which produced such a feeling of veneration among the people, that no one dared to treat him with disrespect" (*Calvin*).

Vers. 15-24. *Termination of the miraculous Passage through the Jordan*.—As soon as the priests left their standing-place in the river with the ark of the covenant, according to the command of God made known to them by Joshua, and the soles of their feet "*tore themselves loose upon the dry ground*" (*נָתַקוּ אֶל הַחֲרָבָה*, *constructio prægnaus*, for they tore themselves loose from the soft soil of the river, and trode upon the dry or firm ground), the waters of the Jordan returned again to their place, and went over all its banks as before (*vid. chap. iii. 15*). This affirms as clearly as possible that it was the ark which kept back the stream.—Ver. 19. The crossing took place on the tenth day of the first month, that is to say, on the same day on which, forty years before, Israel had begun to prepare for going out of Egypt by setting apart the paschal lamb (*Ex. xii. 3*). After crossing the river, the people encamped at Gilgal, on the eastern border of the territory of Jericho. The place of encampment is called *Gilgal* proleptically in vers. 19 and 20 (see at chap. v. 9).—Vers. 20 sqq. There Joshua set up the

twelve stones, which they had taken over with them out of the Jordan, and explained to the people at the same time the importance of this memorial to their descendants (vers. 21, 22), and the design of the miracle which had been wrought by God (ver. 24). On vers. 21, 22, see vers. 6, 7. וַיִּצְּקוּ (ver. 23), *quod*, as (see Deut. ii. 22). The miracle itself, like the similar one at the Dead Sea, had a double intention, viz. to reveal to the Canaanites the omnipotence of the God of Israel, the strong hand of the Lord (compare Ex. xiv. 4, 18, with chap. vi. 6; and for the expression "the hand of the Lord is mighty," see Ex. iii. 19, vi. 1, etc.), and to serve as an impulse to the Israelites to fear the Lord their God always (see at Ex. xiv. 31).

CIRCUMCISION OF THE PEOPLE, AND CELEBRATION OF THE
PASSOVER AT GILGAL.—CHAP. V. 1–12.

When the Israelites had trodden the soil of Canaan, Joshua began immediately to make arrangements for conquering the land, and destroying its inhabitants. As the Lord had only promised him His assistance on condition that the law given by Moses was faithfully observed (chap. i. 7 sqq.), it was necessary that he should proceed first of all to impose it as an inviolable obligation, not only upon himself, but also upon all the people entrusted to his charge, to fulfil all the precepts of the law, many of which could not be carried out during the journey through the wilderness, whilst many others had only been given with special reference to the time when the people should be dwelling in Canaan. The first duty which devolved upon him in this respect, was to perform the rite of circumcision upon the generation that had been born in the wilderness, and had grown up without circumcision, so that the whole congregation might be included in the covenant of the Lord, and be able to keep the passover, which was to be celebrated in a few days in the manner prescribed by the law.

Vers. 1–9. CIRCUMCISION OF THE PEOPLE.—Ver. 1. Whilst, on the one hand, the approach of the passover rendered it desirable that the circumcision of those who had remained uncircumcised should be carried out without delay, on the other hand the existing circumstances were most favourable for the performance of this covenant duty, inasmuch as the miracle wrought in connection with the passage through the Jordan had thrown the Canaanites into

such alarm that there was no fear of their attacking the Israelitish camp. To indicate this, the impression produced by this miracle is described, namely, that all the kings of Canaan had been thrown into despair in consequence. All the tribes of Canaan are grouped together here under the names of Amorites and Canaanites, the tribes in possession of the mountains being all called Amorites, and those who lived by the sea, *i.e.* by the shore of the Mediterranean, Canaanites (*vid.* chap. i. 4): for the Amorites upon the mountains were the strongest of all the Canaanitish tribes at that time (see at Gen. x. 16); whilst the name Canaanite, *i.e.* the bent one (see at Gen. ix. 25), was peculiarly appropriate to the inhabitants of the lowlands, who relied upon trade more than upon warfare, and were probably dependent upon the strong and mighty Amorites. The application of the expression "*beyond Jordan*" (*Eng. Ver.* "on the side of") to the country on this side, may be explained on the ground that the historian was still writing from the stand-point of the crossing. But in order to prevent any misunderstanding, he adds "*towards the west*," as he had previously added "*towards the sunrise*," in chap. i. 15, when speaking of the land on the eastern side. That we have the report of an eye-witness here is evident from the words, "until *we* were passed over:" the reading of the *Keri*, עָבְרוּ (till *they* were passed over), is nothing but an arbitrary and needless conjecture, and ought not to have been preferred by *Bleek* and others, notwithstanding the fact that the ancient versions and some MSS. also adopt it.—Vers. 2-8. At that time (*sc.* the time of their encampment at Gilgal, and when the Canaanites were in despair) Joshua had the people "*circumcised again, the second time*." The word שְׁנִיית (a second time) is only added to give emphasis to שָׁבַע, or as an explanation of it, and is not to be pressed, either here or in Isa. xi. 11, as though it denoted the repetition of the same act in every respect, *i.e.* of an act of circumcision which had once before been performed upon the whole nation. It merely expresses this meaning, "circumcise the people again, or the second time, as it was formerly circumcised" (*i.e.* a circumcised people, not in the same manner in which it once before had circumcision performed upon it). When the people came out of Egypt they were none of them uncircumcised, as distinctly affirmed in ver. 5; but during their journey through the wilderness circumcision had been neglected, so that now the nation was no longer circumcised, and therefore it was necessary that circumcision should be performed upon the nation as a whole, by circumcising all who were uncir-

cumcised. The opinion of *Masius* and *O. v. Gerlach*, that the expression "the second time" refers to the introduction of circumcision, when Abraham was circumcised with all his house, is very far-fetched. חַרְבוֹת זָרִים are not "sharp knives," but "stone knives," which were used according to ancient custom (see at Ex. iv. 25), literally knives of rocks (the plural *zurim* is occasioned by *charboth*, as in Num. xiii. 32, etc.; the singular might have been used: see *Ewald*, § 270, c.).—Ver. 3. Joshua had the circumcision performed "at the hill of the foreskins," as the place was afterwards called from the fact that the foreskins were buried there.—Vers. 4–7. The reason for the circumcision of the whole nation was the following: all the fighting men who came out of Egypt had died in the wilderness by the way; for all the people that came out were circumcised; but all that were born in the wilderness during the journey had not been circumcised (בְּצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם, on their coming out of Egypt, which only came to an end on their arrival in Canaan). They walked forty years in the wilderness; till all the people—that is to say, all the fighting men—who came out of Egypt were consumed, because they had not hearkened to the voice of the Lord, and had been sentenced by the Lord to die in the wilderness (ver. 6; cf. Num. xiv. 26 sqq., xxvi. 64, 65, and Deut. ii. 14–16). But He (Jehovah) set up their sons in their place, *i.e.* He caused them to take their place; and these Joshua circumcised (*i.e.* had them circumcised), for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised by the way. This explains the necessity for a general circumcision of all the people, but does not state the reason why those who were born in the wilderness had not been circumcised. All that is affirmed in vers. 5 and 7 is, that this had not taken place "by the way." The true reason may be gathered from ver. 6, if we compare the statement made in this verse, "for the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the men that were capable of bearing arms were consumed . . . unto whom the Lord swore that He would not show them the land promised to the fathers," with the sentence pronounced by God to which these words refer, viz. Num. xiv. 29–34. The Lord is then said to have sworn that all the men of twenty years old and upwards, who had murmured against Him, should perish in the wilderness; and though their sons should enter the promised land, they too should pasture, *i.e.* lead a nomad life, for forty years in the wilderness, and bear the apostasy of their fathers, till their bodies had fallen in the desert. This clearly means, that not only was the generation that came out

of Egypt sentenced to die in the wilderness because of its rebellion against the Lord, and therefore rejected by God, but the sons of this generation had to bear the whoredom, *i.e.* the apostasy of their fathers from the Lord, for the period of forty years, until the latter had been utterly consumed; that is to say, during all this time they were to endure the punishment of rejection along with their fathers: with this difference alone, that the sons were not to die in the wilderness, but were to be brought into the promised land after their fathers were dead. The sentence upon the fathers, that their bodies should fall in the desert, was unquestionably a rejection of them on the part of God, an abrogation of the covenant with them. This punishment was also to be borne by their sons; and hence the reason why those who were born in the desert by the way were not circumcised. As the covenant of the Lord with the fathers was abrogated, the sons of the rejected generation were not to receive the covenant sign of circumcision. Nevertheless this abrogation of the covenant with the generation that had been condemned, was not a complete dissolution of the covenant relation, so far as the nation as a whole was concerned, since the whole nation had not been rejected, but only the generation of men that were capable of bearing arms when they came out of Egypt, whilst the younger generation which had grown up in the desert was to be delivered from the ban, which rested upon it as well, and brought into the land of Canaan when the time of punishment had expired. For this reason the Lord did not withdraw from the nation every sign of His grace; but in order that the consciousness might still be sustained in the young and rising generation, that the covenant would be set up again with them when the time of punishment had expired, He left them not only the presence of the pillar of cloud and fire, but also the manna and other tokens of His grace, the continuance of which therefore cannot be adduced as an argument against our view of the time of punishment as a temporary suspension of the covenant. But if this was the reason for the omission of circumcision,¹ it did

¹ This reason was admitted even by *Calvin*, and has been well supported by *Hengstenberg* (*Diss.* ii. pp. 13 sqq.). The arguments adduced by *Kurtz* in opposition to this view are altogether unfounded. We have already observed that the reason for the suspension is not given in ver. 7; and the further remark, that in ver. 5 ("all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised") the book of *Joshua* dates the suspension not from the sentence of rejection, but expressly and undoubtedly (?) from the departure from Egypt, has no force whatever, unless we so press the word *all* ("all the people that were born in the desert")

not commence till the second year of their journey, viz. at the time when the murmuring nation was rejected at Kadesh (Num. xiv.); so that by "all the people that were born in the wilderness" we are to understand those who were born after that time, and during the last thirty-eight years of their wanderings, just as "all the people that came out of Egypt" are to be understood as signifying only those men who were twenty years old and upwards when they came out. Consequently circumcision was suspended as long as the nation was under the ban of the divine sentence pronounced upon it at Kadesh. This sentence was exhausted when they crossed the brook Zared and entered the country of the Amorites (compare Deut. ii. 14 with Num. xxi. 12, 13). Why, then, was not the circumcision performed during the encampment in the steppes of Moab either

as not to allow of the slightest exception. But this is decidedly precluded by the fact, that we cannot imagine it possible for God to have established His covenant with the people at a time when they had neglected the fundamental law of the covenant, the transgression of which was threatened with destruction (Gen. xvii. 14), by neglecting to circumcise all the children who had been born between the departure from Egypt and the conclusion of the covenant at Sinai. We are also prevented from pressing the little word "all" in this manner by the evident meaning of the words before us. In vers. 4 and 5 the Israelites are divided into two classes: (1) All the people that came out of Egypt and were circumcised; and (2) All the people that were born in the desert and were uncircumcised. The first of these died in the wilderness, the second came to Canaan and were circumcised by Joshua at Gilgal. But if we should press the word "all" in these clauses, it would follow that all the male children who were under twenty years of age at the time of the exodus, either died in the desert or were circumcised a second time at Gilgal. Lastly, it does not follow from ver. 6 that the circumcision was suspended for exactly forty years; for the forty years during which Israel journeyed in the desert until the murmuring generation was consumed, are to be interpreted by Num. xiv. 33, 34, and amounted, chronologically considered, to no more than thirty-eight years and a few months (see the commentary on Num. xxiv. 28 sqq.). On the other hand, the other very general view which Kurtz adopts—namely, that the circumcision was omitted during the journey through the desert on account of the hardships connected with travelling, and because it was impossible to have regard to particular families who might wish for longer rest on account of their children who had just been circumcised, and were suffering from the wound, just at the time when they had to decamp and journey onward, and they could not well be left behind—throws but little light upon the subject, as the assumption that the people were constantly wandering about for forty years is altogether an unfounded one. The Israelites were not always wandering about: not only did they stay at Sinai for eleven whole months, but even after that they halted for weeks and months at the different places of encampment, when they might have circumcised their children without the slightest danger of their suffering from the wound.

before or after the numbering, since all those who had been sentenced to die in the wilderness were already dead (Num. xxvi. 65)? The different answers which have been given to this question are some of them wrong, and others incomplete. For example, the opinion held by some, that the actual reason was that the forty years had not yet expired, is incorrect (see Deut. ii. 14). And the uncertainty how long they would remain in the steppes of Moab cannot be adduced as an explanation, as there were no circumstances existing that were likely to occasion a sudden and unexpected departure from Shittim. The reason why Moses did not renew the circumcision before the end of his own life, is to be sought for in the simple fact that he would not undertake an act of such importance without an express command from the Lord, especially as he was himself under sentence to die without entering the promised land. But the Lord did not enjoin the renewal of the covenant sign before Israel had been conducted into the promised land, because He saw fit first of all to incline the hearts of the people to carry out His commandment through this magnificent proof of His grace. It is the rule of divine grace first to give and then to ask. As the Lord did not enjoin circumcision as a covenant duty upon Abraham himself till He had given him a practical proof of His grace by leading him to Canaan, and by repeated promises of a numerous posterity, and of the eventual possession of the land; and just as He did not give the law to the children of Israel at Sinai till He had redeemed them with a mighty arm from the bondage of Egypt, and borne them on eagles' wings, and brought them to Himself, and had thereby made them willing to promise gladly to fulfil all that He should say to them as His covenant nation; so now He did not require the renewal of circumcision, which involved as the covenant sign the observance of the whole law, till He had given His people practical proofs, through the help afforded in the defeat of Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and in the miraculous division of the waters of Jordan, that He was able to remove all the obstacles that might lie in the way of the fulfilment of His promises, and give them the promised land for their inheritance, as He had sworn to their fathers.

Ver. 8. When the rite of circumcision had been performed upon them all, the people remained quietly in the camp till those who were circumcised had recovered. "*They abode in their places,*" i.e. sat still as they were, without attempting anything. *וַיָּשֻׁבוּ*, to revive (Gen. xlv. 27; Job xiv. 14), or recover (2 Kings i. 2, viii. 8,

etc.). The circumcision of the people could not be performed earlier than the day after the crossing of the Jordan, *i.e.*, according to chap. iv. 19, not earlier than the 11th day of the first month. Now, as the passover was to be kept, and actually was kept, on the 14th (ver. 10), the two accounts are said to be irreconcilable, and the account of the circumcision has been set down as a later and unhistorical legend. But the objections made to the historical credibility of this account—viz. that the suffering consequent upon circumcision made a person ill for several days, and according to Gen. xxxiv. 25 was worst on the third day, so that the people could not have kept the passover on that day, and also that the people could not possibly have been all circumcised on one day—are founded upon false assumptions. In the latter, for example, the number of persons to be circumcised is estimated, most absurdly, at a million; whereas, according to the general laws of population, the whole of the male population of Israel, which contained only 601,730 of twenty years of age and upwards, besides 23,000 Levites of a month old and upwards, when the census was taken a short time before in the steppes of Moab, could not amount to more than a million in all, and of these between 280,000 and 330,000 were thirty-eight years old, and therefore, having been born before the sentence was pronounced upon the nation at Kadesh, and for the most part before the exodus from Egypt, had been already circumcised, so that there were only 670,000, or at the most 720,000, to be circumcised now. Consequently the proportion between the circumcised and uncircumcised was one to three or three and a half; and the operation could therefore be completed without any difficulty in the course of a single day. As regards the consequences of this operation, Gen. xxxiv. 25 by no means proves that the pain was most acute on the third day; and even if this really were the case, it would not prevent the keeping of the passover, as the lambs could have been killed and prepared by the 280,000 or 330,000 circumcised men; and even those who were still unwell could join in the meal, since it was only Levitical uncleanness, and not disease or pain, which formed a legal impediment to this (Num. ix. 10 sqq.).¹ But if there were about 300,000 men of the age of forty and upwards who could not only perform the rite of circumcision upon their sons or younger brothers, but, if necessary, were able at any moment to draw the sword, there was no reason what-

¹ For the basis upon which this computation rests, see *Keil's Commentary on Joshua*, p. 139 (Eng. trans. 1857).

ever for their being afraid of an attack on the part of the Canaanites, even if the latter had not been paralyzed by the miraculous crossing of the Jordan.—Ver. 9. When the circumcision was completed, the Lord said to Joshua, “*This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.*” “The reproach of Egypt” is the reproach proceeding from Egypt, as “the reproach of Moab,” in Zeph. ii. 8, is the reproach heaped upon Israel by Moab (cf. Isa. li. 7; Ezek. xvi. 57). We are not to understand by this the Egyptian bondage, or the misery which still cleaved to the Israelites from Egypt, and the still further misery which they had suffered during their journey, on account of the displeasure of Jehovah (*Knobel*), but the reproach involved in the thoughts and sayings of the Egyptians, that Jehovah had brought the Israelites out of Egypt to destroy them in the desert (Ex. xxxii. 12; Num. xiv. 13-16; Deut. ix. 28), which rested upon Israel as long as it was condemned to wander restlessly about and to die in the wilderness. This reproach was rolled away from Israel with the circumcision of the people at Gilgal, inasmuch as this act was a practical declaration of the perfect restoration of the covenant, and a pledge that the Lord would now give them the land of Canaan for their inheritance. From this occurrence the place where the Israelites were encamped received the name of *Gilgal*, viz. “rolling away,” from גלל, to roll. This explanation and derivation of the name is not to be pronounced incorrect and unhistorical, simply because it merely preserves the subordinate idea of rolling, instead of the fuller idea of the rolling away of reproach. For the intention was not to form a word which should comprehend the whole affair with exhaustive minuteness, but simply to invent a striking name which should recall the occurrence, like the name *Tomi*, of which Ovid gives the following explanation: *Inde Tomos dictus locus est quia fertur in illo membra soror fratris consecuisse sui* (*Trist.* iii. 9, 33). *Knobel* is wrong in maintaining that the name should be explained in a different way, and that this *Gilgal* is the same as *Geliloth* (circles) in chap. xviii. 17 (see the explanation given at chap. xv. 7). The word *gilgal*, formed from גלל, to roll, signifies primarily rolling, then a wheel (Isa. xxviii. 28); and if by possibility it signifies *orbis* also, like גלגל, this is neither the original nor the only meaning of the word. According to *Josephus* (*Ant.* v. 1, 4), Israel encamped fifty stadia, i.e. two hours and a half, from the Jordan, and ten stadia, or half an hour, from Jericho,—that is to say, in the plain or steppe between Jericho and the Jordan, in an uninhabited and unculti-

vated spot, which received the name of *Gilgal* for the first time, as the place where the Israelites were encamped. No town or village ever existed there, either at the period in question or at any later time. The only other places in which this *Gilgal* can be shown to be evidently referred to, are Micah vi. 5 and 2 Sam. xix. 16, 41; and the statement made by *Eusebius* in the *Onom. s. v. Galgala*, *δείκνυται ὁ τόπος ἔρημος ὡς ἑρὸς θησκευόμενος*, which *Jerome* paraphrases thus, "Even to the present day a deserted place is pointed out at the second mile from Jericho, which is held in amazing reverence by the inhabitants of that region," by no means proves the existence of a town or village there in the time of the Israelites. Consequently it is not to be wondered at, that in spite of repeated search, *Robinson* has not been able to discover any remains of *Gilgal* to the east of Jericho, or to meet with any Arab who could tell him of such a name in this locality (see *Rob. Pal. ii. pp. 287-8 and 278*). On the situation of the *Gilgal* mentioned in chap. ix. 6, x. 6, etc., see at chap. viii. 35.

Vers. 10-14. THE PASSOVER AT GILGAL.—When the whole nation had been received again into covenant with the Lord by circumcision, they kept the passover, which had no doubt been suspended from the time that they left Sinai (Num. ix. 1 sqq.), on the 14th of the month (*Nisan*), in the evening (according to the law in Ex. xii. 6, 18, Lev. xxiii. 5, Num. xxviii. 16, Deut. xvi. 6). The next day, *i.e.* on the 16th, or the day after the first feast-day, they ate unleavened loaves and parched corn ("roasted grains," see at Lev. ii. 14) of the produce of the land (עֲבֹר,¹ which only occurs in vers. 11 and 12, is synonymous with תְּבֻאָה² in ver. 12), *i.e.* corn that had grown in the land of Canaan, as the manna entirely ceased from this day forwards. "The morrow after the passover" is used in Num. xxxiii. 3 for the 15th *Nisan*; but here it must be understood as signifying the 16th, as the produce of the land, of which they ate not only on that day, but, according to ver. 12, throughout that year, cannot mean the corn of the previous year, but the produce of this same year, *i.e.* the new corn, and they were not allowed to eat any of that till it had been sanctified to the Lord by the presentation of the wave sheaf on the second day of the passover (Lev. xxiii. 11). According to Lev. xxiii. 11, the presentation was to take place on the day after the Sabbath, *i.e.* the

¹ Rendered "old corn" in the Eng. version.

² Rendered *fruit* in our version.

first day of the feast of Mazzoth, which was kept as a Sabbath, or the 16th of Nisan, as the seven days' feast of Mazzoth commenced on the 15th (Lev. xxiii. 6; Num. xxviii. 17). "On the morrow after the passover" is the same as "on the morrow after the Sabbath" in Lev. xxiii. 11, the term passover being used here not in its original and more restricted sense, in which it applies exclusively to the observance of the paschal meal, which took place on the evening of the 14th, and is expressly distinguished from the seven days' feast of *Mazzoth* (Ex. xii. 23, 27; Lev. xxiii. 5; Num. xxviii. 16), but in the broader sense, which we have already met with in Deut. xvi. 2, in which the name was gradually extended to the whole of the seven days' feast. The writer assumed that the facts themselves were already well known from the Mosaic law, and therefore did not think it necessary to give any fuller explanation. Moreover, the words, "they did eat of the fruit of the land," etc., are not to be understood as signifying that they began to eat unleavened bread for the first time on the 16th Nisan (they had already eaten it as an accompaniment to the paschal lamb); but unleavened bread of the produce of the land, the green corn of that year, was what they ate for the first time on that day. Especial prominence is given to this by the words, "in the self-same day," because not only did the eating of the new corn commence on that day, but from that day forward "*the children of Israel had manna no more.*" This statement is evidently related to Ex. xvi. 35, and must be understood, according to that passage, as merely signifying, that on that day the gift of the manna entirely ceased (see Pentateuch, vol. ii. pp. 70 sqq.).

APPEARANCE OF THE ANGEL OF THE LORD, AND CONQUEST OF JERICHO.—CHAP. V. 13-VI. 27.

Having been confirmed and fortified in the covenant with the Lord through the observance of the passover, Joshua determined to proceed at once to the work entrusted to him, viz. the conquest of the land of Canaan. But the town of Jericho, which was surrounded with strong walls, as the border defence of Canaan against any foe approaching from the east, had its gates shut before the children of Israel. And whilst Joshua was deep in meditation concerning its capture, the angel of the Lord appeared to him to announce that the Lord had given Jericho and its king into his power, and would miraculously throw down its walls.

Chap. v. 13—vi. 5. APPEARANCE AND MESSAGE OF THE ANGEL OF THE LORD.—Vers. 13–15. When Joshua was by Jericho, בְּיְרִיחוֹ, *lit. in Jericho* (בְּ expressing immediate proximity, the entrance as it were into some other object, *vid. Ewald*, § 217),—that is to say, inside it in thought, meditating upon the conquest of it,—he saw, on lifting up his eyes, a man standing before him with a drawn sword in his hand; and on going up to him, and asking, “*Dost thou belong to us or to our enemies?*” he received this reply: “*Nay* (אֵי) is not to be altered into אֵל, which is the reading adopted in the *Sept.*, *Syr.*, and a few MSS.), *but I am the prince of the army of Jehovah; now I am come.*” The person who had appeared neither belonged to the Israelites nor to their enemies, but was the prince of the army of Jehovah, *i.e.* of the angels. “*The Lord’s host*” does not mean “the people of Israel, who were just at the commencement of their warlike enterprise,” as *v. Hofmann* supposes; for although the host of Israel who came out of Egypt are called “the hosts of the Lord” in Ex. xii. 41, the Israelites are never called the host or army of Jehovah (in the singular). “The host of Jehovah” is synonymous with “the host of heaven” (1 Kings xxii. 19), and signifies the angels, as in Ps. cxlviii. 2 and ciii. 21. With the words “*now I am come,*” the prince of the angels is about to enter upon an explanation of the object of his coming; but he is interrupted in his address by Joshua, who falls down before him, and says, “*What saith my lord to his servant?*” so that now he first of all commands Joshua to take off his shoes, as the place on which he stands is holy. It by no means follows that because Joshua fell down upon the ground and שָׁתַּחֲוָה (Eng. Ver. “*did worship*”), he must have recognised him at once as the angel of the Lord who was equal with God; for the word שָׁתַּחֲוָה, which is connected with the falling down, does not always mean divine worship, but very frequently means nothing more than the deep Oriental reverence paid by a dependant to his superior or king (*e.g.* 2 Sam. ix. 6, xiv. 33), and Joshua did not address the person who appeared to him by the name of God, אֱלֹהִי, but simply as אֲדֹנָי, “My lord.” In any case, however, Joshua regarded him at once as a superior being, *i.e.* an angel. And he must have recognised him as something more than a created angel of superior rank, that is to say, as the angel of Jehovah who is essentially equal with God, the visible revealer of the invisible God, as soon as he gave him the command to take off his shoes, etc.,—a command which would remind him of the appearance of God to Moses in the burning bush, and which im-

plied that the person who now appeared was the very person who had revealed himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (On the meaning of the command to take off the shoes, see the exposition of Ex. iii. 5.) The object of the divine appearance was indicated by the drawn sword in the hand (cf. Num. xxii. 31), by which he manifested himself as a heavenly warrior, or, as he describes himself to Joshua, as prince of the army of Jehovah. The drawn sword contained in itself this practical explanation: "I am now come with my heavenly army, to make war upon the Canaanites, and to assist thee and thy people" (*Seb. Schmidt*). It was not in a vision that this appearance took place, but it was an actual occurrence belonging to the external world; for Joshua saw the man with the drawn sword at a certain distance from himself, and went up to him to address him,—a fact which would be perfectly incompatible with an inward vision.

Chap. vi. 1-5. When Joshua had taken off his shoes, the prince of the army of God made known to him the object of his coming (vers. 2-5). But before relating the message, the historian first of all inserts a remark concerning the town of Jericho, in the form of an explanatory clause, for the purpose of showing the precise meaning of the declaration which follows.¹ This meaning is to be found not merely in the fact that the Lord was about to give Jericho into the hands of the Israelites, but chiefly in the fact that the town which He was about to give into their hands was so strongly fortified.—Ver. 1. "*Jericho was shutting its gates (vid. Jndg. ix. 51), and closely shut.*" The participles express the permanence of the situation, and the combination of the active and passive in the emphatic form פָּסְגָה (LXX. συγκεκλεισμένη καὶ ἀχυρωμένη; *Vulg. clausa erat atque munita*) serves to strengthen the idea, to which still further emphasis is given by the clause, "*no one was*

¹ If there is any place in which the division of chapters is unsuitable, it is so here; for the appearance of the prince of the angels does not terminate with chap. v. 15, but what he had come to communicate follows in chap. vi. 2-5, and chap. vi. 1 merely contains an explanatory clause inserted before his message, which serves to throw light upon the situation (*vid. Ewald, § 341*). If we regard the account of the appearance of the angel as terminating with chap. v. 15, as *Knobel* and other commentators have done, we must of necessity assume either that the account has come down to us in a mutilated form, or that the appearance ceased without any commission being given. The one is as incredible as the other. The latter especially is without analogy; for the appearance in Acts x. 9 sqq., which *O. v. Gerlach* cites as similar, contains a very distinct explanation in vers. 13-16.

going out and in," i.e. so firmly shut that no one could go out or in.

—Ver. 2. "*And the Lord said to Joshua:*" this is the sequel to chap. v. 15; as ver. 1 is merely a parenthesis and Jehovah is the prince of the army of Jehovah (chap. v. 14), or the angel of Jehovah, who is frequently identified with Jehovah (see Pentateuch, vol. i. pp. 184 sqq.). "*See, I have given into thy hand Jericho and its king, the mighty men of valour.*" ("Have given," referring to the purpose of God, which was already resolved upon, though the fulfilment was still in the future.) "*The mighty men of valour*" (brave warriors) is in apposition to Jericho, regarded as a community, and its king. In vers. 3–5 there follows an explanation of the way in which the Lord would give Jericho into the hand of Joshua. All the Israelitish men of war were to go round the town once a day for six days. הָלַךְ אֶחָד . . . הַקִּיף, "*going round about the city once*," serves as a fuller explanation of סָבְאוּם ("ye shall compass"). As they marched in this manner round the city, seven priests were to carry seven jubilee trumpets before the ark, which implies that the ark itself was to be carried round the city in solemn procession. But on the seventh day they were to march round the town seven times, and the priests to blow the trumpets; and when there was a blast with the jubilee horn, and the people on hearing the sound of the trumpet raised a great cry, the wall of the town should fall down "*under itself*." The "jubilee trumpets" (Eng. Ver. "trumpets of rams' horns") are the same as the "jubilee horn" (Eng. Ver. "rams' horn") in ver. 5, for which the abbreviated form *shophar* (trumpet, ver. 5; cf. Ex. xix. 16) or *jobel* (jubilee: Ex. xix. 13) is used. They were not the silver trumpets of the priests (Num. x. 1 sqq.), but large horns, or instruments in the shape of a horn, which gave a loud far-sounding tone (see at Lev. xxiii. 24, xxv. 11). For הִקְעוּ בַשֹּׁפָר, blow the trumpet (lit. strike the trumpet), in ver. 4, קָשַׁף בְּקֶרֶן, draw with the horn, i.e. blow the horn with long-drawn notes, is used in ver. 5 (see at Ex. xix. 13). The people were then to go up, i.e. press into the town over the fallen wall; "*every one straight before him*," i.e. every one was to go straight into the town without looking round at his neighbour either on the right hand or on the left (*vid.* ver. 20).

Vers. 6–27. **TAKING OF JERICHO.**—In the account of this we have first of all a brief statement of the announcement of the divine message by Joshua to the priests and the people (vers. 6, 7); then the execution of the divine command (vers. 8–20); and lastly

the burning of Jericho and deliverance of Rahab (vers. 21-27).—Vers. 6, 7. In communicating the divine command with reference to the arrangements for taking Jericho, Joshua mentions in the first place merely the principal thing to be observed. The plural *וַיֹּאמְרוּ* ("they said"), in ver. 7, must not be altered, but is to be explained on the ground that Joshua did not make the proclamation to the people himself, but through the medium of the *shoterim*, who were appointed to issue his commands (see chap. i. 10, 11, iii. 2, 3). In this proclamation the more minute instructions concerning the order of march, which had been omitted in vers. 3-5, are given; namely, that *וְהַחֲלִיץ* was to march in front of the ark. By *וְהַחֲלִיץ*, "the equipped (or armed) man," we are not to understand all the fighting men, as *Knobel* supposes; for in the description of the march which follows, the whole of the fighting men ("all the men of war," ver. 3) are divided into *וְהַחֲלִיץ* and *הַמִּצָּפֵּה* (*Eng. Ver.* "the armed men" and "the rereward," vers. 9 and 13), so that the former can only have formed one division of the army. It is very natural therefore to suppose, as *Kimchi* and *Rashi* do, that the former were the fighting men of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh (*וְהַחֲלִיץ הַנִּצָּב*, chap. iv. 13), and the latter the fighting men of the rest of the tribes. On the meaning of *מִצָּפֵּה*, see at Num. x. 25. If we turn to the account of the facts themselves, we shall see at once, that in the report of the angel's message, in vers. 3-5, several other points have been passed over for the purpose of avoiding too many repetitions, and have therefore to be gathered from the description of what actually occurred. First of all, in vers. 8-10, we have the appointment of the order of marching, namely, that the ark, with the priests in front carrying the trumpets of jubilee, was to form the centre of the procession, and that one portion of the fighting men was to go in front of it, and the rest to follow after; that the priests were to blow the trumpets every time they marched round during the seven days (vers. 8, 9, 13); and lastly, that it was not till the seventh time of going round, on the seventh day, that the people were to raise the war-cry at the command of Joshua, and then the walls of the town were to fall (vers. 10, 16). There can be no doubt that we are right in assuming that Joshua had received from the angel the command which he issued to the people in vers. 17 sqq., that the whole town, with all its inhabitants and everything in it, was to be given up as a ban to the Lord, at the time when the first announcement concerning the fall of the town was made.

Vers. 8–20. *Execution of the divine Command.*—Vers. 8–11. The march round on the first day; and the instructions as to the war-cry to be raised by the people, which are appended as a supplement in ver. 10. “*Before Jehovah,*” instead of “before the ark of Jehovah,” as the signification of the ark was derived entirely from the fact, that it was the medium through which Jehovah communicated His gracious presence to the people. In ver. 9, *הִקָּעַ* is in the perfect tense, and we must supply the relative *אֲשֶׁר*, which is sometimes omitted, not only in poetry, but also in prose, after a definite noun in the accusative (e.g. Ex. xviii. 20; see *Ewald*, § 332, a.). There is not sufficient ground for altering the form of the word into *הִקָּעַי*, according to the *Keri*, as *הִקָּעַ* is construed in other cases with the accusative *הַשֹּׁפָר*, instead of with *אֲשֶׁר*, and that not only in poetry, but also in prose (e.g. Judg. vii. 22, as compared with vers. 18–20). *הִלְלוּ וְהִקָּעוּ*, “trumpeting continually” (*Eng. Ver.* “going on and blowing”). *הִלְלוּ* is used adverbially, as in Gen. viii. 3, etc.—Ver. 11. “*So the ark of the Lord compassed the city,*” not “Joshua caused the ark to compass the city.” The *Hiphil* has only an active, not a causative, meaning here, as in 2 Sam. v. 23, etc.—Vers. 12–14. The march on each of the next five days resembled that on the first. “*So they did six days.*” In ver. 13, *וְהִקָּעוּ* does not stand for *וְהִקָּעַי*, but corresponds to *וְהִקָּעַ* in ver. 8; and the participle *הוֹלֵךְ* is used interchangeably with the *inf. abs.* *הִלְכוּ*, as in Gen. xxvi. 13, Judg. iv. 24, etc., so that the *Keri* *הִלְכוּ* is an unnecessary emendation.—Vers. 15–19. On the seventh day the marching round the town commenced very early, at the dawning of the day, that they might go round seven times. *בַּשְּׁבִיעִתָּה*, in the manner prescribed and carried out on the previous days, which had become a *right* through precept and practice. On the seventh circuit, when the priests had blown the trumpet, Joshua commanded the fighting men to raise a war-cry, announcing to them at the same time that the town, with all that was in it, was to be a ban to the Lord, with the exception of Rahab and the persons in her house, and warning them not to take of that which was laid under the ban, that they might not bring a ban upon the camp of Israel. The construction in ver. 16, “*it came to pass at the seventh time the priests had blown the trumpets, then Joshua said, . . .*” is more spirited than if the conjunction *כִּאֲשֶׁר* had been used before *וְהִקָּעוּ*, or *בְּהִקָּעוֹ* had been used. Because the Lord had given Jericho into the hands of the Israelites, they were to consecrate it to Him as a ban (*cherem*), i.e. as a holy thing belonging to Jehovah, which was not to be touched by man, as being

the first-fruits of the land of Canaan. (On *cherem*, see the remarks at Lev. xxvii. 28, 29.) Rahab alone was excepted from this ban, along with all that belonged to her, because she had hidden the spies. The inhabitants of an idolatrous town laid under the ban were to be put to death, together with their cattle, and all the property in the town to be burned, as Moses himself had enjoined on the basis of the law in Lev. xxvii. 29. The only exceptions were metals, gold, silver, and the vessels of brass and iron; these were to be brought into the treasury of the Lord, *i.e.* the treasury of the tabernacle, as being holy to the Lord (ver. 19; *vid.* Num. xxxi. 54). Whoever took to himself anything that had been laid under the ban, exposed himself to the ban, not only because he had brought an abomination into his house, as Moses observes in Deut. vii. 25, in relation to the gold and silver of idols, but because he had wickedly invaded the rights of the Lord, by appropriating that which had been laid under the ban, and had wantonly violated the ban itself. The words, "*beware of the ban, that ye do not ban and take of the ban*" (ver. 18), point to this. As *Lud. de Dieu* observes, "the two things were altogether incompatible, to devote everything to God, and yet to apply a portion to their own private use; either the thing should not have been devoted, or having been devoted, it was their duty to abstain from it." Any such appropriation of what had been laid under the ban would make the camp of Israel itself a ban, and trouble it, *i.e.* bring it into trouble (*conturbare*, cf. Gen. xxxiv. 30). In consequence of the trumpet-blast and the war-cry raised by the people, the walls of the town fell together, and the Israelites rushed into the town and took it, as had been foretold in ver. 5. The position of *הָרָעָה הָעֵץ* is not to be understood as signifying that the people had raised the war-cry before the trumpet-blast, but may be explained on the ground, that in his instructions in ver. 16 Joshua had only mentioned the shouting. But any misinterpretation is prevented by the fact, that it is expressly stated immediately afterwards, that the people did not raise the great shout till they heard the trumpet-blast.

As far as the event itself is concerned, the different attempts which have been made to explain the miraculous overthrow of the walls of Jericho as a natural occurrence, whether by an earthquake, or by mining, or by sudden storming, for which the inhabitants, who had been thrown into a false security by the marvellous procession repeated day after day for several days, were quite unprepared (as *Ewald* has tried to explain the miracle away), really deserve no

serious refutation, being all of them arbitrarily forced upon the text. It is only from the naturalistic stand-point that the miracle could ever be denied; for it not only follows most appropriately upon the miraculous guidance of Israel through the Jordan, but is in perfect harmony with the purpose and spirit of the divine plan of salvation. "It is impossible," says *Hess*, "to imagine a more striking way, in which it could have been shown to the Israelites that Jehovah had given them the town. Now the river must retire to give them an entrance into the land, and now again the wall of the town must fall to make an opening into a fortified place. Two such decisive proofs of the co-operation of Jehovah so shortly after Moses' death, must have furnished a pledge, even to the most sensual, that the same God was with them who had led their fathers so mightily and so miraculously through the Red Sea." That this was *in part* the intention of the miracle, we learn from the close of the narrative (ver. 27). But this does not explain the *true object* of the miracle, or the reason why God gave up this town to the Israelites without any fighting on their part, through the miraculous overthrow of their walls. The reason for this we have to look for in the fact that Jericho was not only the first, but the strongest town of Canaan, and as such was the key to the conquest of the whole land, the possession of which would open the way to the whole, and give the whole, as it were, into their hands. The Lord would give His people the first and strongest town of Canaan, as the first-fruits of the land, without any effort on their part, as a sign that He was about to give them the whole land for a possession, according to His promise; in order that they might not regard the conquest of it as their own work, or the fruit of their own exertions, and look upon the land as a well-merited possession which they could do as they pleased with, but that they might ever use it as a gracious gift from the Lord, which he had merely conferred upon them as a trust, and which He could take away again, whenever they might fall from Him, and render themselves unworthy of His grace. This design on the part of God would of necessity become very obvious in the case of so strongly fortified a town as Jericho, whose walls would appear impregnable to a people that had grown up in the desert and was so utterly without experience in the art of besieging or storming fortified places, and in fact would necessarily remain impregnable, at all events for a long time, without the interposition of God. But if this was the reason why the Lord gave up Jericho to the Israelites by a miracle, it does

not explain either the connection between the blast of trumpets or the war-cry of the people and the falling of the walls, or the reason for the divine instructions that the town was to be marched round every day for seven days, and seven times on the seventh day. Yet as this was an appointment of divine wisdom, it must have had some meaning.

The significance of this repeated marching round the town culminates unquestionably in the ark of the covenant and the trumpet-blast of the priests who went before the ark. In the account before us the ark is constantly called the ark of the Lord, to show that the Lord, who was enthroned upon the cherubim of the ark, was going round the hostile town in the midst of His people; whilst in ver. 8 Jehovah himself is mentioned in the place of the ark of Jehovah. Seven priests went before the ark, bearing jubilee trumpets and blowing during the march. The first time that we read of a trumpet-blast is at Sinai, where the Lord announced His descent upon the mount to the people assembled at the foot to receive Him, not only by other fearful phenomena, but also by a loud and long-continued trumpet-blast (Ex. xix. 16, 19, xx. 14 (18)). After this we find the blowing of trumpets prescribed as part of the Israelitish worship in connection with the observance of the seventh new moon's day (Lev. xxiii. 24), and at the proclamation of the great year of jubilee (Lev. xxv. 9). Just as the trumpet-blast heard by the people when the covenant was made at Sinai was as it were a herald's call, announcing to the tribes of Israel the arrival of the Lord their God to complete His covenant and establish His kingdom upon earth; so the blowing of trumpets in connection with the round of feasts was intended partly to bring the people into remembrance before the Lord year by year at the commencement of the sabbatical month, that He might come to them and grant them the Sabbath rest of His kingdom, and partly at the end of every seven times seven years to announce on the great day of atonement the coming of the great year of grace and freedom, which was to bring to the people of God deliverance from bondage, return to their own possessions, and deliverance from the bitter labours of this earth, and to give them a foretaste of the blessed and glorious liberty to which the children of God would attain at the return of the Lord to perfect His kingdom (*vid.* Pentateuch, vol. ii. pp. 466-7). But when the Lord comes to found, to build up, and to perfect His kingdom upon earth, He also comes to overthrow and destroy the worldly power which opposes His kingdom. The revelation of the grace and mercy of God to His children, goes

ever side by side with the revelation of justice and judgment towards the ungodly who are His foes. If therefore the blast of trumpets was the signal to the congregation of Israel of the gracious arrival of the Lord its God to enter into fellowship with it, no less did it proclaim the advent of judgment to an ungodly world. This shows clearly enough the meaning of the trumpet-blast at Jericho. The priests, who went before the ark of the covenant (the visible throne of the invisible God who dwelt among His people) and in the midst of the hosts of Israel, were to announce through the blast of trumpets both to the Israelites and Canaanites the appearance of the Lord of the whole earth for judgment upon Jericho, the strong bulwark of the Canaanitish power and rule, and to foretell to them through the falling of the walls of this fortification, which followed the blast of trumpets and the war-cry of the soldiers of God, the overthrow of all the strong bulwarks of an ungodly world through the omnipotence of the Lord of heaven and earth. Thus the fall of Jericho became the symbol and type of the overthrow of every worldly power before the Lord, when He should come to lead His people into Canaan and establish His kingdom upon earth. On the ground of this event, the blowing of trumpets is frequently introduced in the writings of the prophets, as the signal and symbolical omen of the manifestations of the Lord in great judgments, through which He destroys one worldly power after another, and thus maintains and extends His kingdom upon earth, and leads it on towards that completion to which it will eventually attain when He descends from heaven in His glory at the time of the last trump, with a great shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, to raise the dead and change the living, to judge the world, cast the devil, death, and hell into the lake of fire, create a new heaven and new earth, and in the new Jerusalem erect the tabernacle of God among men for all eternity (1 Cor. xv. 51 sqq.; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; Rev. xx. and xxi.).

The appointment of the march round Jericho, which was to be continued for seven days, and to be repeated seven times on the seventh day, was equally significant. The number seven is a symbol in the Scriptures of the work of God and of the perfection already produced or to be eventually secured by Him; a symbol founded upon the creation of the world in six days, and the completion of the works of creation by the resting of God upon the seventh day. Through this arrangement, that the walls of Jericho were not to fall till after they had been marched round for seven days,

and not till after this had been repeated seven times on the seventh day, and then amidst the blast of the jubilee trumpets and the war-cry of the soldiers of the people of God, the destruction of this town, the key to Canaan, was intended by God to become a type of the final destruction at the last day of the power of this world, which exalts itself against the kingdom of God. In this way He not only showed to His congregation that it would not be all at once, but only after long-continued conflict, and at the end of the world, that the worldly power by which it was opposed would be overthrown, but also proved to the enemies of His kingdom, that however long their power might sustain itself in opposition to the kingdom of God, it would at last be destroyed in a moment.

Vers. 21-27. After the taking of Jericho, man and beast were banned, *i.e.* put to death without quarter (ver. 21; cf. ver. 17); Rahab and her relations being the only exceptions. Joshua had directed the two spies to fetch them out of her house, and in the first instance had them taken to a place of safety outside the camp of Israel (vers. 22, 23). "*Her brethren*," *i.e.* her brothers and sisters, as in chap. ii. 13, not her brothers only. "*All that she had*" does not mean all her possessions, but all the persons belonging to her house; and "*all her kindred*" are all her relations by birth or marriage, with their dependants (cf. chap. ii. 13). *Clericus* is correct in observing, that as Rahab's house was built against the town-wall, and rested partly upon it (chap. ii. 15), when the wall fell down, that portion against or upon which the house stood cannot have fallen along with the rest, "otherwise when the wall fell no one would have dared to remain in the house." But we must not draw the further inference, that when the town was burned Rahab's house was spared.¹ וַיִּנְחָמוּם מִחַיִּי וְנָוִי (ver. 23; cf. Gen. xix. 16), "*they let them rest*," *i.e.* placed them in safety, "*outside the camp of Israel*," *sc.* till they had done all that was requisite for a formal reception into the congregation of the Lord, viz. by giving up idolatry and heathen superstition, and turning to the God of Israel as the only true God (to which circumcision had to be added in the case of the men), and by whatever lustrations and purifications were customary at the time in connection with reception into the covenant with Jehovah, of which we have no further information.—Vers. 24, 25. After man and beast had been put to death,

¹ The statements made by travellers in the middle ages, to the effect that they had seen Rahab's house (*Rob. Pal.* ii. pp. 295-6), belong to the delusions of pious superstition.

and Rahab and her relatives had been placed in security, the Israelites set the town on fire with everything in it, excepting the metals, which were taken to the treasury of the tabernacle, as had been commanded in ver. 19. On the conquest of the other towns of Canaan the inhabitants only were put to death, whilst the cattle and the rest of the booty fell to the conquerors, just as in the case of the conquest of the land and towns of Sihon and Og (compare chap. viii. 26, 27, x. 28, with Deut. ii. 34, 35, and iii. 6, 7), as it was only the inhabitants of Canaan that the Lord had commanded to be put under the ban (Deut. vii. 2, xx. 16, 17). In the case of Jericho, on the contrary, men, cattle, and booty were all put under the ban, and the town itself was to be laid in ashes. This was because Jericho was the first town of Canaan which the Lord had given up to His people. Israel was therefore to sacrifice it to the Lord as the first-fruits of the land, and to sanctify it to Him as a thing placed under the ban, for a sign that they had received the whole land as a fief from his hand, and had no wish to grasp as a prey that which belonged to the Lord.—Ver. 25. But Rahab and all that belonged to her Joshua suffered to live, so that she dwelt in Israel *“unto this day.”* It is very evident from this remark, that the account was written not very long after the event.¹

Vers. 26, 27. But in order to complete the ban pronounced upon Jericho in perfect accordance with the command of God in Deut. xiii. 17, and to make the destruction of it a memorial to posterity of the justice of God sanctifying itself upon the ungodly, Joshua completed the ban with an oath: *“Cursed be the man before the Lord that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof at the price of his first-born, and set up its gates at the price of his youngest son”* (ז denoting the price of a

¹ Rahab is no doubt the same person as the Rachab mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus Christ, who married Salmon the tribe prince of Judah, to whom she bore Boaz, an ancestor of David (Matt. i. 5). The doubts which *Theophylact* expressed as to the identity of the two, and which *J. Outhov* has since sought to confirm, rest for the most part upon the same doctrinal scruples as those which induced the author of the Chaldee version to make Rahab an innkeeper, namely, the offence taken at her dishonourable calling. *Jerome's* view, on the other hand, is a very satisfactory one. “In the genealogy of the Saviour,” he says, “none of the holy women are included, but only those whom the Scriptures blame, that He who came on behalf of sinners, being himself born of sinners, might destroy the sins of all.” The different ways in which the name is written, viz. ἡ Ραχάβ in Matthew, and Ρααβ in the Sept. version of Joshua, and in Heb. xi. 31 and James ii. 25, is not enough to throw

thing). The rhythmical parallelism is unmistakeable in this curse. The two last clauses express the thought that the builder of the town would pay for its restoration by the loss of all his sons, from the first-born to the very youngest. The word "buildeth," however, does not refer to the erection of houses upon the site of the town that had been burnt to ashes, but to the restoration of the town as a fortification, the word בָּנָה being frequently used to denote the fortification of a town (*e.g.* 1 Kings xv. 17; 2 Chron. xi. 6, xiv. 5, 6). This is evident in general from the fact that a town is not founded by the erection of a number of houses upon one spot, but by the joining of these houses together into an enclosed whole by means of a surrounding wall, but more particularly from the last words of the verse, in which בָּנָה is explained as יִסְדֶּנָּה (lay the foundation thereof) and יָצַיב דְּלִמְחֶיהָ (set up the gates of it). Setting up the gates of a town is not setting up doors to the houses, but erecting town-gates, which can only be done when a town-wall has been built. But if setting up the gates would be a sign of the completion of the wall, and therefore of the restoration of the town as a fortification, the "founding" (laying the foundation) mentioned in the parallel clause can only be understood as referring to the foundation of the town-wall. This view of the curse, which is well supported both by the language and the facts, is also confirmed by the subsequent history. Joshua himself allotted Jericho to the Benjamites along with certain other towns (chap. xviii. 21), which proves that he intended them to inhabit it; and accordingly we find the city of palms, *i.e.* Jericho, mentioned afterwards as an inhabited place (Judg. iii. 13; 2 Sam. x. 5), and yet it was not till the time of Ahab that Joshua's curse was fulfilled, when Hiel the Bethelite undertook to make it into a fortified town (1 Kings xvi.

any doubt upon the identity of the two, as *Josephus* always calls the harlot Rahab ἡ Παράβη. The chronological difficulty, that Salmon and Rahab lived much too soon to have been the parents of Boaz, which is adduced by *Knobel* as an argument against the identity of the mother of Boaz and the harlot Rahab, has no force unless it can be proved that every link is given in the genealogy of David (in Ruth iv. 21, 22; 1 Chron. ii. 11; Matt. i. 5), and that Boaz was really the great-grandfather of David; whereas the very opposite, viz. the omission from the genealogies of persons of no celebrity, is placed beyond all doubt by many cases that might be cited. Nothing more is known of Rahab. The accounts of the later Rabbins, such as that she was married to Joshua, or that she was the mother of eight prophets, and others of the same kind, are fables without the slightest historical foundation (see *Lightfoot*, *hor. hebr. et talm.* in Matt. i. 5).

34).¹—Ver. 27. Thus the Lord was with Joshua, fulfilling His promise to him (chap. i. 5 sq.), so that his fame spread through all the land.

ACHAN'S THEFT AND PUNISHMENT.—CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. At Jericho the Lord had made known to the Canaanites His great and holy name; but before Ai the Israelites were to learn that He would also sanctify Himself on them if they transgressed His covenant, and that the congregation of the Lord could only conquer the power of the world so long as it was faithful to His covenant. But notwithstanding the command which Joshua had enforced upon the people (chap. vi. 18), Achan, a member of the tribe of Judah, laid hands upon the property in Jericho which had been banned, and thus brought the ban upon the children of Israel, the whole nation. His breach of trust is described as unfaithfulness (a trespass) on the part of the children of Israel in the ban, in consequence of which the anger of the Lord was kindled against the whole nation. לַעֲוֹן לַעֲוֹן, to commit a breach of trust (see at Lev. v. 15), generally against Jehovah, by purloining or withholding what was sanctified to Him, here in the matter of the ban, by appropriating what had been banned to the Lord. This crime was imputed to the whole people, not as *imputatio moralis*, i.e. as though the whole nation had shared in Achan's disposition, and cherished in their hearts the same sinful desire which Achan had carried out in action in the theft he had committed; but as *imputatio civilis*, according to which Achan, a member of the nation, had robbed the whole nation of the purity and holiness which it ought to possess before God, through the sin that he had committed, just as the whole body is affected by the sin of a single member.² Instead of

¹ *Knobel's* opinion, that the Jericho mentioned between the times of Joshua and Abah in all probability did not stand upon the old site which Hiel was the first to build upon again, is at variance with 1 Kings xvi. 34, as it is not stated there that he rebuilt the old site of Jericho, but that he began to build the town of Jericho, which existed, according to 2 Sam. x. 5 and Judg. iii. 13, in the time of David, and even of the judges, i.e. to restore it as a fortified town; and it is not raised into a truth by any appeal to the statements of *Strabo*, *Appian*, and others, to the effect that Greeks and Romans did not choose places for building upon which any curse rested.

² In support of this I cannot do better than quote the most important of the remarks which I made in my former commentary (*Keil* on Joshua, pp. 177–8, Eng. trans.): "However truly the whole Scriptures speak of each man as indi-

Achan (the reading here and in chap. xxii. 20) we find *Achar* in 1 Chron. ii. 7, the liquids *n* and *r* being interchanged to allow of a play upon the verb *פָּרַח* in ver. 25. Hence in *Josephus* the name is spelt *Acharos*, and in the *Cod. Vat.* of the LXX. *Achar*, whereas the *Cod. Al.* has *Achan*. Instead of *Zabdi*, we find *Zimri* in 1 Chron. ii. 6, evidently a copyist's error. *Zerah* was the twin-brother of Pharez (Gen. xxxviii. 29, 30). *Matteli*, from *מָתַח*, to spread out, is used to denote the tribe according to its genealogical ramifications; whilst *shebet* (from an Arabic root signifying "uniform, not curled, but drawn out straight and long without any curvature at all") was applied to the sceptre or straight staff of a magistrate or ruler (never to the stick upon which a person rested), and differed from *matteh* not only in its primary and literal meaning, but also in the derivative meaning *tribe*, in which it was used to designate the division of the nation referred to, not according to its genealogical ramifications and development, but as a corporate body possessing authority and power. This difference in the ideas expressed by the two words will explain the variations in their use: for example, *matteh* is used here (in vers. 1 and 18), and in chap. xxii. 1-14, and in fact is the term usually employed in the geographical sections; whereas *shebet* is used in vers. 14, 16, in chap. iii. 12, iv. 2, and on many other occasions, in those portions of the historical narratives in which the tribes of Israel are introduced as military powers.

Vers. 2-5. The anger of God, which Achan had brought upon Israel, was manifested to the congregation in connection with their attempt to take *Ai*. This town was situated near Bethaven, on the east of Bethel. *Bethel* was originally called *Luz* (see at Gen. xxviii. 19), a place on the border of Ephraim and Benjamin (chap.

vidually an object of divine mercy and justice, they teach just as truly that a nation is one organic whole, in which the individuals are merely members of the same body, and are not atoms isolated from one another and the whole, since the state as a divine institution is founded upon family relationship, and intended to promote the love of all to one another and to the invisible Head of all. As all then are combined in a fellowship established by God, the good or evil deeds of an individual affect injuriously or beneficially the welfare of the whole society. And, therefore, when we regard the state as a divine organization and not merely as a civil institution, a compact into which men have entered by treaty, we fail to discover caprice and injustice in consequences which necessarily follow from the moral unity of the whole state; namely, that the good or evil deeds of one member are laid to the charge of the entire body. Caprice and injustice we shall always find if we leave out of sight this fundamental unity, and merely look at the fact that the many share the consequences of the sin of one."

xvi. 2, xviii. 13). It is frequently mentioned, was well known at a later time as the city in which Jeroboam established the worship of the calves, and was inhabited again even after the captivity (see v. *Raumer*, Pal. pp. 178, 179). It has been preserved, in all probability, in the very extensive ruins called *Beitin* (see *Robinson*, Pal. ii. pp. 126 sqq.), about four hours' journey on horseback to the north of Jerusalem, and on the east of the road which leads from Jerusalem to Sichem (Nablus).¹ No traces have ever been discovered of Bethaven. According to chap. xviii. 12, 13, the northern boundary of the tribe of Benjamin, which ran up from Jericho to the mountains on the west, passed on to the desert of Bethaven, and so onwards to Luz (Bethel). If we compare with this the statement in 1 Sam. xiii. 5, that the Philistines who came against Israel encamped at Michmash before (in front of) Bethaven, according to which Bethaven was on the east or north-east of Michmash (Mukhmas), the desert of Bethaven may very possibly have been nothing more than the table-land which lies between the Wady Mutyah on the north and the Wadys Fuwar and Suweinit (in *Robinson's* map), or Wady Tuwâr (on *Van de Velde's* map), and stretches in a westerly direction from the rocky mountain Kuruntel to Abu Sebah (Subbah). Bethaven would then lie to the south or south-east of Abu Sebah. In that case, however, *Ai* (*Sept. Gai* or *Aggai*, Gen. xii. 8) would neither be found in the inconsiderable ruins to the south of the village of Deir Diwan, as *Robinson* supposes (Pal. ii. pp. 312 sqq.), nor on the site of the present Tell el Hajar, i.e. stone hill, three-quarters of an hour to the s.e. of Beitin, on the southern side of the deep and precipitous Wady Mutyah, as *Van de Velde* imagines; but in the ruins of *Medinet Chai* or *Gai*, which *Krafft*² and *Strauss*³ discovered on the flat surface of a mountain that slopes off towards the east, about forty minutes on the eastern side of Geba (Jeba), where "there are considerable ruins surrounded by a circular wall, whilst the place is defended on the south by the valley of Farah, and on the north by the valley of Es Suweinit, with steep shelving walls of rock" (*Strauss: vid. C. Ritter Erdk.* xvi. pp. 526-7). On the advice of the men who were sent out to explore the land, and who

¹ The statements of the *Onomasticon* of *Eusebius s. v. 'Αγγαί* agree with this: *Κεῖται Βαιθήλ ἀπέναντον εἰς Αἰλίαν ἀπὸ Νίας πόλεως ἐν λαιοῖς τῆς οἰοῦ ἀμφὶ τὸ δαδίκαιον ἀπ' Αἰλίας σημείου.* Also *s. v. Βαιθήλ: καὶ νῦν ἐστὶ κώμη, Αἰλίας ἀποθὲν σημείοις ιβ' (twelve Roman miles are four or five hours' journey).*

² *Topograph.* v. Jerusalem, p. ix.

³ *Sinai u. Golgoth.* pp. 326-7.

described the population on their return as small ("*they are but few*"), Joshua did not send the whole of the fighting men against Ai, but only about 3000 men. As there were not more than 12,000 inhabitants (chap. viii. 25), there could hardly have been 3000 fighting men, who might easily have been beaten by 3000 Israelitish warriors. But when the Israelites attacked the town they fled before its inhabitants, who slew about thirty-six men, and pursued them before the gate, *i.e.* outside the town, to the stone quarries, and smote them on the sloping ground. The *Shebarim*, from *sheber*, a breach or fracture, were probably stone quarries near the slope on the east of the town. Nothing more can be decided, as the country has not been thoroughly explored by travellers. On account of this repulse the people lost all their courage. "*The hearts of the people melted*" (see chap. ii. 15): this expression is strengthened still further by the additional clause, "*and became as water.*"

Vers. 6-9. Joshua and the elders of the people were also deeply affected, not so much at the loss of thirty-six men, as because Israel, which was invincible with the help of the Lord, had been beaten, and therefore the Lord must have withdrawn His help. In the deepest grief, with their clothes rent (see at Lev. x. 6) and ashes upon their heads, they fell down before the ark of the Lord (*vid.* Num. xx. 6) until the evening, to pour out their grief before the Lord. Joshua's prayer contains a complaint (ver. 7) and a question addressed to God (vers. 8, 9). The complaint, "*Alas, O Lord Jehovah, wherefore hast Thou brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us?*" almost amounts to murmuring, and sounds very much like the complaint which the murmuring people brought against Moses and Aaron in the desert (Num. xiv. 2, 3); but it is very different from the murmuring of the people on that occasion against the guidance of God; for it by no means arose from unbelief, but was simply the bold language of faith wrestling with God in prayer,—faith which could not comprehend the ways of the Lord,—and involved the most urgent appeal to the Lord to carry out His work in the same glorious manner in which it had been begun, with the firm conviction that God could neither relinquish nor alter His purposes of grace. The words which follow, "*Would to God that we had been content*" (see at Deut. i. 5) *to remain on the other side of the Jordan,*" assume on the one hand, that previous to the crossing of the river Israel had cherished a longing for the possession of Canaan, and on the

other hand, that this longing might possibly have been the cause of the calamity which had fallen upon the people now, and therefore express the wish that Israel had never cherished any such desire, or that the Lord had never gratified it. (On the unusual form *הַעֲבֹרָה* for *הַעֲבָרָה*, see Ges. § 63, *anm.* 4, and *Ewald*, § 41, *b.*) The *inf. abs.* *הַעֲבִיר* (with the unusual *i* in the final syllable) is placed for the sake of emphasis after the finite verb, as in Gen. xli. 4, etc. The Amorites are the inhabitants of the mountains, as in Gen. xli. 4, etc.—Vers. 8, 9. The question which Joshua addresses to God he introduces in this way: “*Pray* (׀ַׁ contracted from ׀ַׁׁ), *Lord, what shall I say?*” to modify the boldness of the question which follows. It was not because he did not know what to say, for he proceeded at once to pour out the thoughts of his heart, but because he felt that the thought which he was about to utter might involve a reproach, as if, when God permitted that disaster, He had not thought of His own honour; and as he could not possibly think this, he introduced his words with a supplicatory inquiry. What he proceeds to say in vers. 8, 9, does not contain two co-ordinate clauses, but one simple thought: how would God uphold His great name before the world, when the report that Israel had turned their back before them should reach the Canaanites, and they should come and surround the Israelites, and destroy them without a single trace from off the face of the earth.¹ In the words, “*the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land,*” there is involved the thought that there were other people living in Canaan beside the Canaanites, *e.g.* the Philistines. The question, “*What wilt Thou do with regard to Thy great name?*” signifies, according to the parallel passages, Ex. xxxii. 11, 12, Num. xiv. 13 sqq., Deut. ix. 28, “*How wilt Thou preserve Thy great name, which Thou hast acquired thus far in the sight of all nations through the miraculous guidance of Israel, from being misunderstood and blasphemed among the heathen?*” (“*what wilt Thou do?*” as in Gen. xxvi. 29).

Vers. 10–15. The answer of the Lord, which was addressed to Joshua directly and not through the high priest, breathed anger against the sin of Israel. The question, “*Wherefore liest thou upon*

¹ *Calovius* has therefore given the correct interpretation: “When they have destroyed our name, after Thou hast chosen us to be Thy people, and brought us hither with such great wonders, what will become of Thy name? Our name is of little moment, but wilt Thou consult the honour of Thine own name, if Thou destroyest us? For Thou didst promise us this land; and what people is there that will honour Thy name if ours should be destroyed?”

thy face?" ("fallest," as in Deut. xxi. 1) involved the reproof that Joshua had no reason to doubt the fidelity of the Lord. Instead of seeking for the cause of the calamity in God, he ought to seek it in the sin of the people.—Ver. 11. Israel had sinned, and that very grievously. This is affirmed in the clauses which follow, and which are rendered emphatic by the repetition of **וַיִּזְעַק** as an expression of displeasure. The sin of one man was resting as a burden upon the whole nation in the manner explained above (on ver. 1). This sin was a breach of the covenant, being a transgression of the obligation into which the people had entered in their covenant with the Lord, to keep His commandments (Ex. xix. 8, xxiv. 7); yea, it was a grasping at the ban, and a theft, and a concealment, and an appropriation of that which was stolen to their own use. The first three clauses describe the sin in its relation to God, as a grievous offence; the three following according to its true character, as a great, obstinate, and reckless crime. "*They have put it among their own stuff*" (house furniture), viz. to use and appropriate it as their own property. As all that had been stolen was a property consecrated to the Lord, the appropriation of it to private use was the height of wickedness.—Ver. 12. On account of this sin the Israelites could not stand before their foes, because they had fallen under the ban (cf. chap. vi. 18). And until this ban had been removed from their midst, the Lord would not help them any further.—Vers. 13-15. Joshua was to take away this ban from the nation. To discover who had laid hands upon the ban, he was to direct the people to sanctify themselves for the following day (see at chap. iii. 5), and then to cause them to come before God according to their tribes, families, households, and men, that the guilty men might be discovered by lot; and to burn whoever was found guilty, with all that he possessed. **וַיִּקְרַב**, "*to come near*," sc. to Jehovah, i.e. to come before His sanctuary. The tribes, families, households, and men, formed the four classes into which the people were organized. As the tribes were divided into families, so these again were subdivided into houses, commonly called fathers' houses, and the fathers' houses again into men, i.e. fathers of families (see the remarks on Ex. xviii. 25, 26, and my Bibl. Archæology, § 140). Each of these was represented by its natural head, so that we must picture the affair as conducted in the following manner: in order to discover the tribe, the twelve tribe princes came before the Lord; and in order to discover the family, the heads of families of the tribe that had been taken; and so on to the end, each one in turn being

subjected to the lot. For although it is not distinctly stated that the lot was resorted to in order to discover who was guilty, and that the discovery was actually made in this way, this is very evident from the expression *אֲשֶׁר יִלְכְּדָהּ* (*which the Lord taketh*), as this was the technical term employed, according to 1 Sam. xiv. 42, to denote the falling of the lot upon a person (see also 1 Sam. x. 20). Moreover, the lot was frequently resorted to in cases where a crime could not be brought home to a person by the testimony of eye-witnesses (see 1 Sam. xiv. 41, 42; Jonah i. 7; Prov. xviii. 18), as it was firmly believed that the lot was directed by the Lord (Prov. xvi. 33). In what manner the lot was cast we do not know. In all probability little tablets or potsherds were used, with the names written upon them, and these were drawn out of an urn. This may be inferred from a comparison of chap. xviii. 11 and xix. 1, with xviii. 6, 10, according to which the casting of the lot took place in such a manner that the lot *came up* (*עָלָה*, chap. xviii. 11, xix. 10; Lev. xvi. 9), or *came out* (*יָצָא*, chap. xix. 1, xvii. 24; Num. xxxiii. 54). *הַיִּלְכָּד בַּחֶרֶם*, the person taken in (with) the ban, *i.e.* taken by the lot as affected with the ban, was to be burned with fire, of course not alive, but after he had been stoned (ver. 25). The burning of the body of a criminal was regarded as heightening the punishment of death (*vid.* Lev. xx. 14). This punishment was to be inflicted upon him, in the *first* place, because he had broken the covenant of Jehovah; and in the *second* place, because he had wrought folly in Israel, that is to say, had offended grievously against the covenant God, and also against the covenant nation. "*Wrought folly*:" an expression used here, as in Gen. xxxiv. 7, to denote such a crime as was irreconcilable with the honour of Israel as the people of God.

Vers. 16-26. *Execution of the Command.*—Vers. 16-18. Discovery of the guilty man through the lot. In ver. 17 we should expect "the tribe" (*shebet*) or "the families" (*mishpachoth*) of Judah, instead of "*the family*." The plural *mishpachoth* is adopted in the LXX. and *Vulgate*, and also to be met with in seven MSS.; but this is conjecture rather than the original reading. *Mishpachah* is either used generally, or employed in a collective sense to denote all the families of Judah. There is no ground for altering *לְיָבָרִים* (man by man) into *לְבָתִּים* (house by house) in ver. 17, according to some of the MSS.; the expression "man by man" is used simply because it was the representative men who came for the lot to be cast, not only in the case of the fathers' houses, but in that of the families also.

—Ver. 19. When Achan had been discovered to be the criminal, Joshua charged him to give honour and praise to the Lord, and to confess without reserve what he had done. It is not ironically, or with dissimulation, that Joshua addresses him as “my son,” but with “sincere paternal regard.”¹ “*Give glory to the Lord:*” this is a solemn formula of adjuration, by which a person was summoned to confess the truth before the face of God (cf. John ix. 24). “*And give Him praise:*” the meaning is not, “make confession,” but give praise, as Ezra x. 11 clearly shows. Through a confession of the truth Achan was to render to God, as the Omniscient, the praise and honour that were due.—Vers. 20, 21. Achan then acknowledged his sin, and confessed that he had appropriated to himself from among the booty a beautiful Babylonish cloak, 200 shekels of silver, and a tongue of gold of 50 shekels weight. The form מִצְנֵף is not to be abbreviated into מִצְנֵף, according to the *Keri*, as the form is by no means rare in verbs לִמְצֵף. “*A Babylonish cloak*” (*lit.* a cloak of Shinar, or Babylon) is a costly cloak, artistically worked, such as were manufactured in Babylon, and distributed far and wide through the medium of commerce.² Two hundred shekels of silver was about £25. “*A tongue of gold*” (according to *Luther*, “ornaments made in the shape of tongues”) was certainly a golden ornament in the form of a tongue, the use of which is unknown; it was of considerable size, as it weighed 50 shekels, *i.e.* 13,700 grains. It is not necessary to suppose that it was a golden dagger, as many do, simply because the ancient Romans gave the name *lingula* to an oblong dagger formed in the shape of a tongue. Achan had hidden these things in the ground in the midst of his tent, and the silver “*under it*,” *i.e.* under these things (the suffix is neuter, and must be understood as referring to all the things with the exception of the silver). The Babylonish cloak and the tongue of gold were probably placed in

¹ To these remarks *Calvin* also adds: “This example serves as a lesson to judges, that when punishing crimes they should moderate their rigour, and not lose all the feelings of humanity; and, on the other hand, that whilst merciful they should not be careless or remiss.”

² *Plinius h. n.* viii. 48: *Colores diversos picturæ vestium intexere Babylon maxime celebravit et nomen imposuit.* (See *Heeren Ideen*. i. 2, pp. 205 sqq., and *Movers Phönizier*, ii. 3, pp. 258 sqq.) The *Sept.* rendering is ψιλλή ποικίλη, *i.e.* a Babylonian cloak ornamented with pictures. It is called ψιλλή because it was cut smooth, and ποικίλη because it was covered with coloured figures, either of men or animals, sometimes woven, at other times worked with the needle (*Fischer de vers. græc. libr.* V. T. pp. 87-8).

a chest; at any rate they would be carefully packed up, and the silver was placed underneath. The article in **הַכֶּסֶף**, which occurs twice, as it also does in chap. viii. 33, Lev. xxvii. 33, Micah ii. 12, is probably to be explained in the manner suggested by *Hengstenberg*, viz. that the article and noun became so fused into one, that the former lost its proper force.—Vers. 22, 23. Joshua sent two messengers directly to Achan's tent to fetch the things, and when they were brought he had them laid down before Jehovah, *i.e.* before the tabernacle, where the whole affair had taken place. **פָּצַח**, here and in 2 Sam. xv. 24, signifies to lay down (synonymous with **נָחַץ**), whilst the *Hiphil* form is used for pouring out.—Vers. 24, 25. Then Joshua and all Israel, *i.e.* the whole nation in the person of its heads or representatives, took Achan, together with the things which he had purloined, and his sons and daughters, his cattle, and his tent with all its furniture, and brought them into the valley of Achor, where they stoned them to death and then burned them, after Joshua had once more pronounced this sentence upon him in the place of judgment: "*How hast thou troubled us*" (**עָצַר**, as in chap. vi. 18, to bring into trouble)! "*The Lord will trouble thee this day.*" It by no means follows from the expression "stoned him" in ver. 25, that Achan only was stoned. The singular pronoun is used to designate Achan alone, as being the principal person concerned. But it is obvious enough that his children and cattle were stoned, from what follows in the very same verse: "*They burned them* (the persons stoned to death, and their things) *with fire, and heaped up stones upon them.*" It is true that in Deut. xxiv. 16 the Mosaic law expressly forbids the putting to death of children for their fathers' sins; and many have imagined, therefore, that Achan's sons and daughters were simply taken into the valley to be spectators of the punishment inflicted upon the father, that it might be a warning to them. But for what reason, then, were Achan's cattle (oxen, sheep, and asses) taken out along with him? Certainly for no other purpose than to be stoned at the same time as he. The law in question only referred to the punishment of ordinary criminals, and therefore was not applicable at all to the present case, in which the punishment was commanded by the Lord himself. Achan had fallen under the ban by laying hands upon what had been banned, and consequently was exposed to the same punishment as a town that had fallen away to idolatry (Deut. xiii. 16, 17). The law of the ban was founded upon the assumption, that the conduct to be punished was

not a crime of which the individual only was guilty, but one in which the whole family of the leading sinner, in fact everything connected with him, participated. Thus, in the case before us, the things themselves had been abstracted from the booty by Achan alone; but he had hidden them in his tent, buried them in the earth, which could hardly have been done so secretly that his sons and daughters knew nothing of it. By so doing he had made his family participators in his theft; they therefore fell under the ban along with him, together with their tent, their cattle, and the rest of their property, which were all involved in the consequences of His crime. The clause *וַיִּסְקְלוּ אֹתָם בְּאֲבָנִים* does not refer to the stoning as a capital punishment, but to the casting of stones upon the bodies after they were dead and had been burned, for the purpose of erecting a heap of stones upon them as a memorial of the disgrace (*vid.* chap. viii. 29; 2 Sam. xviii. 17).—In ver. 26, the account of the whole affair closes with these two remarks: (1) That after the punishment of the malefactor the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger; and (2) That the valley in which Achan suffered his punishment received the name of *Achor* (troubling) with special reference to the fact that Joshua had described his punishment as well as Achan's sin as *עָכָר* (troubling: see ver. 25), and that it retained this name down to the writer's own time. With regard to the situation of this valley, it is evident from the word *וַיַּעַל* in ver. 24 that it was on higher ground than Gilgal and Jericho, probably in one of the ranges of hills that intersect the plain of Jericho, and from chap. xv. 7, where the northern border of the possessions of Judah is said to have passed through this valley, that it is to be looked for to the south of Jericho. The only other places in which there is any allusion to this event are Hos. ii. 17 and Isa. lxxv. 10. 15

CONQUEST OF AI. BLESSINGS AND CURSES UPON GERIZIM AND
EBAL.—CHAP. VIII.

Vers. 1-29. CONQUEST AND BURNING OF AI.—Vers. 1, 2. After the ban which rested upon the people had been wiped away, the Lord encouraged Joshua to make war upon Ai, promising him that the city should be taken, and giving him instructions what to do to ensure the success of his undertaking. With evident allusion to Joshua's despair after the failure of the first attack, the Lord commences with these words, "*Fear not, neither be thou dismayed*" (as in Deut. i. 21, xxxi. 8), and then commands him to go against

Ai with all the people of war. By "all the people of war" we are hardly to understand all the men out of the whole nation who were capable of bearing arms; but as only a third of these were contributed by the two tribes and a half to cross over into Canaan and take part in the war (see p. 32), the other tribes also are not likely to have levied more than a third, say about 160,000, which would form altogether an army of about 200,000 men. But even such an army as this seems out of all proportion to the size of Ai, with its 12,000 inhabitants (ver. 25). On the other hand, however, we must bear in mind that the expression "*all the people of war*" simply denotes the whole army, in contrast with the advice of the spies that only a portion of the army should be sent (chap. vii. 3), so that we are not warranted in pressing the word "all" too absolutely;¹ and also that this command of God was not given with reference to the conquest of Ai alone, but applied at the same time to the conquest of the whole land, which Joshua was not to attempt by sending out detachments only, but was to carry out with the whole of the force at his command. *עָלָה*, to go up, is applied to the advance of an army against a hostile town, independently of the question whether the town was situated upon an eminence or not, as every town that had to be taken was looked upon as a height to be scaled, though as a fact in this instance the army had really to ascend from Jericho to Ai, which was situated up in the mountains. (On ver. 1b, see chap. vi. 2.) "*His land*" is the country round, which belonged to the town and was under its king.—Ver. 2. Joshua was to do the same to Ai and her king as he had already done to Jericho and her king, except that in this case the conquerors were to be allowed to appropriate the booty and the cattle to themselves. In order to conquer the town, he was to lay an ambush behind it.² *אֵרֶב*, a collective noun, signifying the persons concealed in ambush; *מֵאַחֲרָיִם* (ver. 9), the place of ambush. "*Behind it*," i.e. on the west of the town.

Vers. 3-13. Accordingly Joshua set out with all the people of war against Ai, and selected 30,000 brave men, and sent them out in the night, with instructions to station themselves as an ambuscade

¹ "As we have just before seen how their hearts melted, God *consulted their weakness*, by putting no heavier burden upon them than they were able to bear, until they had recovered from their alarm, and hearkened readily to His commands."—*Calvin*.

² The much agitated question, whether it could be worthy of God to employ stratagem in war, to which different replies have been given, has been answered

behind the town, and at no great distance from it. As the distance from Gilgal to Ai was about fifteen miles, and the road runs pretty straight in a north-westerly direction from Jericho through the Wady Faran, the detachment sent forward might easily accomplish the distance in a night, so as to arrive on the western side of Ai before the break of day. They were then to hold themselves in readiness to fight. He (Joshua) himself would approach the town with the people of war that remained with him; and if the inhabitants of Ai should come out against him as they did before, they would flee before them till they had drawn them quite away from their town (ver. 5). This was to be expected; "*for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: and we will flee before them*" (ver. 6). When this was done, the warriors were to come forth from their ambush, fall upon the town, and set it on fire (vers. 7, 8). Having been sent away with these instructions, the 30,000 men went into ambush, and posted themselves "*between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai*" (ver. 9), *i.e.*, according to *Strauss*, in the Wady es Suweinit, to the north-west of Ai, where it forms almost a perpendicular wall, near to which the ruins of *Chai* are to be found, though "not near enough to the rocky wady for it to be possible to look down its almost perpendicular wall" (*Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. p. 528). Joshua remained for the night in the midst of the people, *i.e.* in the camp of that portion of the army that had gone with him towards Ai; not in Gilgal, as *Knobel* supposes.—Ver. 10. The next morning he mustered the people as early as possible, and then went, with the elders of Israel, "before the people of Ai." The elders of Israel are not "military tribunes, who were called *elders* because of their superiority in military affairs," as *Masius* supposes, but, as in every other case, the heads of the people, who accompanied Joshua as counsellors.—Ver. 11. The whole of the people of war also advanced with him to the front of the town, and encamped on the north of Ai, so that the valley was between it (בֵּית, as in chap. iii. 4) and Ai. This was probably a side valley branching off towards the south from the eastern continuation of the Wady es Suweinit.—In vers. 12, 13, the account of the prepara-

quite correctly by *Calvin*. "Surely," he says, "wars are not carried on by striking alone; but they are considered the best generals who succeed through art and counsel more than by force. . . . Therefore, if war is lawful at all, it is beyond all controversy that the way is perfectly clear for the use of the customary arts of warfare, provided there is no breach of faith in the violation of treaty or truce, or in any other way."

tions for the attack is rounded off by a repetition of the notice as to the forces engaged, and in some respects a more exact description of their disposition. Joshua, it is stated in ver. 12, took about 5000 men and placed them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west of the town. As the place where this ambuscade was posted is described in precisely the same terms as that which was occupied, according to ver. 9, by the 30,000 men who were sent out to form an ambuscade in the night before the advance of the main army against Ai (for the substitution of "*the city*" for Ai cannot possibly indicate a difference in the locality), the view held by the majority of commentators, that ver. 12 refers to a second ambuscade, which Joshua sent out in addition to the 30,000, and posted by the side of them, is even more than questionable, and is by no means raised into a probability by the expression *אֶחָד עֶשְׂרֵים* (*Eng.* "their liers in wait") in ver. 13. The description of the place, "on the west of the city," leaves no doubt whatever that "their liers in wait" are simply the ambuscade (*אֶרֶב*) mentioned in ver. 12, which was sent out from the whole army, *i.e.* the ambuscade that was posted on the west of the town. *עָלָה* signifies literally the *liar in wait* (*Ps.* xlix. 5), from *עָלָה*, *insidiari*, and is synonymous with *אֶרֶב*. The meaning which *Gesenius* and others attach to the word, *viz.* the rear or hinder part of the army, cannot be sustained from *Gen.* xlix. 19. If we add to this the fact that ver. 13a is obviously nothing more than a repetition of the description already given in ver. 11 of the place where the main army was posted, and therefore bears the character of a closing remark introduced to wind up the previous account, we cannot regard ver. 12 as anything more than a repetition of the statements in vers. 3, 9, and can only explain the discrepancy with regard to the number of men who were placed in ambush, by supposing that, through a copyist's error, the number which was expressed at first in simple letters has in one instance been given wrongly. The mistake, however, is not to be found in the 5000 (*ver.* 12), but in the 30,000 in *ver.* 3, where *ה* has been confounded with *ל*. For a detachment of 5000 men would be quite sufficient for an ambuscade that had only to enter the town after the soldiers had left it in pursuit of the Israelites, and to set it on fire, whereas it hardly seems possible that 30,000 men should have been posted in ambush so near to the town.¹—In *ver.* 13a, *הָעָם*

¹ We need have no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that there is a mistake in the number given in *ver.* 3, as the occurrence of such mistakes in the historical books is fully established by a comparison of the numbers given

(the people) is to be taken as the subject of the sentence: "*The people had set all the host, that was on the north of the city, and its ambuscade on the west of the city.*" In the night, namely the night before the army arrived at the north of the town, Joshua went through the midst of the valley, which separated the Israelites from the town, so that in the morning he stood with all the army close before the town.

Vers. 14-23. When the king of Ai saw the Israelites, he hurried out in the morning against them to battle at the (previously) appointed place (למקום, *in locum conductum*, as in 1 Sam. xx. 35) before the steppe (*Arabah*, not the valley of the Jordan, but the steppe or desert of Bethaven; see at chap. vii. 2), as he knew nothing of the ambuscade behind the town.—Ver. 15. But the Israelites let them beat them, and fled along the desert (of Bethaven).—Vers. 16, 17. And all the people in the town were called together to pursue the Israelites, and were drawn away from the town, so that not a man, *i.e.* not a single soldier who could take part in the pursuit, remained either in Ai or the neighbouring town of Bethel, and the town stood open behind them. It is evident from ver. 17 that the inhabitants of Bethel, which was about three hours' journey from Ai, took part in the battle, probably in consequence of a treaty which the king of Ai had made with them in the expectation of a renewed and still stronger attack on the part of the Israelites. Nothing further is known upon this point; nor can anything be inferred from the fact that the king of Bethel is included in the list of the kings slain by Joshua (chap. xii. 16). Consequently, we cannot decide whether the Bethelites came to the help of the Aites

in the books of Samuel and Kings with those in the books of Chronicles, and is admitted by every commentator. In my earlier commentary on Joshua, I attempted to solve the difficulty by the twofold assumption: *first*, that ver. 12 contains a supplementary statement, in which the number of the men posted in ambush is given for the first time; and *secondly*, that the historian forgot to notice that out of the 30,000 men whom Joshua chose to make war upon Ai, 5000 were set apart to lie in ambush. But, on further examination of the text, I have come to the conclusion that the second assumption is irreconcilable with the distinct words of ver. 3, and feel obliged to give it up. On the other hand, I still adhere to the conviction that there is not sufficient ground either for the assumption that vers. 12, 13, contain an old marginal gloss that has crept into the text, or for the hypothesis of *Ewald* and *Knobel*, that these verses were introduced by the last editor of the book out of some other document. The last hypothesis amounts to a charge of thoughtlessness against the latest editor, which is hardly reconcilable with the endeavour, for which he is praised in other places, to reconcile the discrepancies in the different documents.

for the first time on the day of the battle itself, or, what is more probable, had already sent men to Ai, to help to repulse the expected attack of the Israelites upon that town.—Vers. 18, 19. At the command of God Joshua now stretched out the javelin in his hand towards the town. At this sign the ambushade rose hastily from its concealment, rushed into the town, and set it on fire. *נָטָה בַּיָּד* signifies to stretch out the hand with the spear. The object *י*, which is missing (cf. vers. 19, 26), may easily be supplied from the apposition *אֶשׁוֹר בַּיָּד*. The raising of the javelin would probably be visible at a considerable distance, even if it was not provided with a small flag, as both earlier and later commentators assume, since Joshua would hardly be in the midst of the flying Israelites, but would take his station as commander upon some eminence on one side. And the men in ambush would have scouts posted to watch for the signal, which had certainly been arranged beforehand, and convey the information to the others.—Vers. 20, 21. The men of Ai then turned round behind them, being evidently led to do so by the Israelites, who may have continued looking round to the town of Ai when the signal had been given by Joshua, to see whether the men in ambush had taken it and set it on fire, and as soon as they saw that this had been done began to offer still further resistance to their pursuers, and to defend themselves vigorously against them. On looking back to their town the Aites saw the smoke of the town ascending towards heaven: “*and there were not hands in them to flee hither and thither,*” i.e. they were utterly unable to flee. “*Hands,*” as the organs of enterprise and labour, in the sense of “strength,” not “room,” for which we should expect to find *לָהֶם* instead of *בָּהֶם*. There is an analogous passage in Ps. lxxvi. 6, “None of the men of might have found their hands.” For the people that fled to the wilderness (the Israelitish army) turned against the pursuers (the warriors of Ai), or, as is added by way of explanation in ver. 21, when Joshua and all Israel saw the town in the hands of the ambushade, and the smoke ascending, they turned round and smote the people of Ai; and (ver. 22) these (i.e. the Israelites who had formed the ambushade) came out of the town to meet them. “*These*” (Eng. the other), as contrasted with “the people that fled” in ver. 20, refers back to “the ambush” in ver. 19. In this way the Aites were in the midst of the people of Israel, who came from this side and that side, and smote them to the last man. “*So that they let none of them remain:*” as in Num. xxi. 35 and Deut. iii. 3, except that in

this case it is strengthened still further by וְיָצְאוּ, "or escape."—Ver. 23. The king of Ai was taken alive and brought to Joshua.

Vers. 24-29. When all the men of Ai, who had come out to pursue the Israelites, had been slain upon the field (namely) in the desert, all Israel returned to Ai and smote it (the town, *i.e.* the inhabitants), so that on that day there fell of men and women 12,000, all the people of Ai: for Joshua did not draw back his hand, which had been stretched out with the javelin, till all the inhabitants of Ai were smitten with the ban, *i.e.* put to death; according to the common custom of war, that the general did not lower the war-signal till the conflict was to cease (see *Suidas* in *Σημεῖα*, and *Lipsius de militia, Rom. iv. dial. 12*).—Ver. 27. Only the cattle and the rest of the booty the conquerors retained for themselves, according to the word of the Lord (ver. 2).—Ver. 28. Joshua had the town burnt down and made into a heap of rubbish for ever.—Ver. 29. He had the king of Ai hanged upon a tree, *i.e.* put to death, and then suspended upon a stake (see *Num. xxv. 4*) until the evening; but at sunset he had him taken down (in accordance with *Dent. xxi. 22, 23*), and thrown at the entrance of the town-gate, and a heap of stones piled upon him (as in the case of Achan, chap. vii. 26).

Vers. 30-35. BLESSINGS AND CURSES UPON GERIZIM AND EBAL.—After the capture of Ai, Israel had gained so firm a footing in Canaan that Joshua was able to carry out the instructions of Moses in *Deut. xxvii.*, that, after crossing the Jordan, he was to build an altar upon Mount Ebal for the setting up of the covenant. The fulfilment of these instructions, according to the meaning of this solemn act, as a symbolical setting up of the law of the Lord to be the invariable rule of life to the people of Israel in the land of Canaan (see at *Deut. xxvii.*), was not only a practical expression of thanksgiving on the part of the covenant nation for its entrance into this land through the almighty assistance of its God, but also a practical acknowledgment, that in the overthrow of the Canaanites thus far it had received a strong pledge of the conquest of the foes that still remained and the capture of the whole of the promised land, provided only it persevered in covenant faithfulness towards the Lord its God. The account of this transaction is attached, it is true, to the conquest of Ai by the introduction, "*Then Joshua built,*" etc. (ver. 30); but simply as an occurrence which had no logical connection with the conquest of Canaan and

the defeat of its kings. The particle *וְ* (*sequ. imperf.*) is used, for example, in cases where the historian either wishes to introduce contemporaneous facts, that do not carry forward the main course of the history, or loses sight for the time of the strictly historical sequence and simply takes note of the occurrence of some particular event (*vid. Ewald*, § 136, *b.*). The assertion of modern critics, which *Knobel* repeats, that this account is out of place in the series of events as contained in chap. vi.-xii., is so far correct, that the promulgation of the law and the renewal of the covenant upon Ebal form no integral part of the account of the conquest of Canaan; but it by no means proves that this section has been interpolated by the Jehovist from his first document, or by the last editor of this book from some other source, and that what is related here did not take place at the time referred to. The circumstance that, according to chap. vi.-viii. 29, Joshua had only effected the conquest of Jericho in the south of the land from Gilgal as a base, and that even in chap. ix. and x. he was still engaged in the south, by no means involves the impossibility or even the improbability of a march to *Shechem*, which was situated further north, where he had not yet beaten the Canaanites, and had not effected any conquests. The distance from Ai to Shechem between Gerizim and Ebal is about thirty miles in a straight line. *Robinson* made the journey from Bireh (Beeroth) to Sichem on mules in eleven and a half hours, and that not by the most direct route (*Pal. iii. pp. 81-2*), and Ai was not more than an hour to the south of Beeroth; so that Joshua could have gone with the people from Ai to Gerizim and Ebal in two days without any excessive exertion. Now, even if the conquests of the Israelites had not extended further north than Ai at that time, there was no reason why Joshua should be deterred from advancing further into the land by any fear of attack from the Canaanites, as the people of war who went with him would be able to repulse any hostile attack; and after the news had spread of the fate of Ai and Jericho, no Canaanitish king would be likely to venture upon a conflict with the Israelites alone. Moreover, Shechem had no king, as we may gather from the list of the thirty-one kings who were defeated by Joshua. To the further remark of *Knobel*, that "there was no reason for their hurrying with this ceremony, and it might have been carried out at a later period in undisturbed security," we simply reply, that obedience to the command of God was not a matter of such indifference to the servant of the Lord as *Knobel* imagines. There was no valid reason after the capture of

As for postponing any longer the solemn ceremony of setting up the law of Jehovah which had been enjoined by Moses; and if we consider the reason for this solemnity, to which we have already referred, there can be no doubt that Joshua would proceed without the least delay to set up the law of the Lord in Canaan as early as possible, even before the subjugation of the whole land, that he might thereby secure the help of God for further conflicts and enterprises.

The account of this religious solemnity is given very briefly. It presupposes an acquaintance with the Mosaic instructions in Deut. xxvii., and merely gives the leading points, to show that those instructions were carefully carried out by Joshua. Of the three distinct acts of which the ceremony consisted, in the book of Deuteronomy the setting up of the stones with the law written upon them is mentioned first (Deut. xxvii. 2-4), and then (vers. 5-7) the building of the altar and the offering of sacrifice. Here, on the contrary, the building of the altar and offering of sacrifice are mentioned first (vers. 30, 31), and then (ver. 32) the writing of the law upon the stones; which was probably the order actually observed.—In ver. 30 Jehovah is called "*the God of Israel*," to show that henceforth no other god was to be worshipped in Canaan than the God of Israel. On Mount *Ebal*, see at Deut. xi. 29 and xxvii. 4.—Ver. 31. "*As Moses commanded:*" namely, Deut. xxvii. 5. "*As it is written in the book of the law of Moses:*" viz. in Ex. xx. 22 (25). On the presentation of burnt-offerings and slain-offerings, see at Deut. xxvii. 6, 7.—In ver. 32 nothing is mentioned but the writing of the law upon the stones; all the rest is presupposed from Deut. xxvii. 2 sqq., to which the expression "*the stones*" refers. "*Copy of the law:*" as in Deut. xvii. 18; see the explanation at Deut. xxvii. 3. In connection with the third part of the ceremony, the promulgation of the law with the blessing and cursing, the account of the Mosaic instructions given in Deut. xxvii. 11 sqq. is completed in ver. 33 by the statement that "*all Israel, and their elders (i.e. with their elders), and shoterim, and judges,*" stood on both sides of the ark before the Levitical priests, the stranger as well as the native, i.e. without any exception, one half (i.e. six tribes) towards Mount *Ebal*, and the other half towards Mount *Gerizim*. For further remarks, see at Deut. xxvii. 11 sqq. "*As Moses commanded to bless the people before:*" i.e. as he had previously commanded. The fact that the thought itself does not suit the context is quite sufficient to show that the explanation given by many commentators, viz. that they were to commence with the

blessings, is incorrect. But if, on the other hand, we connect the word "before" with the principal verb of the sentence, "commanded," the meaning will be that Moses did not give the command to proclaim the blessings and cursings to the people for the first time in connection with these instructions (Deut. xxvii.), but had done so before, at the very outset, namely, as early as Deut. xi. 29. —Ver. 34. "*And afterwards (after the people had taken the place assigned them) he read to them all the words of the law,*" i.e. he had the law proclaimed aloud by the persons entrusted with the proclamation of the law, viz. the Levitical priests. קָרָא, *lit.* to call out or proclaim, then in a derivative sense to read, inasmuch as reading aloud is proclaiming (as, for example, in Ex. xxiv. 7). The words "*the blessing and the curse*" are in apposition to "*all the words of the law,*" which they serve to define, and are not to be understood as relating to the blessings in Deut. xxviii. 1-14, and the curses in Deut. xxvii. 15-26 and xxviii. 15-68. The whole law is called "*the blessing and the curse*" with special reference to its contents, inasmuch as the fulfilment of it brings *eo ipso* a blessing, and the transgression of it *eo ipso* a curse. In the same manner, in Deut. xi. 26, Moses describes the exposition of the whole law in the steppes of Moab as setting before them blessing and cursing. In ver. 35 it is most distinctly stated that Joshua had the whole law read to the people; whilst the expression "all Israel," in ver. 33, is more fully explained as signifying not merely the congregation in its representatives, or even the men of the nation, but "all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were in the midst of it."

Nothing is said about the march of Joshua and all Israel to Gerizim and Ebal. All that we know is, that he not only took with him the people of war and the elders or heads of tribes, but all the people. It follows from this, however, that the whole of the people must have left and completely vacated the camp at Gilgal in the valley of the Jordan. For if all Israel went to the mountains of Gerizim and Ebal, which were situated in the midst of the land, taking even the women and children with them, it is not likely that they left their cattle and other possessions behind them in Gilgal, exposed to the danger of being plundered in the meantime by the Canaanites of the southern mountains. So again we are not informed in what follows (chap. ix. sqq.) in which direction Joshua and the people went after these solemnities at Ebal and Gerizim were over. It is certainly not stated that he went back to Gilgal

in the Jordan valley, and pitched his tent again on the old site. No doubt we find Gilgal still mentioned as the encampment of Israel, not only in chap. ix. 6, x. 6, 9, 15, 43, but even after the defeat and subjugation of the Canaanites in the south and north, when a commencement was made to distribute the land (chap. xiv. 6). But when it is asked whether this Gilgal was the place of encampment on the east of Jericho, which received its name from the circumcision of the whole nation which took place there, or the town of Gilgal by the side of the terebinths of Moreh, which is mentioned in Deut. xi. 30, and by which Moses defines the situation of Gerizim and Ebal, this question cannot be answered unhesitatingly according to the traditional view, viz. in favour of the encampment in the Jordan valley. For when not only the army, but all the people with their wives and children, had once proceeded from the Jordan valley to the mountains of Gerizim and Ebal, we cannot imagine any reason why Joshua should go back again to the plain of Jericho, that is to say, to the extreme corner of Canaan on the east, for the purpose of making that the base of his operations for the conquest and extermination of the Canaanites. And there is just as much improbability in the assumption, that after Joshua had not only defeated the kings of southern Canaan, who had allied themselves with Adonizedek of Jerusalem in the battle fought at Gibeon (chap. x.), but had also overthrown the kings of northern Canaan, who were allied with Jabin of Hazor at the waters of Merom above the Sea of Galilee (chap. xi.), he should return again to Gilgal in the Jordan valley, and there quietly encamp with all the people, and commence the distribution of the land. The only thing that could bring us to assent to such extremely improbable assumptions, would be the fact that there was no other Gilgal in all Canaan than the encampment to the east of Jericho, which received the name of Gilgal for the first time from the Israelites themselves. But as the other Gilgal by the side of the terebinths of Moreh—*i.e.* the present *Jiljilia*, which stands upon an eminence on the south-west of Shiloh at about the same distance from Jerusalem as from Sichem—was a well-known place even in Moses' days (Deut. xi. 30), and from its situation on a lofty ridge, from which you can see the great lowlands and the sea towards the west, the mountains of Gilead towards the east, and far away in the north-east even Hermon itself (*Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 81), was peculiarly well adapted for a place of encampment, from which Joshua could carry on the conquest of the land toward both

the north and south, we can come to no other conclusion than that this Gilgal or Jiljilia was the Gilgal mentioned in chap. ix. 6, x. 6, 9, 15, 43, and xiv. 6, as the place where the Israelites were encamped. We therefore assume, that after the setting up of the law on Gerizim and Ebal, Joshua did not conduct the people with their wives and children back again to the camp which they had left in the Jordan valley on the other side of Jericho, but chose the Gilgal which was situated upon the mountains, and only seven hours' journey to the south of Sichem, as the future place of encampment, and made this the central point of all his further military operations; and that this was the place to which he returned after his last campaign in the north, to commence the division of the conquered land among the tribes of Israel (chap. xiv. 6), and where he remained till the tabernacle was permanently erected at Shiloh, when the further distribution was carried on there (chap. xviii. 1 sqq.). This view, which even *Van de Velde* (Memoir, p. 316) has adopted as probable, is favoured still further by the fact that this Gilgal or Jiljilia, which is still a large village, is frequently mentioned in the subsequent history of Israel, not only in 2 Kings ii. 1 and iv. 38, as the seat of a school of the prophets in the time of Elijah and Elisha, and in Hos. iv. 15, ix. 15, xii. 12, Amos iv. 4, v. 5, as a place which was much frequented for the purpose of idolatrous worship; but even at an earlier date still, namely, as one of the places where Samuel judged the people (1 Sam. vii. 16), and as the place where he offered sacrifice (1 Sam. x. 8; cf. xiii. 7-9), and where he gathered the people together to confirm the monarchy of Saul (1 Sam. xi. 14, 15), at a time when the tabernacle at Shiloh had ceased to be the only national sanctuary of Israel, on account of the ark having been taken away. Gilgal had no doubt acquired this significance along with Bethel, which had been regarded as a holy place ever since the time of Jacob, from the fact that it was there that Joshua had established the camp of Israel with the ark of the covenant, until the land was divided, and Shiloh was appointed as the site for the national sanctuary.

STRATAGEM OF THE GIBEONITES, AND THEIR CONSEQUENT PRESERVATION.—CHAP. IX.

The victorious advance of the Israelites in the land induced the kings of Canaan to form a common league for the purpose of resisting them. But, as frequently happens, the many kings and

lords of the towns and provinces of Canaan were not all united, so as to make a common and vigorous attack. Before the league had been entered into, the inhabitants of Gibeon, one of the largest towns in the central part of Canaan, together with the smaller neighbouring towns that were dependent upon it, attempted to anticipate the danger which threatened them by means of a stratagem, and to enter into a friendly alliance with the Israelites. And they succeeded, inasmuch as Joshua and the elders of the congregation of Israel fell into the snare that was laid for them by the ambassadors of the Gibeonites, who came to the camp at Gilgal, and made the desired treaty with them, without inquiring of the Lord. "This account," as *O. v. Gerlach* says, "is a warning to the Church of God of all ages against the cunning and dissimulation of the world, which often seeks for a peaceable recognition on the part of the kingdom of God, and even for a reception into it, whenever it may be its advantage to do so."

Vers. 1, 2, form the introduction to chaps. ix.-xi., and correspond to the introduction in chap. v. 1. The news of the miraculous passage of the Israelites through the Jordan had thrown all the kings of Canaan into such despair, that they did not venture to make any attack upon Israel. But they gradually recovered from their first panic, partly, no doubt, in consequence of the failure of the first attack of the Israelites upon Ai, and resolved to join together in making war upon the foreign invaders. The kings of Canaan did this when they heard, *sc.* what Israel had hitherto undertaken and accomplished, not merely "what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai" (*Knobel*): that is to say, all the kings across the Jordan, *i.e.* in the country to the west of the Jordan (עֶבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן), as in chap. v. 1), viz. "upon the mountains" (not only the mountains of Judah, as in chap. x. 40, xi. 16, etc., but all the mountains which run throughout the whole length of Canaan, as in Deut. i. 7 and Num. xiii. 17: see the explanation of the latter passage); "in the lowlands" (*shephelah*, the low-lying country between the mountains and the sea-coast, which is simply intersected by small ranges of hills; see at Deut. i. 7); "and on all the coast of the Great Sea towards Lebanon," *i.e.* the narrow coast of the Mediterranean Sea from Joppa up to the Ladder of Tyre (see at Deut. i. 7). The different tribes of the Canaanites are also mentioned by name, as in chap. iii. 10, except that the Gergashites are omitted. These gathered themselves together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one mouth, or with one accord (1 Kings xxii. 13).

Vers. 3-5. But the inhabitants of a republic, which included not only Gibeon the capital, but the towns of Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim also, acted differently from the rest. *Gibeon* (*Γαβᾶων*, *Gabaon*, LXX. *Vulg.*) was larger than Ai, being one of the royal cities (chap. x. 2), and was inhabited by Hivites, who were a brave people (chap. x. 7, xi. 19). It was afterwards allotted to the tribe of Benjamin, and set apart as a Levitical town (chap. xviii. 25, xxi. 17). After the destruction of Nob by Saul, the tabernacle was removed thither, and there it remained till the building of Solomon's temple (1 Chron. xvi. 39, xxi. 29; 1 Kings iii. 4, 5; 2 Chron. i. 3 sqq.). According to *Josephus*, it was forty or fifty stadia from Jerusalem, and judging from its name was built upon a hill. It is to be found in the modern *Jib*, two good hours' journey to the north-west of Jerusalem, a village of moderate size, on a long chalk hill which overlooks a very fertile, well cultivated plain, or rather a basin, consisting of broad valleys and plains, and rises like a vineyard, in the form of separate terraces (*Strauss*, *Sinai*, p. 332). The remains of large massive buildings of great antiquity are still to be seen there, also some fountains, and two large subterraneous reservoirs (*vid. Rob. Pal. ii. p. 136*). When the Gibeonites heard of the fate of Jericho and Ai, they also did (something) with stratagem. In the expression *וְגַם הֵמָּה* ("they also") there is a reference implied to what Joshua had done at Jericho and Ai; not, however, to the stratagem resorted to in the case of Ai, as such an allusion would not apply to Jericho. *They set out as ambassadors*: *וַיֵּצְאוּ*, from *צִיר*, which occurs in every other instance in the form of a noun, signifying a messenger (*Prov. xiii. 17*, etc.). In the *Hithpael* it means to make themselves ambassadors, to travel as ambassadors. The translators of the ancient versions, however, adopted the reading *וַיֵּצְאוּ*, they provided themselves with food; but this was nothing more than a conjecture founded upon ver. 12, and without the slightest critical value. They also took "*old sacks upon their asses, and old mended wineskins*." *מְצֻרִים*, from *צָרַר*, *lit.* bound together, is very characteristic. There are two modes adopted in the East of repairing skins when torn, viz. inserting a patch, or tying up the piece that is torn in the form of a bag. Here the reference is to the latter, which was most in harmony with their statement, that the skins had got injured upon their long journey. Also "*old mended sandals upon their feet, and old clothes upon them* (upon their bodies); and all the bread of their provisions had become dry and quite mouldy." *נֶפְרִים*, *lit.*

furnished with points; נִקְּנָה, pointed, speckled (Gen. xxx. 32 sqq.). Hence the rendering of the LXX., εὐρωτιῶν; *Theod.*, βεβρωμένοι; *Luther schimmlicht*, mouldy; whereas the rendering adopted by *Aquila* is ἐφ'αθρυωμένος; by *Symmachus*, κάπορος, i.e. *adustus*, *torridus*; and by the *Vulgate*, in *frusta comminuti*, i.e. *crumbled*.

Vers. 6-15. Having made these preparations, they went to the Israelitish camp at Gilgal (Jiljilia), introduced themselves to the men of Israel (עַם, in a collective sense, the plural being but little used, and only occurring in Prov. viii. 4, Isa. liii. 3, and Ps. cxli. 4) as having come from a distant land, and asked them to make a league with them. But the Israelites hesitated, and said to the Hivites, i.e. the Gibeonites who were Hivites, that they might perhaps be living in the midst of them (the Israelites), i.e. in the land of Canaan, which the Israelites already looked upon as their own; and if so, how could they make a league with them? This hesitation on their part was founded upon the express command of God, that they were not to make any league with the tribes of Canaan (Ex. xxiii. 32, xxxiv. 12; Num. xxxiii. 55; Deut. vii. 2, etc.). In reply to this the Gibeonites simply said, "*We are thy servants*" (ver. 8), i.e. we are at thy service, which, according to the obsequious language common in the East, was nothing more than a phrase intended to secure the favour of Joshua, and by no means implied a readiness on their part to submit to the Israelites and pay them tribute, as *Rosenmüller*, *Knobel*, and others suppose; for, as *Grotius* correctly observes, what they wished for was "a friendly alliance, by which both their territory and also full liberty would be secured to themselves." The *Keri* וְאֵמְרִי (ver. 7) is nothing more than a critical conjecture, occasioned not so much by the singular עַם, which is frequently construed in the historical writings as a collective noun with a plural verb, as by the singular suffix attached to וְאֵמְרִי, which is to be explained on the ground that only one of the Israelites (viz. Joshua) was speaking as the mouthpiece of all the rest. The plural וְאֵמְרֵי is used, because Joshua spoke in the name of the people.—Ver. 8. To the further question put by Joshua, where they had come from, the Gibeonites replied, "*From a very distant land have thy servants come, because of the name of Jehovah thy God*," or as they themselves proceed at once to explain: "*for we have heard the fame (fama) of Him, and all that He did in Egypt, and to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites.*" They very wisely say nothing about the miracles connected with the crossing of the Jordan and the taking of Jericho, since, "as the inhabit-

ants of a very far distant region, they could not have heard anything about things that had occurred so lately, even by report" (*Masius*).—Vers. 11 sqq. When these tidings reached them, they were sent off by the elders (the leaders of the republic) and the inhabitants of the land to meet the Israelites, that they might offer them their service, and form an alliance with them. In confirmation of this, they point to their dried provisions, and their torn and mended skins and clothes.—Vers. 14, 15. The Israelites suffered themselves to be taken in by this pretence. "*The men* (the elders of Israel) *took of their provisions; but they did not ask the mouth of the Lord.*" Instead of inquiring the will of the Lord in this matter through the Urim and Thummim of the high priest (Num. xxvii. 21), they contented themselves with taking some of the bread that was shown them, and tasting it; as if the dry mouldy bread furnished a safe guarantee of the truth of the words of these foreign ambassadors. Some commentators regard their taking of their provisions as a sign of mutual friendship, or of the league which they made; but in that case their eating with them would at any rate have been mentioned. Among the Arabs, simply eating bread and salt with a guest is considered a sign of peace and friendship.—Ver. 15. So Joshua made (granted) them peace (*vid.* Isa. xxvii. 5), and concluded a covenant with them (ברית, in their favour), to let them live; and the princes of the congregation swore unto them. Letting them live is the only article of the league that is mentioned, both because this was the main point, and also with special reference to the fact that the Gibeonites, being Canaanites, ought properly to have been destroyed. It is true that Joshua and the princes of the congregation had not violated any express command of God by doing this; for the only thing prohibited in the law was making treaties with the *Canaanites*, which they did not suppose the Gibeonites to be, whilst in Deut. xx. 11, where wars with foreign nations (not Canaanites) are referred to, permission is given to make peace with them, so that all treaties with foreign nations are not forbidden. But they had failed in this respect, that, trusting to the crafty words of the Gibeonites, and to outward appearances only, they had forgotten their attitude to the Lord their God, who had promised to His congregation, in all important matters, a direct revelation of His own will.

Vers. 16–27. Three days after the treaty had been concluded, the Israelites discovered that they had been deceived, and that their allies dwelt among them (see ver. 7). They set out therefore

to deal with the deceivers, and reached their towns Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim on the third day. *Chephirah*, which was afterwards allotted to the tribe of Benjamin along with Gibeon and Beeroth, and was still inhabited after the captivity (chap. xviii. 25, 26; Ezra ii. 25; Neh. vii. 29), is to be seen in the ruins of *Kefir*, an hour's journey to the east of Yalo, in the mountains, and three hours to the west of Gibeon (see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 146, and *Van de Velde*, *Memoir*, pp. 303-4). *Beeroth*, *Βηρώθ*, according to *Eusebius* (*Onom. s. v.*) a hamlet near Jerusalem, and seven miles on the road to *Nicopolis* (it should read *Neapolis*), was in the tribe of Benjamin (2 Sam. iv. 2), and still exists in the large village of *Bireh*, which is situated upon a mountain nine Roman miles to the north of Jerusalem in a stony and barren district, and has still several springs and a good well, besides the remains of a fine old church of the time of the Crusades (see *Rob. Pal. ii.* pp. 130 sqq.; *Seetzen*, R. ii. pp. 195-6). *Kirjath-jearim*, also called *Kirjath-baal* (chap. xv. 60), *Baalath* (chap. xv. 9), and *Baal-Jehuda* (2 Sam. vi. 2), was allotted to the tribe of Judah. It stood upon the boundary between Judah and Benjamin (chap. xv. 60, xviii. 15); and the ark remained there, after it had been sent back by the Philistines, until the time of David (1 Sam. vii. 2; 2 Sam. vi. 2; 1 Chron. xiii. 5, 6). According to the *Onom., s. v.* *Καριαθιαπελ* and *Βαάλ*, it was nine or ten Roman miles from Jerusalem, on the road to Diospolis (Lydda), and is probably to be seen in the present *Kuryet el Enab*, a considerable village with a large number of olive trees, figs, pomegranates, and vineyards, from the last of which the old "town of the forests" has received the more modern name of "town of the vine" (see *Rob. Pal. ii.* p. 335, and *Bibl. Res.* pp. 156-7; and *Seetzen*, ii. p. 65). These towns, which formed one republic with Gibeon, and were governed by elders, were at so short a distance from Gilgal (Jiljilia), that the Israelites could reach it in one or two days. The expression "on the third day" is not at variance with this; for it is not stated that Israël took three days to march there, but simply that they arrived there on the third day after receiving the intelligence of the arrival of the ambassadors.—Ver. 18. "*The Israelites smote them not,*" sc. with the edge of the sword, "*because the princes of the congregation had sworn to them,*" sc. to let them live (ver. 15); but, notwithstanding the murmuring of the congregation, they declared that they might not touch them because of their oath. "*This* (sc. what we have sworn) *we will do to them, and let them live* (חַיֵּיהֶם, *inf.*

abs. with special emphasis instead of the finite verb), *lest wrath come upon us because of the oath.*" *Wrath* (*sc.* of God), a judgment such as fell upon Israel in the time of David, because Saul disregarded this oath and sought to destroy the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 1 sqq.).

But how could the elders of Israel consider themselves bound by their oath to grant to the Gibeonites the preservation of life which had been secured to them by the treaty they had made, when the very supposition upon which the treaty was made, viz. that the Gibeonites did not belong to the tribes of Canaan, was proved to be false, and the Gibeonites had studiously deceived them by pretending that they had come from a very distant land? As they had been absolutely forbidden to make any treaties with the Canaanites, it might be supposed that, after the discovery of the deception which had been practised upon them, the Israelitish rulers would be under no obligation to observe the treaty which they had made with the Gibeonites in full faith in the truth of their word. And no doubt from the stand-point of strict justice this view appears to be a right one. But the princes of Israel shrank back from breaking the oath which, as is emphatically stated in ver. 19, they had sworn by Jehovah the God of Israel, not because they assumed, as *Hauff* supposes, "that an oath simply regarded as an outward and holy transaction had an absolutely binding force," but because they were afraid of bringing the name of the God of Israel into contempt among the Canaanites, which they would have done if they had broken the oath which they had sworn by this God, and had destroyed the Gibeonites. They were bound to observe the oath which they had once sworn, if only to prevent the sincerity of the God by whom they had sworn from being rendered doubtful in the eyes of the Gibeonites; but they were not justified in taking the oath. They had done this without asking the mouth of Jehovah (ver. 14), and thus had sinned against the Lord their God. But they could not repair this fault by breaking the oath which they had thus imprudently taken, *i.e.* by committing a fresh sin; for the violation of an oath is always sin, even when the oath has been taken inconsiderately, and it is afterwards discovered that what was sworn to was not in accordance with the will of God, and that an observance of the oath will certainly be hurtful (*vid.* Ps. xv. 4).¹ By taking an oath to the ambassadors that they

¹ "The binding power of an oath ought to be held so sacred among us, that we should not swerve from our bond under any pretence of error, even though we had been deceived: since the sacred name of God is of greater worth than all the riches of the world. Even though a person should have sworn therefore

would let the Gibeonites live, the princes of Israel had acted unconsciously in violation of the command of God that they were to destroy the Canaanites. As soon therefore as they discovered their error or their oversight, they were bound to do all in their power to ward off from the congregation the danger which might arise of their being drawn away to idolatry—the very thing which the Lord had intended to avert by giving that command. If this could by any possibility be done without violating their oath, they were bound to do it for the sake of the name of the Lord by which they swore; that is to say, while letting the Gibeonites live, it was their duty to put them in such a position, that they could not possibly seduce the Israelites to idolatry. And this the princes of Israel proposed to do, by granting to the Gibeonites on the one hand the preservation of their lives according to the oath they had taken, and on the other hand by making them slaves of the sanctuary. That they acted rightly in this respect, is evident from the fact that their conduct is never blamed either by the historian or by the history, inasmuch as it is not stated anywhere that the Gibeonites, after being made into temple slaves, held out any inducement to the Israelites to join in idolatrous worship, and still more from the fact, that at a future period God himself reckoned the attempt of Saul to destroy the Gibeonites, in his false zeal for the children of Israel, as an act of blood-guiltiness on the part of the nation of Israel for which expiation must be made (2 Sam. xxi. 1 sqq.), and consequently approved of the observance of the oath which had been sworn to them, though without thereby sanctioning the treaty itself.—Ver. 21. The princes declared again most emphatically, “*They shall live.*” Thus the Gibeonites became hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation, as the princes had said to them, *i.e.* had resolved concerning them. This resolution they communicated to the congregation at the time, using the expression *וַיֵּן* (*let them live*); but the historian has passed this over at ver. 21a, and instead of mentioning the resolution proceeds at once to describe its execution.—Vers. 22, 23. Joshua then summoned the Gibeonites, charged them with their deceit, and pronounced upon them the curse of

without sufficient consideration, no injury or loss will release him from his oath.” This is the opinion expressed by Calvin with reference to Ps. xv. 4; yet for all that he regards the observance of their oath on the part of the princes of Israel as a sin, because he limits this golden rule in the most arbitrary manner to private affairs alone, and therefore concludes that the Israelites were not bound to observe this “wily treaty.”

eternal servitude: "*There shall not be cut off from you a servant,*" i.e. ye shall never cease to be servants, ye shall remain servants for ever (*vid.* 2 Sam. iii. 29; 1 Kings ii. 4), "*and that as hewers of wood and drawers of waters for our God's house.*" This is a fuller definition of the expression "for all the congregation" in ver. 21. The Gibeonites were to perform for the congregation the slaves' labour of hewing wood and drawing water for the worship of the sanctuary, —a duty which was performed, according to Deut. xxix. 10, by the lowest classes of the people. In this way the curse of Noah upon Canaan (Gen. ix. 25) was literally fulfilled upon the Hivites of the Gibeonitish republic.—Vers. 24, 25. The Gibeonites offered this excuse for their conduct, that having heard of the command of God which had been issued through Moses, that all the Canaanites were to be destroyed (Deut. vii. 1, xx. 16, 17), they had feared greatly for their lives, and readily submitted to the resolution which Joshua made known to them.—Vers. 26, 27. "*And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. He made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and indeed for the altar of the Lord,*" (assigning them) "*to the place which God would choose,*" viz. for the altar. אֶל-הַמִּקְדָּשׁ (to the place) is grammatically dependent upon יִתְּנֵם (he "gave them"). It by no means follows, however, that Joshua sent them there at that very time, but simply that he sentenced them to service at the altar in the place which would be chosen for the sanctuary. From the words "*unto this day,*" it no doubt follows, on the one hand, that the account was written after the fact had taken place; but, on the other hand, it also follows from the future יִבְחֵר (should, or shall choose), that it was written before the place was definitely fixed, and therefore before the building of Solomon's temple.

VICTORY AT GIBEON, AND CONQUEST OF SOUTHERN CANAAN.—
CHAP. X.

Vers. 1-5. The report that Joshua had taken Ai, and put it, like Jericho, under the ban, and that the Gibeonites had concluded a treaty with Israel, filled Adonizedek the king of Jerusalem with alarm, as Gibeon was a large town, like one of the king's towns, even larger than Ai, and its inhabitants were brave men. He therefore joined with the kings of Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon, to make a common attack upon Gibeon, and punish it for

its alliance with the Israelites, and at the same time to put a check upon the further conquests of Israel. *Adonizedek*, i.e. lord of righteousness, is synonymous with *Melchizedek* (king of righteousness), and was a title of the Jebusite kings, as Pharaoh was of the Egyptian. *Jerusalem*, i.e. the founding or possession of peace, called *Salem* in the time of Abraham (Gen. xiv. 18), was the proper name of the town, which was also frequently called by the name of its Canaanitish inhabitants *Jebus* (Judg. xix. 10, 11; 1 Chron. xi. 4), or "city of the Jebusites" (*Ir-Jebusi*, Judg. xix. 11), sometimes also in a contracted form, *Jebusi* (יְבוּסִי, chap. xviii. 16, 28, xv. 8; 2 Sam. v. 8).¹ On the division of the land it was allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 28); but being situated upon the border of Judah (chap. xv. 8), it was conquered, and burned by the sons of Judah after the death of Joshna (Judg. i. 8). It was very soon taken again and rebuilt by the Jebusites, whom the sons of Judah were unable to destroy (Judg. xv. 63, xix. 12), so that both Benjaminites and Judahites lived there along with the Jebusites (Judg. i. 21, xv. 63); and the upper town especially, upon the summit of Mount Zion, remained as a fortification in the possession of the Jebusites, until David conquered it (2 Sam. v. 6 sqq.), made it the capital of his kingdom, and called it by his own name, "the city of David," after which the old name of Jebus fell into disuse. *Hebron*, the town of *Arba* the Anakite (chap. xiv. 15, etc.; see at Gen. xxiii. 2), was twenty-two Roman miles south of Jerusalem, in a deep and narrow valley upon the mountains of Judah, a town of the greatest antiquity (Num. xiii. 22), now called *el Khalil*, i.e. the friend (of God), with reference to Abraham's sojourn there. The ruins of an ancient heathen temple are still to be seen there, as well as the Haram, built of colossal blocks, which contains, according to Mohammedan tradition, the burial-place of the patriarchs (see at Gen. xxiii. 17). *Jarmuth*, in the lowlands of Judah (chap. xv. 35; Neh. xi. 29), according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Jermus*) a hamlet, *Jermucha* (Ἰερμοχῶς), ten Roman miles from Eleutheropolis, on the road to Jerusalem, is the modern *Jarmuk*, a village on a lofty hill, with the remains of walls and cisterns of a very ancient date, the name of which, according to *Van de Velde* (Mem. pp. 115-6), is pronounced *Tell 'Armuth* by the Arabs (see *Rob. Pal.* ii. p. 344). *Lachish*, in the lowlands of Judah (chap. xv. 39), was fortified

¹ In our English version, we have the Hebrew word itself simply transposed in Joshua xviii. 16, 28; whilst it is rendered "the Jebusite" in chap. xv. 8, and "the Jebusites" in 2 Sam. v. 8.—Tr.

by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 9), and besieged by Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xviii. 14, xix. 8; Jer. xxxiv. 7), and was still inhabited by Jews after the return from the captivity (Neh. xi. 30). It is probably to be found in *Um Lakis*, an old place upon a low round hill, covered with heaps of small round stones thrown together in great confusion, containing relics of marble columns; it is about an hour and a quarter to the west of Ajlun, and seven hours to the west of Eleutheropolis.¹ *Eglon*: also in the lowlands of Judah (chap. xv. 39). The present name is *Ajlân*, a heap of ruins, about three-quarters of an hour to the east of Um Lakis (see *Rob. Pal. ii. p. 392*, and *Van de Velde, Mem. p. 308*). In the *Onom. (s. v. Eglon)* it is erroneously identified with *Odollam*; whereas the situation of *Agla*, "at the tenth stone, as you go from Eleutheropolis to Gaza" (*Onom. s. v. Βηθαλατμ, Bethagla*), suits *Eglon* exactly.—Ver. 5. These five kings marched against Gibeon and besieged the town. The king of Jerusalem headed the expedition, as his town was so near to Gibeon that he was the first to fear an attack from the Israelites.

Vers. 6–11. The Gibeonites then sent to Joshua to the camp at Gilgal, and entreated him to come to his help as speedily as possible. "*Slack not thy hand from thy servants,*" i.e. withhold not thy help from us. The definition appended to "the kings of the Amorites" ("*that dwelt in the mountains*") is to be understood *a potiori*, and does not warrant us in drawing the conclusion, that all the towns mentioned in ver. 3 were in the mountains of Judah. The Amorites who dwelt in the mountains were the strongest of all the Canaanites.—Ver. 7. In accordance with this petition Joshua advanced from Gilgal (לַגְגָל, not went up) with all the people of war, even (vav. expl.) all the men of valour.—Ver. 8. The Lord then renewed the assurance of His help in this particular war, in which Joshua was about to fight for the first time with several allied kings of Canaan (cf. chap. ii. 24, vi. 2, viii. 1, 18).—Ver. 9. Joshua came

¹ It is true that *Robinson* disputes the identity of *Um Lakis* with the ancient *Lachish* (*Pal. ii. p. 388*), but "not on any reasonable ground" (*Van de Velde, Mem. p. 320*). The statement in the *Onom. (s. v. Lochis)*, that it was seven Roman miles to the south of Eleutheropolis, cannot prove much, as it may easily contain an error in the number, and *Robinson* does not admit its authority even in the case of *Eglon* (*Pal. ii. p. 392*). Still less can *Knobel's* conjecture be correct, that it is to be found in the old place called *Sukkarijeh*, two hours and a half to the south-west of Beit Jibrin (Eleutheropolis), as *Sukkarijeh* is on the east of Ajlun, whereas, according to vers. 31–36, *Lachish* is to be sought for on the west of *Eglon*.

suddenly upon them (the enemy), as he had marched the whole night from Gilgal, *i.e.* had accomplished the entire distance in a night. Jiljilia is fully fifteen miles from el-Jib.—Ver. 10. “*Jehovah threw them into confusion*,” as He had promised in Ex. xxiii. 27, and in all probability, judging from ver. 11, by dreadful thunder and lightning (*vid.* 1 Sam. vii. 10; Ps. xviii. 15, cxliv. 6: it is different in Ex. xiv. 24). “*Israel smote them in a great slaughter at Gibeon, and pursued them by the way of the ascent of Bethhoron*,” *i.e.* Upper Bethhoron (*Beit Ur, el-Foka*), which was nearest to Gibeon, only four hours distant on the north-west, on a lofty promontory between two valleys, one on the north, the other on the south, and was separated from Lower Bethhoron, which lies further west, by a long steep pass, from which the ascent to Upper Bethhoron is very steep and rocky, though the rock has been cut away in many places now, and a path made by means of steps (see *Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 59). This pass between the two places leads downwards from Gibeon towards the western plain, and was called sometimes the ascent, or going up to Bethhoron, and sometimes the descent, or going down from it (ver. 11), ἀνάβασις καὶ κατὰβασις Βαιθωρῶν (1 Macc. iii. 16, 24). Israel smote the enemy still further, “*to Azekah and Makkedah* :” so far were they pursued and beaten after the battle (*cf.* vers. 16, 21). If we compare ver. 11, according to which the enemy was smitten, from Bethhoron to Azekah, by a violent fall of hail, it is very evident that the two places were on the west of Bethhoron. And it is in perfect harmony with this that we find both places described as being in the lowland; Azekah in the hill-country between the mountains and the plain (chap. xv. 35), Makkedah in the plain itself (chap. xv. 41). *Azekah*, which was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 9), besieged by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xxxiv. 7), and still inhabited after the captivity (Neh. xi. 30), was not far from Socoh, according to chap. xv. 35; whilst sideways between the two was *Ephes-dammim* (1 Sam. xvii. 1). *Van de Velde* has discovered the latter in the ruins of *Damûm*, about an hour’s journey east by south from Beit Nettif (Mem. p. 290), and consequently imagines that *Azekah* is to be found in the village of *Ahbeke*, which stands upon a lofty mountain-top a mile and a half to the north of *Damûm*, and about four or five miles N.N.E. of *Shuweikeh*, supposing this to be *Aphek*. The statement in the *Onom.* (s. v. Ἀζηκά), ἀνάμεσον Ἐλευθεροπόλεως καὶ Αἰλίας, agrees with this. *Makkedah* is described in the *Onom.* as being eight Roman miles to the east of Eleutheropolis, and hence *Knobel* supposes it to have

been near *Terkunieh*, or *Morak*; but he is wrong in his supposition, as in that case it would have been in the hill-country or upon the mountains, whereas it was one of the towns in the plain (chap. xv. 41). *Van de Velde's* conjecture (p. 332) is a much more probable one, viz. that it is to be found in *Summeil*, a considerable village on an eminence in the plain, with a large public well 110 feet deep and 11 feet in diameter, with strongly built walls of hewn stones, where there is also part of an old wall, which to all appearance must formerly have belonged to a large square castle built of uncemented stones, resembling in some respects the oldest foundation wall of Beit Jibrin (*Rob. Pal. ii. p. 368*). It is two hours and a half to the north-west of Beit Jibrin, and there *Van de Velde* discovered the large cave (see at ver. 16), which *Robinson* has not observed (see his *Journey through Syria and Palestine*).—Ver. 11. The large stones which the Lord threw upon the flying foe at the slope of Bethhoron were hail-stones (see *Isa. xxx. 30*), not stone-hail, or a shower of stones, but a terrible hail-storm, in which hail fell upon the foe in pieces as large as stones (see *Wisd. xlv. 6*), and slew a greater number of them than the swords of the Israelites. This phenomenon, which resembled the terrible hail in Egypt (*Ex. ix. 24*), was manifestly a miraculous occurrence produced by the omnipotent power of God, inasmuch as the hail-stones slew the enemy without injuring the Israelites, who were pursuing them. By this the Israelites were to be made to see that it was not their own power, but the supernatural help of their God, which had given them the victory; whilst the enemy discovered that it was not only the people of Israel, but the God of Israel, that had devoted them to destruction.

Vers. 12–15. In firm reliance upon the promise of God (ver. 8), Joshua offered a prayer to the Lord during the battle, that He would not let the sun go down till Israel had taken vengeance upon their foes; and the Lord hearkened to the prayer of His servant, and the sun hastened not to go down till the defeat of the Amorites was accomplished. This miraculous victory was celebrated by the Israelites in a war-song, which was preserved in the “*book of the Righteous*.” The author of the book of Joshua has introduced the passage out of this book which celebrates the mighty act of the Lord for the glorification of His name upon Israel, and their foes the Amorites. It is generally admitted, that vers. 12–15 contain a quotation from the “*book of Jasher*,” mentioned in ver. 13. This quotation, and the reference to the work itself, are analogous to the

notice of "the book of the wars of the Lord," in Num. xxi. 14, and to the strophes of a song which are there interwoven with the historical narrative; the object being, not to confirm the historical account by referring to an earlier source, but simply to set forth before other generations the powerful impression which was made upon the congregation by these mighty acts of the Lord. The "*book of Jasher*," i.e. book of the upright, or righteous man, that is to say, of the true members of the theocracy, or godly men. יָשָׁר (*Jasher*, the righteous) is used to denote the genuine Israelite, in the same sense as in Num. xxiii. 10, where Balaam calls the Israelites "the righteous," inasmuch as Jehovah, the righteous and upright one (Deut. xxxii. 4), had called them to be His people, and to walk in His righteousness. In addition to this passage, the "*book of the righteous (Jasher)*" is also mentioned in 2 Sam. i. 18, as a work in which was to be found David's elegy upon Saul and Jonathan. From this fact it has been justly inferred, that the book was a collection of odes in praise of certain heroes of the theocracy, with historical notices of their achievements interwoven, and that the collection was formed by degrees; so that the reference to this work is neither a proof that the passage has been interpolated by a *later* hand, nor that the work was composed at a very late period. That the passage quoted from this work is extracted from a song, is evident enough, both from the poetical form of the composition, and also from the parallelism of the sentences. The quotation, however, does not begin with וַיֹּאמֶר (*and he said*) in ver. 12*b*, but with בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא (*in the day when the Lord delivered*) in ver. 12*a*, and vers. 13 and 14 also form part of it; so that the title of the book from which the quotation is taken is inserted in the middle of the quotation itself. In other cases, unquestionably, such formulas of quotation are placed either at the beginning (as in Num. xxi. 14, 27; 2 Sam. i. 18), or else at the close of the account, which is frequently the case in the books of Kings and Chronicles; but it by no means follows that there were no exceptions to this rule, especially as the reason for mentioning the original sources is a totally different one in the books of Kings, where the works cited are not the simple vouchers for the facts related, but works containing fuller and more elaborate accounts of events which have only been cursorily described. The poetical form of the passage in ver. 13 also leaves no doubt whatever that vers. 13 and 14 contain the words of the old poet, and are not a prose comment made by the historian upon the poetical passage quoted. The only purely his-

torical statement is ver. 15; and this is repeated in ver. 43, at the close of the account of the wars and the victory. But this literal repetition of ver. 15 in ver. 43, and the fact that the statement, that Joshua returned with all the people to the camp at Gilgal, anticipates the historical course of the events in a very remarkable manner, render it highly probable, if not absolutely certain, that ver. 15 was also taken from the book of the righteous.

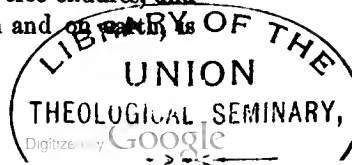
In the day when Jehovah delivered up the Amorites to the children of Israel ("before," as in Deut. ii. 31, 33, etc.), Joshua said before the eyes (*i.e.* in the presence) of Israel, so that the Israelites were witnesses of his words (*vid.* Deut. xxxi. 7): "*Sun, stand still (wait) at Gibeon; and, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.*" שָׁמַח, to be silent, to keep one's self quiet or still, to wait (1 Sam. xiv. 9). The address to the sun and moon implies that they both of them stood, or were visible in the heavens at the time; and inasmuch as it was spoken to the Lord, involves a prayer that the Lord and Creator of the world would not suffer the sun and moon to set till Israel had taken vengeance upon its foes. This explanation of the prayer is only to be found, it is true, in the statement that the sun and moon stood still at Joshua's word; but we must imagine it as included in the prayer itself. שָׁמַח without an article, when used to denote the people of Israel, is to be regarded as a poetical expression. In the sequel (ver. 13b) the sun only is spoken of: "*and the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.*" The poetical word שָׁמַח, to press or hurry, is founded upon the idea that the sun runs its course like a strong man, with vigour, and without weariness or cessation (Ps. xix. 6, 7). It follows from this, that Joshua merely prayed for the day to be lengthened, *i.e.* for the setting of the sun to be delayed; and that he included the moon (ver. 12), simply because it was visible at the time. But even if this is the case, we are not therefore to conclude, as *C. v. Lapide*, *Clericus*, and others have done, that Joshua spoke these words in the afternoon, when the sun was beginning to set, and the moon had already risen. The expression בְּחֵצֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם, "*in the half*," *i.e.* the midst, "*of the sky*," is opposed to this view, and still more the relative position of the two in the sky, the sun at Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, *i.e.* in the fine broad basin on the north side of Yalo (see at chap. xix. 42), the present *Merj Ibn Omeir* (*Rob.* iii. pp. 63, 64), which is four hours' journey to the west of Gibeon. As Joshua smote the enemy at Gibeon, and they fled to the south-west, he was no doubt on the west of

Gibeon when he commanded the sun and moon to stand still ; and therefore from his point of view the sun would be in the east when it stood over Gibeon, and the moon in the far west when it stood over the valley of Ajalon. But that could only be the case before noon, a few hours after sunrise, when the moon had not yet set in the western sky. In all probability the battle took place quite early in the morning, as Joshua had marched from Gilgal the night before, and fell quite suddenly upon the enemy (ver. 9). But after the conflict had lasted for some hours, and Joshua began to be anxious lest he should be unable to overcome the enemy before night came on, he addressed the prayer to the Lord to lengthen out the day, and in a short time saw his prayer so far fulfilled, that the sun still stood high up in the sky when the enemy was put to flight. We take for granted that these words were spoken by Joshua before the terrible hail-storm which fell upon the enemy in their flight, when they were near Bethhoron, which is about two hours from Gibeon, and smote them to Azekah. There is nothing to prevent our assuming this. The fact, that in the historical account the hail is mentioned before the desire expressed by Joshua and the fulfilment of that desire, may be explained on the simple ground, that the historian, following the order of importance, relates the principal incident in connection with the battle first, before proceeding to the special point to be cited from the book of the righteous. **כִּיּוֹם הָיָה**, "*towards* (about, or as it were) *a whole day*," neither signifies "when the day was ended" (*Clericus*), nor "as it usually does when the day is perfected or absolutely finished" (*Rosenmüller*); but the sun did not hasten or press to go down, delayed its setting, almost a whole day ("*day*" being the time between sunrise and sunset).

What conception are we to form of this miraculous event ? It is not stated that the sun actually stood still in one spot in the heavens,—say, for instance, in the zenith. And if the expression, "the sun stood still in the midst of heaven," which is added as an explanation of **וַיַּדּוּם**, is so pressed as to mean that the sun was miraculously stopped in its course, this is hardly reconcilable with **לֹא אָזַן לָבוֹא**, "it hastened not to go down," as these words, if taken literally, merely denote a slower motion on the part of the sun, as many of the Rabbins have observed. All that is clearly affirmed in vers. 12 and 13 is, that at Joshua's word the sun remained standing in the sky for almost a whole day longer. To this there is added, in ver. 14, "*There was no day like that before it, or after it, that*

Jehovah hearkened to the voice of a man ; for Jehovah fought for Israel." This expression must not be pressed too far, as the analogous passages ("there was none like him," etc.) in 2 Kings xviii. 5 and xxiii. 25 clearly show. They merely express this thought : no other day like this, which God so miraculously lengthened, ever occurred either before or afterwards. So much, therefore, is obvious enough from the words, that the writer of the old song, and also the author of the book of Joshua, who inserted the passage in his narrative, were convinced that the day was miraculously prolonged. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that it is not stated that God lengthened that day at the request of Joshua almost an entire day, or that He made the sun stand still almost a whole day, but simply that God hearkened to the voice of Joshua, i.e. did not permit the sun to go down till Israel had avenged itself upon its enemies. This distinction is not without importance : for a miraculous prolongation of the day would take place not only if the sun's course or sun's setting was delayed for several hours by the omnipotent power of God, and the day extended from twelve to eighteen or twenty hours, but also if the day seemed to Joshua and all Israel to be miraculously prolonged ; because the work accomplished on that day was so great, that it would have required almost two days to accomplish it without supernatural aid. It is not easy to decide between these two opposite views ; in fact, it is quite impossible if we go to the root of the matter. When we are not in circumstances to measure the length of the day by the clock, it is very easy to mistake its actual length, especially in the midst of the pressure of business or work. The Israelites at that time had neither sun-clocks nor any other kind of clock ; and during the confusion of the battle it is hardly likely that Joshua, or any one else who was engaged in the conflict, would watch the shadow of the sun and its changes, either by a tree or any other object, so as to discover that the sun had actually stood still, from the fact that for hours the shadow had neither moved nor altered in length. Under such circumstances, therefore, it was quite impossible for the Israelites to decide whether it was in reality, or only in their own imagination, that the day was longer than others. To this there must be added the poetical character of the verses before us. When David celebrates the miraculous deliverance which he had received from the Lord, in these words, "In my distress I called upon the Lord. . . . He heard my voice out of His temple. . . . He bowed the heavens also, and came down. . . . He sent from above, He took

me, He drew me out of many waters" (Ps. xviii. 7-17), who would ever think of interpreting the words literally, and supposing them to mean that God actually came down from the sky, and stretched out His hand to draw David out of the water? Or who would understand the words of Deborah, "They fought from heaven, the stars in their courses fought against Sisera" (Judg. v. 20), in their literal sense? The truthfulness of such utterances is to be sought for in the subjective sphere of religious intuition, and not in a literal interpretation of the words. And it may be just the same with these verses, without their actual contents being affected, if the day was merely *subjectively* lengthened,—that is to say, in the religious conviction of the Israelites. But even if the words really affirmed that a miraculous and objective lengthening of the day did actually take place, we should have no reason whatever for questioning the credibility of the statement. All the objections that have been raised with reference to the reality or possibility of such a miracle, prove to have no force when we examine the subject more closely. Thus, for example, the objection that the annals of the other nations of the earth contain no account of any such miracle, which must have extended over the whole world, loses all its significance from the simple fact that there are no annals in existence belonging to other nations and reaching back to that time, and that it is altogether doubtful whether the miracle would extend far beyond the limits of Palestine. Again, an appeal to the unchangeableness of the motions of the stars according to eternal and unchangeable laws, is not adapted to prove the impossibility of such a miracle. The eternal laws of nature are nothing more than phenomena, or forms of manifestation, of those divine creative powers, the true character of which no mortal has ever fathomed. And does not the almighty Creator and Upholder of nature and all its forces possess the power so to direct and govern the working of these forces, as to make them subservient to the realization of His purposes of salvation? And lastly, the objection that a sudden stoppage of the revolution of the earth upon its axis would have dashed to pieces all the works of human hands that were to be found upon its surface, and hurled the earth itself, with its satellite the moon, out of their orbits, cannot prove anything, because it leaves out of sight the fact that the omnipotent hand of God, which not only created the stars, but gave them the power to revolve with such regularity in their orbits as long as this universe endures, and which upholds and governs all things in heaven and on earth, is



not too short to guard against any such disastrous consequences as these. But to this we may add, that even the strictest and most literal interpretation of the words does not require us to assume, as the fathers and earlier theologians did, that the sun itself was miraculously made to stand still, but simply supposes an optical stopping of the sun in its course,—that is to say, a miraculous suspension of the revolution of the earth upon its axis, which would make it appear to the eye of an observer as if the sun itself were standing still. *Knobel* is by no means warranted in pronouncing this view of the matter an assumption at variance with the text. For the Scriptures speak of the things of the visible world as they appear; just as we speak of the sun as rising and setting, although we have no doubt whatever about the revolution of the earth. Moreover, the omnipotence of God might produce such an optical stoppage of the sun, or rather a continuance of the visibility of the sun above the horizon, by celestial phenomena which are altogether unknown to us or to naturalists in general, without interfering with the general laws affecting the revolution of the heavenly bodies. Only we must not attempt, as some have done, to reduce the whole miracle of divine omnipotence to an unusual refraction of the light, or to the continuance of lightning throughout the whole night.

Vers. 16–27. The five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave that was at Makkedah. When they were discovered there, Joshua ordered large stones to be rolled before the entrance to the cave, and men to be placed there to watch, whilst the others pursued the enemy without ceasing, and smote their rear (*vid.* Deut. xxv. 18), and prevented their entering into their cities. He himself remained at Makkedah (ver. 21).—Vers. 20, 21. When the great battle and the pursuit of the enemy were ended, and such as remained had reached their fortified towns, the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace, *i.e.* without being attacked by anybody. “*There pointed not (a dog) its tongue against the sons of Israel, against any one*” (see at Ex. xi. 7). וְלֹא שָׁפָה לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל is in apposition to לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, and serves to define it more precisely. It is possible, however, to regard the ל as a copyist’s error, as *Houbigant* and *Maurer* do, in which case וְלֹא would be the nominative to the verb.—Vers. 22–27. Joshua then commanded the five kings to be fetched out of the cave, and directed the leaders of the army to set their feet upon the necks of the kings; and when this had been done, he ordered the kings to be put to death, and to be hanged upon

trees until the evening, when their bodies were to be thrown into the cave in which they had concealed themselves. Of course this did not take place till the day after the battle, as the army could not return from their pursuit of the foe to the camp at Makkedah till the night after the battle; possibly it did not take place till the second day, if the pursuit had lasted any longer. In ver. 24, "*all the men of Israel*" are all the warriors in the camp. הָהָלָכִים, with הָ artic., instead of the relative pronoun (see *Ges.* § 109; *Ew.* § 331, *b.*); and the ending ם for י or ן, as in *Isa.* xxviii. 12 (see *Ew.* § 190, *b.*). The fact that the military leaders set their feet at Joshua's command upon the necks of the conquered kings, was not a sign of barbarity, which it is necessary to excuse by comparing it with still greater barbarities on the part of the Canaanites, as in *Judg.* i. 7, but was a symbolical act, a sign of complete subjugation, which was customary in this sense even in the Eastern empire (see *Bynæus de calceis*, p. 318, and *Constant. Porphyrogen de cerimon. aulae Byzant.* ii. 19). It was also intended in this instance to stimulate the Israelites to further conflict with the Canaanites. This is stated in the words of Joshua (ver. 25): "*Fear not, nor be dismayed (vid. chap. i. 9, viii. 1); for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies.*" On the putting to death and then hanging, see chap. viii. 29 and *Deut.* xxi. 22, 23. The words וַיִּשְׂמוּ וְ (ver. 27b) are generally understood as signifying, that after the bodies of the kings had been cast into the cave, the Israelites placed large stones before the entrance, just as in other cases heaps of stones were piled upon the graves of criminals that had been executed (*vid.* chap. vii. 25), and that these stones remained there till the account before us was written. But this leaves the words עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה unexplained, as עַד never occurs in any other case where the formula "until this day" is used with the simple meaning that a thing had continued to the writer's own time. הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַד expresses the thought that the day referred to was the very same day about which the author was writing, and no other (see chap. v. 11; *Gen.* vii. 13, xvii. 23; *Ex.* xii. 17, etc.). If, therefore, it has any meaning at all in the present instance, we must connect the whole clause with the one preceding, and even construe it as a relative clause: "*where they (the kings) had hidden themselves, and they (the Israelites) had placed large stones at the mouth of the cave until that very day*" (on which the kings were fetched out and executed).

Vers. 28-39. Further prosecution of the victory, by the conquest of the fortified towns of the south, into which those who

escaped the sword of the Israelites had thrown themselves.—Ver. 28. On the same day on which the five kings were impaled, Joshua took Makkedah (see at ver. 10), and smote the town and its king with the edge of the sword, banning the town and all the persons in it, *i.e.* putting all the inhabitants to death (many MSS. and some editions adopt the reading מַכְּדָה for מַכְּדָה, as in ver. 37), taking the cattle and the property in the town as booty, as in the case of Ai (chap. viii. 27, 28), and treating its king like the king of Jericho, who was suspended upon a stake, to judge from chap. viii. 2, 29, although this is not stated in chap. vi.—Vers. 29, 30. From Makkedah he went with all Israel, *i.e.* all the men of war, against Libnah, and after effecting the conquest of it, did just the same as he had done to Makkedah. Libnah was one of the towns of the plain or of the hill-country of Judah (chap. xv. 42); it was allotted to the priests (chap. xxi. 13), revolted from Judah in the reign of Joram (2 Kings viii. 22), and was besieged by Sennacherib (Isa. xxxvii. 8). It is to be sought on the north-west of Lachish, not on the south as Knobel erroneously infers from Isa. xxxvii. 8. According to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Lebna*), it was at that time *villa in regione Eleutheropolitana, quæ appellatur Lobna*. It has not been discovered yet; but according to the very probable conjecture of *V. de Velde* (Mem. p. 330), the ruins of it may perhaps be seen upon the hill called *Arâk el Menshiyeh*, about two hours to the west of Beit Jibrin.¹—Vers. 31, 32. Lachish, *i.e.* *Um Lakis* (see at ver. 3), shared the same fate.—Ver. 33. Joshua also smote the king of Gezer, who had come with his people to the help of Lachish, and left no one remaining. Nothing is said about the capture of the town of Gezer. According to chap. xvi. 10 and Judg. i. 29, it was still in the possession of the Canaanites when the land was divided, though this alone is not sufficient to prove that Joshua did not conquer it, as so many of the conquered towns were occupied by the Canaanites again after the Israelites had withdrawn. But its situation makes it very probable that Joshua did not conquer it at that time, as it was too much out of his road, and too far from Lachish. Gezer (LXX. Γάζερ, in 1 Chron. xiv. 16 Γαζηρά, in 1 Macc. Γαζήρα or Γάζαρα plur., in

¹ Knobel is decidedly wrong in his supposition, that Libnah is to be seen in the considerable ruins called *Hora*, which lie in the plain (*Seetzen* and *V. de Velde*) and are called *Hawara* by *Robinson*. He founds his conjecture upon the fact that the name signifies *white*, and is the Arabic translation of the Hebrew name. But *Hora* is only two hours and a half to the north of Beersheba, and is not in the plain at all, but in the Negeb.

Josephus Γάζαπα, Ant. vii. 4, 1, viii. 6, 1, and also *Γάδαπα*, v. 1, 22, xii. 7, 4) was on the southern boundary of Ephraim (chap. xvi. 3), and was given up by that tribe to the Levites (chap. xvi. 9, 10, xxi. 20, 21). It is very frequently mentioned. David pursued the Philistines to Gezer (Gazer), after they had been defeated at Gibeon or Geba (2 Sam. v. 25; 1 Chron. xiv. 16). At a later period it was conquered by Pharaoh, and presented to his daughter, who was married to Solomon; and Solomon built, *i.e.* fortified it (1 Kings ix. 16, 17). It was an important fortress in the wars of the Maccabees (1 Macc. ix. 52; 2 Macc. x. 32; cf. 1 Macc. iv. 15, vii. 45, xiii. 53, xiv. 34, xv. 28, 35). According to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Gazer*), it was four Roman miles to the north of Nicopolis, *i.e.* Anwas, and was called *Γαζάπα*. This is not only in harmony with chap. xvi. 3, according to which the southern border of Ephraim ran from Lower Bethhoron to Gezer, and then on to the sea, but also with all the other passages in which Gezer is mentioned,¹ and answers very well to the situation of *el Kubab*, a village of considerable size on a steep hill at the extreme north of the mountain

¹ The statement in 1 Macc. vii. 45, that Judas Maccabæus pursued the army of Nicanor, which had been beaten at Adasa, for a day's journey, as far as Gazera ("a day's journey from Adasa into Gazera"), is perfectly reconcilable with the situation of *el Kubab*; for, according to *Josephus* (Ant. xii. 10, 5), Adasa was thirty stadia from Bethhoron, and Bethhoron is ten miles to the west of Kubab (measuring in a straight line upon the map); so that Judas pursued the enemy fifteen miles,—a distance which might very well be called "a day's journey," if we consider that the enemy, when flying, would not always take the straightest road, and might even make a stand at intervals, and so delay their pursuers. Still less do the statement in 1 Macc. xiv. 34, that Simon fortified Joppa on the sea, and Gazara on the border of Ashdod, the combination of Joppa, Gazara, and the tower that is in Jerusalem (1 Macc. xv. 28, 35), and the fact that the country of Gadaris, with the town of Gadara, occurs between Joppa and Jamnia in *Strabo* xvi. 759, warrant us in making a distinction between Gazara (Gezer) and the place mentioned in the *Onom.*, as *Grimm* does (on 1 Macc. iv. 15), and identifying it with the village of *Jazûr*, an hour and a half from Jaffa, although *Arvieux* calls this village *Gesser*. The objections of *Van de Velde* against the identity of Kubab and Gazer are without any force. It does not necessarily follow from the expression "went up," that Lachish stood on higher ground than Gezer, as going up often signifies nothing more than making a hostile attack upon a fortification. And no importance can be attached to the conjecture, that with the great distance of Kubab from Um Lakis, the king of Gezer would have come to the help of the kings of Makkedah and Libnah, who were much nearer and were attacked first, as the circumstances which determined his conduct are too thoroughly unknown to us, for it to be possible to pronounce an opinion upon the subject with any certainty.

chain which runs to the north-west of Zorea, and slopes off towards the north into the broad plain of Merj el Omeir, almost in the middle of the road from Ramleh to Yalo. For this village, with which *Van Semden* identifies Gezer (*Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 315), was exactly four Roman miles north by west of Anwas, according to *Robinson's* map, and not quite four hours from Akir (Ekron), the most northerly city of the Philistines; so that *Josephus* (Ant. vii. 4, 1) could very properly describe Gazara as the frontier of the territory of the Philistines. *Robinson* discovered no signs of antiquity, it is true, on his journey through Kubab, but in all probability he did not look for them, as he did not regard the village as a place of any importance in connection with ancient history (Bibl. Res. pp. 143-4).

Vers. 34, 35. From Lachish Joshua proceeded eastwards against Eglon (Ajlan, see ver. 3), took the town, and did to it as he had done to Lachish.—Vers. 36, 37. From Eglon he went up from the lowland to the mountains, attacked Hebron and took it, and did to this town and its king, and the towns belonging to it, as he had already done to the others. The king of Hebron cannot of course be the one who was taken in the cave of Makkedah and put to death there, but his successor, who had entered upon the government while Joshua was occupied with the conquest of the towns mentioned in vers. 28-35, which may possibly have taken more than a year. "*All the cities thereof*" are the towns dependent upon Hebron as the capital of the kingdom.—Vers. 38, 39. Joshua then turned southwards with all Israel (*i.e.* all the army), attacked *Debir* and took it, and the towns dependent upon it, in the same manner as those mentioned before. *Debir*, formerly called *Kirjath-sepher*, *i.e.* book town, *πόλις γραμμάτων* (LXX. chap. xv. 15; Judg. i. 11), and *Kirjath-sanna*, *i.e.* in all probability the city of palm branches (chap. xv. 49), was given up by Judah to the priests (chap. xxi. 15). It stood upon the mountains of Judah (chap. xv. 49), to the south of Hebron, but has not yet been certainly discovered, though *V. de Velde* is probably correct in his supposition that it is to be seen in the ruins of *Dilbeh*, on the peak of a hill to the north of Wady Dilbeh, and on the road from Dhoberiyeh to Hebron, about two hours to the south-west of the latter. For, according to *Dr Stewart*, there is a spring at *Dilbeh*, the water of which is conducted by an aqueduct into the Birket el Dilbeh, at the foot of the said hill, which would answer very well to the upper and lower springs at Debir, if only Debir might be placed, according to chap. xv. 49, so

far towards the north.¹ Moreover, not very long afterwards, probably during the time when the Israelites were occupied with the subjugation of northern Canaan, Hebron and Debir were taken again by the Canaanites, particularly the Anakites, as Joshua had not entirely destroyed them, although he had thoroughly cleared the mountains of Judah of them, but had left them still in the towns of the Philistines (chap. xi. 21, 22). Consequently, when the land was divided, there were Anakites living in both Hebron and Debir; so that Caleb, to whom these towns were given as his inheritance, had first of all to conquer them again, and to exterminate the Anakites (chap. xiv. 12, xv. 13-17: cf. Judg. i. 10-13).²

Vers. 40-43. *Summary of the Conquest of the whole of Southern Canaan.*—In the further prosecution of his victory over the five allied kings, Joshua smote the whole land, i.e. the whole of the south of Canaan from Gibeon onwards, in all its districts, namely

¹ *Knobel* imagines that Debir is to be found in the modern village of *Dhoberiyeh* (*Dhabarije*), five hours to the south-west of Hebron, on the south-west border of the mountains of Judah, upon the top of a mountain, because, in addition to the situation of this village, which is perfectly reconcilable with chap. xv. 49, there are remains of a square tower there (according to *Krafft*, a Roman tower), which point to an ancient fortification (*vid. Rob. Pal. i. pp. 308 sqq.*; *Ritter, Erdk. xvi. pp. 202 sqq.*), and because the name, which signifies "placed behind the back," agrees with *Debir*, the hinder part or back (?), and *Kirjath-sepher*, if interpreted by the Arabic words, which signify "*extremitas, margo, ora.*" But both reasons prove very little. The meanings assigned to *Debir* and *Kirjath-sepher* are improbable and arbitrary. Moreover, it has not been shown that there are any springs near *Dhoberiyeh*, such as there were in the neighbourhood of Debir (chap. xv. 19 sqq.). The view held by *Rosenmüller*, and adopted by *Bunsen*, with regard to the situation of *Debir*,—namely, that it was the same as the modern *Idwirbân* or *Dewirbân*, an hour and a quarter to the west of Hebron, because there is a large spring there with an abundant supply of excellent water, which goes by the name of *Ain Nunkâr*,—is also quite untenable; for it is entirely at variance with chap. xv. 49, according to which Debir was not on the west of Hebron, but upon the mountains to the south, and rests entirely upon the erroneous assumption that, according to ver. 38 (וָיָשָׁב, he turned round), as Joshua came from Eglon, he conquered Hebron first, and after the conquest of this town turned back to Debir, to take it also. But וָיָשָׁב does not mean only to turn round or turn back: it signifies turning generally; and it is very evident that this is the sense in which it is used in ver. 38, since, according to chap. xv. 49, Debir was on the south of Hebron.

² By this simple assumption we get rid of the pretended contradictions, which neological critics have discovered between chap. x. 36-39 on the one hand, and chap. xi. 21, 22, and xiv. 12, xv. 13-17 on the other, and on account of which *Knobel* would assign the passages last named to a different document. On the first conquest of the land by Joshua, *Masius* observes that "in

the mountains (chap. xv. 48), the Negeb (the south land, chap. xv. 21), the lowlands (chap. xv. 33), and the slopes, *i.e.* the hill region (chap. xii. 8, and comm. on Num. xxi. 15), and all the kings of these different districts, banning every living thing (כָּל־חַיָּה = כָּל־בָּשָׂר, vers. 28, 30, *i.e.* all the men; *vid.* Deut. xx. 16), as Jehovah had commanded, *viz.* Num. xxxiii. 51 sqq.; Deut. vii. 1, 2, xx. 16. He smote them from Kadesh-barnea, on the southern boundary of Canaan (chap. xv. 3; see at Num. xii. 16), to Gaza (see at Gen. x. 9), and all the country of *Goshen*, a different place from the Goshen of Egypt, deriving its name in all probability from the town of *Goshen* on the southern portion of the mountains (chap. xv. 51). As the line "*from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza*" defines the extent of the conquered country from south to north on the western side, so the parallel clause, "*all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon*," defines the extent from south to north on the eastern side. There is no tenable ground for the view expressed by *Knobel*, which rests upon very uncertain etymological combinations, that the land of Goshen signifies the hill country between the mountains and the plain, and is equivalent to מְדִינָה.—Ver. 42. All these kings and their country Joshua took "*once*," *i.e.* in one campaign, which lasted, however, a considerable time (*cf.* chap. xi. 18). He was able to accomplish this, because Jehovah the God of Israel fought for Israel (see ver. 14). After this he returned with the army to the camp at Gilgal (Jiljilia, see p. 93; *cf.* ver. 15).

DEFEAT OF THE KINGS OF NORTHERN CANAAN. SUBJUGATION OF THE WHOLE LAND.—CHAP. XI.

Vers. 1–15. THE WAR IN NORTHERN CANAAN.—Vers. 1–3. On receiving intelligence of what had occurred in the south, the king of Hazor formed an alliance with the kings of Madon, Shimron, and Achshaph, and other kings of the north, to make a common attack upon the Israelites. This league originated with Jabin the king of Hazor, because Hazor was formerly the head of this expedition Joshua ran through the southern region with an armed band, in too hurried a manner to depopulate it entirely. All that he needed was to strike such terror into the hearts of all through his victories, that no one should henceforth offer any resistance to himself and to the people of God. Those whom he pursued, therefore, he destroyed according to the commands of God, not sparing a single one, but he did not search out every possible hiding-place in which any could be concealed. This was left as a gleanings to the valour of each particular tribe, when it should take possession of its own inheritance."

all the kingdoms of northern Canaan (ver. 10). *Hazor*, which Joshua conquered and burned to the ground (vers. 10, 11), was afterwards restored, and became a capital again (Judg. iv. 2; 1 Sam. xii. 9); it was fortified by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 15), and taken by Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kings xv. 29). It belonged to the tribe of Naphtali (chap. xix. 36), but has not yet been discovered. According to *Josephus* (Ant. v. 5, 1), it was above the Lake of Samochonitis, the present Bahr el Huleh. *Robinson* conjectures that it is to be found in the ruins upon Tell *Khuraibeh*, opposite to the north-west corner of the lake of Huleh, the situation of which would suit Hazor quite well, as it is placed between Ramah and Kedesh in chap. xix. 35, 36 (see Bibl. Res. p. 364). On the other hand, the present ruins of *Huzzur* or *Hazireh*, where there are the remains of large buildings of a very remote antiquity (see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 62), with which *Knobel* identifies Hazor, cannot be thought of for a moment, as these ruins, which are about an hour and a quarter to the south-west of Yathir, are so close to the Ramah of Asher (chap. xix. 29) that Hazor must also have belonged to Asher, and could not possibly have been included in the territory of Naphtali. There would be more reason for thinking of Tell *Hazûr* or *Khirbet Hazûr*, on the south-west of Szafed (see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 81); but these ruins are not very ancient, and only belong to an ordinary village, and not to a town at all. *Madon* is only mentioned again in chap. xii. 19, and its situation is quite unknown. *Shimron*, called Shimron-meron in chap. xii. 20, was allotted to the tribe of Zebulun (chap. xix. 15), and is also unknown. For *Meron* cannot be connected, as *Knobel* supposes, with the village and ruins of *Marón*, not far from Kedesh, on the south-west (see *Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 371), or *Shimron* with the ruins of *Khuraibeh*, an hour to the south of Kedesh; as the territory of Zebulun, to which Shimron belonged, did not reach so far north, and there is not the slightest ground for assuming that there were two Shimrons, or for making a distinction between the royal seat mentioned here and the Shimron of Zebulun. There is also no probability in *Knobel's* conjecture, that the *Shimron* last named is the same as the small village of *Semunieh*, probably the *Simonias* of *Josephus* (Vita, § 24), on the west of Nazareth (see *Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 201). *Achshaph*, a border town of Asher (chap. xix. 25), is also unknown, and is neither to be sought, as *Robinson* supposes (Bibl. Res. p. 55), in the ruins of *Kesâf*, which lie even farther north than *Abel* (*Abil*), in the tribe of Naphtali, and therefore much too far

to the north to have formed the boundary of Asher; nor to be identified with *Acco* (*Ptolemais*), as *Knobel* imagines, since *Acco* has nothing in common with *Achshaph* except the letter *caph* (see also at chap. xix. 25).—Ver. 2. *Jabin* also allied himself with the kings of the north “upon the mountains,” i.e. the mountains of *Naphtali* (chap. xx. 7), and “in the Arabah to the south of *Chinnereth*” (chap. xix. 35), i.e. in the Ghor to the south of the sea of Galilee, and “in the lowland,” i.e. the northern portion of it, as far down as *Joppa*, and “upon the heights of *Dor*.” The town of *Dor*, which was built by Phœnicians, who settled there on account of the abundance of the purple mussels (*Steph. Byz. s. v. Δῶπος*), was allotted to the *Manassites* in the territory of Asher (chap. xvii. 11; cf. xix. 26), and taken possession of by the children of Joseph (1 Chron. vii. 29). It was situated on the Mediterranean Sea, below the promontory of *Carmel*, nine Roman miles north of *Cæsarea*, and is at the present time a hamlet called *Tantura* or *Tortura*, with very considerable ruins (*Wilson, The Holy Land*, ii. 249, and *V. de Velde, Journey*, i. p. 251). The old town was a little more than a mile to the north, on a small range of hills, which is covered with ruins (*Ritter, Erdk.* xvi. pp. 608–9; *V. de Velde, Mem.* p. 307), and on the north of which there are rocky ranges, with many grottos, and houses cut in the rock itself (*Buckingham, Syria*, i. pp. 101–2). These are “the heights of *Dor*,” or “the high range of *Dor*” (chap. xii. 23; 1 Kings iv. 11).—Ver. 3. “Namely, with the *Canaanites* on the east and west, the *Amorites*” and other tribes dwelling upon the mountains (*vid.* chap. iii. 10), and “the *Hivites* under the *Hermon* in the land of *Mizpah*,” i.e. the country below *Hasbeya*, between *Nahr Hasbany* on the east, and *Merj Ayûn* on the west, with the village of *Mutulleh* or *Mtelleh*, at present inhabited by *Druses*, which stands upon a hill more than 200 feet high, and from which there is a splendid prospect over the *Huleh* basin. It is from this that it has derived its name, which signifies prospect, *specula*, answering to the Hebrew *Mizpah* (see *Robinson, Bibl. Res.* p. 372).

Vers. 4–9. These came out with their armies, a people as numerous as the sand by the sea-shore (*vid.* Gen. xxii. 17, etc.), and very many horses and chariots. All these kings agreed together, *sc.* concerning the war and the place of battle, and encamped at *Merom* to fight against Israel. The name *Merom* (*Meirûm* in the Arabic version) answers to *Meirôm*, a village whose name is also pronounced *Meirûm*, a celebrated place of pilgrimage among the

Jews, because Hillel, Shammai, Simeon ben Jochai, and other noted Rabbins are said to be buried there (see *Robinson*, Pal. iii. p. 333), about two hours' journey north-west of Szafed, upon a rocky mountain, at the foot of which there is a spring that forms a small brook and flows away through the valley below Szafed (*Seetzen*, R. ii. pp. 127-8; *Robinson*, Bibl. Res. pp. 73 sqq.). This stream, which is said to reach the Lake of Tiberias, in the neighbourhood of Bethsaida, is in all probability to be regarded as the "waters of Merom," as, according to Josephus (*Ant.* v. 1, 18), "these kings encamped at Berothe (de. Bell. Jud. xx. 6, and Vit. 37, 'Meroth'), a city of Upper Galilee, not far from Kedese."¹

Vers. 6 sqq. On account of this enormous number, and the might of the enemy, who were all the more to be dreaded because of their horses and chariots, the Lord encouraged Joshua again,² as in chap. viii. 1, by promising him that on the morrow He would deliver them all up slain before Israel; only Joshua was to lame their horses (*Gen.* xlix. 6) and burn their chariots. נִתֵּן before נִתְּנָה gives emphasis to the sentence: "I will provide for this; by my power, which is immeasurable, as I have shown thee so many times, and by my nod, by which heaven and earth are shaken, shall these things be done" (*Masius*).—Vers. 7, 8. With this to inspirit them, the Israelites fell upon the enemy and smote them, chasing them towards the north-west to Sidon, and westwards as far as Misrephothmaim, and into the plain of Mizpah on the east. *Sidon* is called the great (as in chap. xix. 28), because at that time it was the metropolis of Phœnicia; whereas even by the time of David it had lost its ancient splendour, and was outstripped by its daughter city Tyre. It is still to be seen in the town of *Saida*, a town of five or six thousand inhabitants, with many large and well-built

¹ The traditional opinion that "waters of Merom" is the Old Testament name for the Lake of Samochonitis, or Huleh, is not founded upon any historical evidence, but is simply an inference of *Hadr. Reland* (Pal. Ill. p. 262), (1) from the statement made by *Josephus* (*Ant.* v. 5, 1), that Hazor was above the Lake of Samochonitis, it being taken for granted without further reason that the battle occurred at Hazor, and (2) from the supposed similarity in the meaning of the names, viz. that *Samochonitis* is derived from an Arabic word signifying to be high, and therefore means the same as *Merom* (height), though here again the *zere* is disregarded, and *Merom* is arbitrarily identified with *Marom*.

² "As there was so much more difficulty connected with the destruction of so populous and well-disciplined an army, it was all the more necessary that he should be inspired with fresh confidence. For this reason God appeared to Joshua, and promised him the same success as He had given him so many times before."—*Calvin*.

houses (see *Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 415, and *Movers*, Phönizier, ii. 1, pp. 86 sqq.). *Misrephothmaim* (mentioned also at chap. xiii. 6), which the Greek translators have taken as a proper name, though the Rabbins and some Christian commentators render it in different ways, such as salt-pits, smelting-huts, or glass-huts (see *Ges. Thes.* p. 1341), is a collection of springs, called *Ain Mesherfi*, at the foot of the promontory to which with its steep pass the name of *Ras el Nakhura* is given, the *scala Tyrionum* or *Passepoulain* of the Crusaders (see *V. de Velde*, *Mem.* p. 335, and *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. p. 807). בְּקַעַת מִצְפֶּה (*Eng. Ver.* "the valley of Mizpeh") is probably the basin of the *Huleh* lake and of *Nahr Hasbany*, on the western side of which lay the land of *Mizpah* (ver. 3).—Ver. 9. Joshua carried out the command of the Lord with regard to the chariots and horses.

Vers. 10–15. After destroying the foe, and returning from the pursuit, Joshua took Hazor, smote its king and all the inhabitants with the edge of the sword, and burned the town, the former leader of all those kingdoms. He did just the same to the other towns, except that he did not burn them, but left them standing upon their hills. הָעָמָרוֹת עַל-הַלָּם (ver. 13) neither contains an allusion to any special fortification of the towns, nor implies a contrast to the towns built in the valleys and plains, but simply expresses the thought that these towns were still standing upon their hill, *i.e.* upon the old site (cf. *Jer.* xxx. 18: the participle does not express the preterite, but the present). At the same time, the expression certainly implies that the towns were generally built upon hills. The pointing in הַלָּם is not to be altered, as *Knobel* suggests. The singular "upon their hill" is to be taken as distributive: standing, now as then, each upon its hill.—With ver. 15, "*as Jehovah commanded His servant Moses*" (cf. *Num.* xxxiii. 52 sqq.; *Deut.* vii. 1 sqq., xx. 16), the account of the wars of Joshua is brought to a close, and the way opened for proceeding to the concluding remarks with reference to the conquest of the whole land (vers. 16–23). לֹא הָיָה דְּבָר, he put not away a word, *i.e.* left nothing undone.

Vers. 16–23. RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF THE CONQUEST OF THE WHOLE LAND.—Vers. 16, 17. Joshua took all this land, namely, those portions of Southern Canaan that have already been mentioned in chap. x. 40, 41; also the Arabah, and the mountains of Israel and its lowlands (see ver. 2), *i.e.* the northern part of the land (in the campaign described in vers. 1–15), that is to say, Canaan in all its extent, "*from the bald mountain which goeth up to*

Seir" in the south, "to *Baal-gad*, in the valley of Lebanon under *Hermon*." The "*bald mountain*" (*Halak*), which is mentioned here and in chap. xii. 7 as the southern boundary of Canaan, is hardly the row of white cliffs which stretches obliquely across the Arabah eight miles below the Dead Sea and forms the dividing line that separates this valley into *el-Ghor* and *el-Araba* (*Rob. Pal. ii. pp. 489, 492*), or the present *Madara*, a strange-looking chalk-hill to the south-west of the pass of *Sufah* (*Rob. ii. p. 589*), a steep bare mountain in a barren plain, the sides of which consist of stone and earth of a leaden ashy hue (*Seetzen, R. iii. pp. 14, 15*); but in all probability the northern edge of the *Azazimeh* mountain with its white and glistening masses of chalk. *Baal-gad*, i.e. the place or town of Baal, who was there worshipped as Gad (see *Isa. lxx. 11*), also called *Baal-hermon* in *Judg. iii. 3* and *1 Chron. v. 23*, is not *Baalbek*, but the *Paneas* or *Cæsarea Philippi* of a later time, the present *Banjas* (see at *Num. xxxiv. 8, 9*). This is the opinion of *v. Raumer* and *Robinson*, though *Van de Velde* is more disposed to look for *Baal-gad* in the ruins of *Kalath* (the castle of) *Bostra*, or of *Kalath Aisafa*, the former an hour and a half, the latter three hours to the north of *Banjas*, the situation of which would accord with the biblical statements respecting *Baal-gad* exceedingly well. The "*valley of Lebanon*" is not *Cale-Syria*, the modern *Bekâa*, between Lebanon and Antilibanus, but the valley at the foot of the southern slope of *Jebel Sheik* (*Hermon*).—*Vers. 18 sqq.* Joshua made war with the kings of Canaan a long time; judging from chap. xiv. 7, 10, as much as seven years, though *Josephus* (*Ant. v. 1, 19*) speaks of five (see at chap. xiv. 10). No town submitted peaceably to the Israelites, with the exception of *Gibeon*: they took the whole in war. "*For it was of the Lord*" (*ver. 20*), i.e. God ordered it so that they (the Canaanites) hardened their heart to make war upon Israel, that they might fall under the ban, and be destroyed without mercy. On the hardening of the heart as a work of God, see the remarks upon the hardening of *Pharaoh* (*Ex. iv. 21*). It cannot be inferred from this, that if the Canaanites had received the Israelites amicably, God would have withdrawn His command to destroy them, and allowed the Israelites to make peace with them; for when they made peace with the *Gibeonites*, they did not inquire what was the will of the Lord, but acted in opposition to it (see at chap. ix. 14). The remark is made with special reference to this, and has been correctly explained by *Augustine* (qu. 8 in *Jos.*) as follows: "Because the Israelites had

shown mercy to some of them of their own accord, though in opposition to the command of God, therefore it is stated that they (the Canaanites) made war upon them so that none of them were spared, and the Israelites were not induced to show mercy to the neglect of the commandment of God."

In vers. 21, 22, the destruction of the Anakites upon the mountains of Judah and Israel is introduced in a supplementary form, which completes the history of the subjugation and extermination of the Canaanites in the south of the land (chap. x.). This supplement is not to be regarded either as a fragment interpolated by a different hand, or as a passage borrowed from another source. On the contrary, the author himself thought it necessary, having special regard to Num. xiii. 28, 31 sqq., to mention expressly that Joshua also rooted out from their settlements the sons of Anak, whom the spies in the time of Moses had described as terrible giants, and drove them into the Philistine cities of Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. "*At that time*" points back to the "long time," mentioned in ver. 18, during which Joshua was making war upon the Canaanites. The words "cut off," etc., are explained correctly by *Clericus*: "Those who fell into his hands he slew, the rest he put to flight, though, as we learn from chap. xv. 14, they afterwards returned." (On the *Anakim*, see at Num. xiii. 22.) They had their principal settlement upon the mountains in Hebron (*el Khulil*, see chap. x. 3), Debir (see at chap. x. 38), and Anab. The last place (*Anab*), upon the mountains of Judah (chap. xv. 50), has been preserved along with the old name in the village of *Anâb*, four or five hours to the south of Hebron, on the eastern side of the great Wady *el Khulil*, which runs from Hebron down to Beersheba (*Rob. Pal. ii. p. 193*). "*And from all (the rest of) the mountains of Judah, and all the mountains of Israel:*" the latter are called the mountains of Ephraim in chap. xvii. 15. The two together form the real basis of the land of Canaan, and are separated from one another by the large Wady *Beit Hanina* (see *Rob. Pal. ii. p. 333*). They received their respective names from the fact that the southern portion of the mountain land of Canaan fell to the tribe of Judah as its inheritance, and the northern part to the tribe of Ephraim and other tribes of Israel.¹ *Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod* were towns

¹ The distinction here made may be explained without difficulty even from the circumstances of Joshua's own time. Judah and the double tribe of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) received their inheritance by lot before any of the others. But whilst the tribe of Judah proceeded into the territory allotted to

of the Philistines; of these Gaza and Ashdod were allotted to the tribe of Judah (chap. xv. 47), but were never taken possession of by the Israelites, although the Philistines were sometimes subject to the Israelites (see at chap. xiii. 3).—With ver. 23a, “*thus Joshua took the whole land*” etc., the history of the conquest of Canaan by Joshua is brought to a close; and ver. 23b, “*and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel*,” forms a kind of introduction to the second part of the book. The list of the conquered kings in chap. xii. is simply an appendix to the first part.

The taking of the *whole* land does not imply that all the towns and villages to the very last had been conquered, or that all the Canaanites were rooted out from every corner of the land, but simply that the conquest was of such a character that the power of the Canaanites was broken, their dominion overthrown, and their whole land so thoroughly given into the hands of the Israelites, that those who still remained here and there were crushed into powerless fugitives, who could neither offer any further opposition to the Israelites, nor dispute the possession of the land with them, if they would only strive to fulfil the commandments of their God and persevere in the gradual extermination of the scattered remnants. Moreover, Israel had received the strongest pledge, in the powerful help which it had received from the Lord in the conquests thus far obtained, that the faithful covenant God would continue His help in the conflicts which still remained, and secure for it a complete victory and the full possession of the promised land. Looking,

them in the south, all the other tribes still remained in Gilgal; and even at a later period, when Ephraim and Manasseh were in their possessions, all Israel, with the exception of Judah, were still encamped at Shiloh. Moreover, the two parts of the nation were now separated by the territory which was afterwards assigned to the tribe of Benjamin, but had no owner at this time; and in addition to this, the altar, tabernacle, and ark of the covenant were in the midst of Joseph and the other tribes that were still assembled at Shiloh. Under such circumstances, then, would not the idea of a distinction between Judah, on the one hand, and the rest of Israel, in which the double tribe of Joseph and then the single tribe of Ephraim acquired such peculiar prominence, on the other, shape itself more and more in the mind, and what already existed in the germ begin to attain maturity even here? And what could be more natural than that the mountains in which the “children of Judah” had their settlements should be called the mountains of *Judah*; and the mountains where all the rest of Israel was encamped, where the “children of Israel” were gathered together, be called the mountains of *Israel*, and, as that particular district really belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, the mountains of *Ephraim* also? (chap. xix. 50, xx. 7; also xxiv. 30.)

therefore, at the existing state of things from this point of view, Joshua had taken possession of the whole land, and could now proceed to finish the work entrusted to him by the Lord, by dividing the land among the tribes of Israel. Joshua had really done all that the Lord had said to Moses. For the Lord had not only promised to Moses the complete extermination of the Canaanites, but had also told him that He would not drive out the Canaanites at once, or "in one year," but only little by little, until Israel multiplied and took the land (Ex. xxiii. 28-30; cf. Deut. vii. 22). Looking at this promise, therefore, the author of the book could say with perfect justice, that "*Joshua took the whole land according to all that (precisely in the manner in which) the Lord had said to Moses.*" But this did not preclude the fact, that a great deal still remained to be done before all the Canaanites could be utterly exterminated from every part of the land. Consequently, the enumeration of towns and districts that were not yet conquered, and of Canaanites who still remained, which we find in chap. xiii. 1-6, xvii. 14 sqq., xviii. 3, xxiii. 5, 12, forms no discrepancy with the statements in the verses before us, so as to warrant us in adopting any critical hypotheses or conclusions as to the composition of the book by different authors. The Israelites could easily have taken such portions of the land as were still unconquered, and could have exterminated all the Canaanites who remained, without any severe or wearisome conflicts; if they had but persevered in fidelity to their God and in the fulfilment of His commandments. If, therefore, the complete conquest of the whole land was not secured in the next few years, but, on the contrary, the Canaanites repeatedly gained the upper hand over the Israelites; we must seek for the explanation, not in the fact that Joshua had not completely taken and conquered the land, but simply in the fact that the Lord had withdrawn His help from His people because of their apostasy from Him, and had given them up to the power of their enemies to chastise them for their sins.—The distribution of the land for an inheritance to the Israelites took place "*according to their divisions by their tribes.*" מִחֲלֵקֹתָם denote the division of the twelve tribes of Israel into families, fathers' houses, and households; and is so used not only here, but in chap. xii. 7 and xviii. 10. Compare with this 1 Chron. xxiii. 6, xxiv. 1, etc., where it is applied to the different orders of priests and Levites. "*And the land rested from war:*" i.e. the war was ended, so that the peaceable task of distributing the land by lot could

now be proceeded with (*vid.* chap. xiv. 15; Judg. iii. 11, 30, v. 31).

LIST OF THE KINGS SLAUGHTERED BY THE ISRAELITES.—

CHAP. XII.

In the historical account of the wars of Joshua in the south and north of Canaan, the only kings mentioned by name as having been conquered and slain by the Israelites, were those who had formed a league to make war upon them; whereas it is stated at the close, that Joshua had smitten all the kings in the south and north, and taken possession of their towns (chap. x. 40, xi. 17). To complete the account of these conquests, therefore, a detailed list is given in the present chapter of all the kings that were slain, and not merely of those who were defeated by Joshua in the country on this side of the Jordan, but the two kings of the Amorites who had been conquered by Moses are also included, so as to give a complete picture of all the victories which Israel had gained under the omnipotent help of its God.

Vers. 1-6. List of the *kings* whom the Israelites smote, and whose land they took, *on the other side of the Jordan*,—namely, the land by the brook Arnon (Mojeb; see Num. xxi. 13) to Hermon (Jebel es Sheikh, Deut. iii. 8), and the whole of the eastern Arabah (the valley of the Jordan on the eastern side of the river).—Vers. 2, 3. On Sihon and his kingdom, see Num. xxi. 24; Deut. ii. 36, iii. 16, 17. "*Aroër on the Arnon:*" the present ruins of *Araayr*, on the northern bank of the Mojeb (see Num. xxxii. 34). אֲרֹעֶר הַנִּזְוֶה, "*and (from) the middle of the valley onwards:*" i.e., according to the parallel passages in chap. xiii. 9, 16, and Deut. ii. 36, from the town in the Arnon valley, the city of Moab mentioned in Num. xxii. 36, viz. *Ar* or *Areopolis* (see at Num. xxi. 15) in the neighbourhood of Aroër, which is mentioned as the exclusive *terminus a quo* of the land taken by the Israelites along with the inclusive terminus Aroër. "*Half-Gilead,*" i.e. the mountainous district on the south side of the Jabbok (see at Deut. iii. 10), "*to the river Jabbok,*" i.e. the upper Jabbok, the present Nahr Ammán (see at Num. xxi. 24).—Ver. 3. "*And (over) the Arabah, etc., Sihon reigned,*" i.e. over the eastern side of the Ghor, between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea (see at Deut. iii. 17). "*By the way to Bethjeshimoth, and towards the south below the slopes of Pisgah*" (see at Num. xxi. 15 and xxvii. 12), i.e. to the north-

eastern border of the desert by the Dead Sea (see at Num. xxii. 1).—Vers. 4, 5. "*And the territory of Og*," *sc.* they took possession of (ver. 1). On Og, *vid.* Deut. iii. 11; and on his residences, *Ash-taroth* (probably to be seen in Tell *Ashtereh*) and *Edrei* (now *Draa* or *Déra*), see at Gen. xiv. 5 and Num. xxi. 33. On his territory, see Deut. iii. 10, 13, 14.—Ver. 6. These two kings were smitten by Moses, etc.: *vid.* Num. xxi. 21 sqq., and xxxii. 33 sqq.

Vers. 7–24. List of the *thirty-one kings of Canaan* whom Joshua smote on the western side of the Jordan, "*from Baal-gad, in the valley of Lebanon, to the bald mountain that goeth up towards Seir*" (see chap. xi. 17). This land Joshua gave to the other tribes of Israel. (On the different parts of the land, see at chap. ix. 1, x. 40, and xi. 2).—Vers. 9 sqq. The different kings are given in the order in which they were defeated: Jericho (chap. vi. 1); Ai (chap. vii. 2); Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon (chap. x. 3); Gezer (chap. x. 33); and Debir (chap. x. 38). Those given in vers. 13*b* and 14 are not mentioned by name in chap. x. *Geder*, possibly the same as *Gedor* upon the mountains of Judah (chap. xv. 58), which has been preserved under the old name of *Jedur* (*Rob. Pal.* ii. p. 186, and *Bibl. Res.* p. 282). *Hormah* (*i.e.* banning) was in the south of Judah (chap. xv. 30), and was allotted to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 4). It was called *Zephath* by the Canaanites (*Judg.* i. 17; see at Num. xxi. 3), was on the southern slope of the mountains of the Amalekites or Amorites, the present ruins of *Sepâta*, on the western slope of the table-land of *Rakhma*, two hours and a half to the south-west of Khalasa (*Elusa*: see *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xiv. p. 1085). *Arad*, also in the Negeb, has been preserved in Tell *Arad* (see at Num. xxi. 1). *Libnah* (see at chap. x. 29). *Adullam*, which is mentioned in chap. xv. 35 among the towns of the plain between Jarmuth and Socoh, was in the neighbourhood of a large cave in which David took refuge when flying from Saul (1 Sam. xxii. 1; 2 Sam. xxiii. 13). It was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 7), and is mentioned in 2 Macc. xii. 38 as the city of Odollam. The *Onomast.* describes it as being ten Roman miles to the east of Eleutheropolis; but this is a mistake, though it has not yet been discovered. So far as the situation is concerned, *Deir Dubbân* would suit very well, a place about two hours to the north of Beit Jibrin, near to a large number of caves in the white limestone, which form a kind of labyrinth, as well as some vaulted grottos (see *Rob. Pal.* ii. p. 353, and *Van de Velde*, *Reise.* pp. 162–3). *Makkedah*: possibly *Summeil*

(see at chap. x. 10). *Bethel*, i.e. *Beitin* (see chap. viii. 17). The situation of the towns which follow in vers. 17 and 18 cannot be determined with certainty, as the names *Tappuach*, *Aphek*, and *Hefer* are met with again in different parts of Canaan, and *Lassaron* does not occur again. But if we observe, that just as from ver. 10 onwards those kings'-towns are first of all enumerated, the capture of which has already been described in chap. x., and then in vers. 15 and 16 certain other towns are added which had been taken in the war with the Canaanites of the south, so likewise in vers. 19 and 20 the capitals of the allied kings of northern Canaan are given first, and after that the other towns that were taken in the northern war, but had not been mentioned by name in chap. xi.: there can be no doubt whatever that the four towns in vers. 17 and 18 are to be classed among the kings'-towns taken in the war with the king of Jerusalem and his allies, and therefore are to be sought for in the south of Canaan and not in the north. Consequently we cannot agree with *Van de Velde* and *Knobel* in identifying *Tappuach* with *En-Tappuach* (chap. xvii. 7), and looking for it in *Atûf*, a place to the north-east of Nablus and near the valley of the Jordan; we connect it rather with *Tappuach* in the lowlands of Judah (chap. xv. 34), though the place itself has not yet been discovered. *Hefer* again is neither to be identified with *Gath-hepher* in the tribe of Zebulun (chap. xix. 13), nor with *Chafaraim* in the tribe of Issachar (chap. xix. 19), but is most probably the capital of the land of *Hefer* (1 Kings iv. 10), and to be sought for in the neighbourhood of Socoh in the plain of Judah. *Aphek* is probably the town of that name not far from Ebenezer (1 Sam. iv. 1), where the ark was taken by the Philistines, and is most likely to be sought for in the plain of Judah, though not in the village of *Ahbek* (*Rob. Pal.* ii. p. 343); but it has not yet been traced. *Knobel* imagines that it was *Aphek* near to Jezreel (1 Sam. xxix. 1), which was situated, according to the *Onom.*, in the neighbourhood of Endor (1 Sam. xxix. 1; 1 Kings xx. 26, 30); but this *Aphek* is too far north. *Lassaron* only occurs here, and hitherto it has been impossible to trace it. *Knobel* supposes it to be the place called *Saruneh*, to the west of the lake of Tiberias, and conjectures that the name has been contracted from *Lassaron* by aphæresis of the liquid. This is quite possible, if only we could look for *Lassaron* so far to the north. *Bachienne* and *Rosenmüller* imagine it to be the village of *Sharon* in the celebrated plain of that name, between Lydda and Arsuf.—Vers. 19, 20. *Madon*, *Hezor*,

Shimron-meron, and *Achshaph* (see at chap. xi. 1).—Ver. 21. *Taanach*, which was allotted to the Manassites in the territory of Issachar, and given up to the Levites (chap. xvii. 11, xxi. 25), but was not entirely wrested from the Canaanites (Judg. i. 27), is the present Tell *Taanak*, an hour and a quarter to the south-east of Lejun, a flat hill sown with corn; whilst the old name has been preserved in the small village of *Taanak*, at the south-eastern foot of the Tell (see *Van de Velde*, i. p. 269, and *Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 156).—*Megiddo*, which was also allotted to the Manassites in the territory of Issachar, though without the Canaanites having been entirely expelled (chap. xvii. 11; Judg. i. 27), was fortified by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 15), and is also well known as the place where Ahaziah died (2 Kings ix. 27), and where Josiah was beaten and slain by Pharaoh Necho (2 Kings xxiii. 29, 30; 2 Chron. xxxv. 20 sqq.). *Robinson* has shown that it was preserved in the *Legio* of a later time, the present *Lejun* (*Pal.* iii. pp. 177 sqq.; see also *Bibl. Res.* p. 116).—Ver. 22. *Kedesh*, a Levitical city and city of refuge upon the mountains of Naphtali (chap. xix. 37, xx. 7, xxi. 32), the home of Barak (Judg. iv. 6), was conquered and depopulated by Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kings xv. 29), and was also a well-known place after the captivity (1 Macc. xi. 61 sqq.). It is now an insignificant village, still bearing the ancient name, to the north-west of the lake of Huleh, or, according to *Van de Velde* (*Reise.* ii. p. 355), nothing but a miserable farmstead upon a Tell at the south-west extremity of a well-cultivated table-land, with a large quantity of antiquities about, viz. hewn stones, relics of columns, sarcophagi, and two ruins of large buildings, with an open and extensive prospect on every side (see also *Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 367 sqq.). *Jokneam*, near *Carmel*, was a Levitical town in the territory of Zebulun (chap. xix. 11, xxi. 34). *Van de Velde* and *Robinson* (*Bibl. Res.* p. 114) suppose that they have found it in Tell *Kaimôn*, on the eastern side of the Wady *el Milh*, at the north-west end of a chain of hills running towards the south-east; this Tell being 200 feet high, and occupying a very commanding situation, so that it governed the main pass on the western side of Esdraelon towards the southern plain. *Kaimôn* is the Arabic form of the ancient *Καμινά*, *Cimana*, which *Eusebius* and *Jerome* describe in the *Onom.* as being six Roman miles to the north of *Legio*, on the road to Ptolemais.—Ver. 23. *Dor*: see chap. xi. 2. *Gilgal*: the seat of the king of the *Goyim* (a proper name, as in Gen. xiv. 1), in all probability the same place as the *villa nomine Galgulis* mentioned in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Gelgel*) as being six Roman

miles to the north of Antipatris, which still exists in the Moslem village of *Jiljule* (now almost a ruin; see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 136), although this village is only two miles E.S.E. of Kefr Sába, the ancient Antipatris (see *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. pp. 568-9). *Thirza*, the capital of the kings of Israel down to the time of Omri (1 Kings xiv. 17, xv. 21, 33, xvi. 6 sqq.), is probably the present Talluza, an elevated and beautifully situated place, of a considerable size, surrounded by large olive groves, two hours to the north of Shechem (see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 302, and *Van de Velde*, ii. p. 294).

II.—DIVISION OF THE LAND OF CANAAN AMONG THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL.

CHAP. XIII.-XXIV.

The distribution of the conquered land among the Israelites is introduced by the command of the Lord to Joshua to enter upon this work, now that he was old, although different portions of land were still unconquered (chap. xiii. 1-7); and to this there is appended a description of the land on the east of the Jordan which had already been conquered and divided among the two tribes and a half (chap. xiii. 8-33). The distribution of the land on this side among the nine tribes and a half is related in its historical order; so that not only are the territories assigned by lot to the different tribes described according to their respective boundaries and towns, but the historical circumstances connected with the division and allotting of the land are also introduced into the description. These historical accounts are so closely connected with the *geographical* descriptions of the territory belonging to the different tribes, that the latter alone will explain the course pursued in the distribution of the land, and the various ways in which the different territories are described (see the remarks on chap. xiv. 1). For example, in the account of the inheritance which fell to the lot of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, not only are the boundaries most carefully traced, but the towns are also enumerated one by one (chap. xv. and xviii. 11-28); whereas in the tribe of Joseph (Ephraim and half Manasseh) the list of the towns is altogether wanting (chap. xvi. and xvii.); and in the possessions of the other tribes, either towns alone are mentioned, as in the case of Simeon and Dan

(chap. xix. 1-9, 40-48), or the boundaries and towns are mixed up together, but both of them given incompletely, as in the case of Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali (chap. xix. 10-16, 17-23, 24-31, 32-39). This incompleteness, particularly in the territories of the tribes mentioned last, may be explained from the fact, that in northern Canaan there were still very many tracts of land in the hands of the Canaanites, and the Israelites had not acquired a sufficiently exact or complete knowledge of the country, either through Joshua's campaign in the north, or through the men who were sent out to survey the northern land before it was divided (chap. xviii. 4-9), to enable them to prepare a complete account of the boundaries and towns at the very outset. In the same way, too, we may explain the absence of the list of towns in the case of the tribes of Ephraim and half Manasseh,—namely, from the fact that a large portion of the territory assigned to the tribe of Joseph was still in the possession of the Canaanites (*vid.* chap. xvii. 14-18); whilst the omission of any account of the boundaries in the case of Simeon and Dan is attributable to the circumstance that the former received its inheritance within the tribe of Judah, and the latter between Judah and Ephraim, whilst the space left for the Danites was so small, that Ephraim and Judah had to give up to them some of the towns in their own territory. Thus the very inequality and incompleteness of the geographical accounts of the possessions of the different tribes decidedly favour the conclusion, that they are the very lists which were drawn up at the time when Joshua divided the land. There is nothing to preclude this supposition in the fact that several towns occur with different names, *e.g.* *Beth-shemesh* and *Ir-shemesh* (chap. xv. 10, xix. 41, xxi. 16), *Madmannah* and *Beth-marcaboth*, *Sansanna* and *Hazar-susa* (chap. xv. 31, xix. 5), *Shilchim* and *Sharuchen* (chap. xv. 32, xix. 6), *Remeth* and *Jarmuth* (chap. xix. 21, xxi. 29), or in other smaller differences. For variations of this kind may be sufficiently explained from the fact that such places were known by two different names, which could be used promiscuously; whilst in other cases the difference in the name amounts to nothing more than a different mode of writing or pronouncing it: *e.g.* *Kattah* and *Kartah* (chap. xix. 15, xxi. 34), *Eshtemoh* and *Eshtemoa* (chap. xv. 50, xxi. 14), *Baalalah* and *Balah* (chap. xv. 29, xix. 3); or simply in the contraction of a composite name, such as *Ramoth* in Gilead for *Ramoth-mizpeh* (chap. xxi. 36, xiii. 26); *Bealoth* and *Baalath-beer* (chap. xv. 24, xix. 8), *Lebaoth* and *Beth-lebaoth* (chap. xv. 32, xix. 6), *Hammath*

and *Hammoth-dor* (chap. xix. 35, xxi. 32). If the author, on the other hand, had drawn from later sources, or had simply given the results of later surveys, as *Knobel* supposes, there can be no doubt that much greater uniformity would be found in the different lists.¹

COMMAND OF GOD TO DIVIDE THE LAND OF CANAAN. DESCRIPTION OF THE TERRITORY OF THE TWO TRIBES AND A HALF.
—CHAP. XIII.

Vers. 1-14. INTRODUCTION TO THE DIVISION OF THE LAND.
—Vers. 1-7. Command of the Lord to Joshua to distribute the land of Canaan by lot among the nine tribes and a half. Ver. 1 contains only the commencement of the divine command; the conclusion follows in ver. 7. Vers. 2-6 form a parenthesis of several clauses, defining the last clause of ver. 1 more fully. When Joshua had grown old, the Lord commanded him, as he was advanced in years, and there was still much land to be taken, to divide "*this land*," i.e. the whole of the land of Canaan, for an inheritance to

¹ The arguments employed by *Knobel* in support of his assertion, consist on the one hand of inconclusive and incorrect assertions, and are founded on the other hand upon arbitrary assumptions. In the first place, for example, he asserts that "a large number of towns are omitted from the lists, which were within the boundaries mentioned and were in existence in the very earliest times, viz. *in the south*, Tamar (Gen. xiv. 7), Arad (Num. xxi. 1), Atbach, Rachal, Arcoer, and Siphamoth (1 Sam. xxx. 28 sqq.), Gerar (Gen. xx. 26); *in the Shephelah*, Gaza, Askalon, Gath, Ashdod, Jabne, and Joppa (see chap. xv. 45 sqq.); *in Benjamin*, Michmash and Nob (1 Sam. xiii. 2 sqq., xxii. 19); *in the north*, Aphek, Lassaron, Madon, Shimron-meron, and Merom (chap. xi. 5, xii. 18-20), as well as Meroz and Ajjalon (Judg. v. 23, xii. 12); and these with other places would assuredly not be wanting here, if Joshua and his associates had distributed the towns as well as the land, and furnished our author with the lists." But it would be difficult to bring forward the proofs of this, since *Knobel* himself acknowledges that there are gaps in the lists which have come down to us, some of which can be proved to be the fault of the copyists,—such, for example, as the want of a whole section after chap. xv. 19 and xxi. 35. Moreover, the Philistine towns of Ashdod and Gaza are really mentioned in chap. xv. 46, and the others at all events hinted at; whereas *Knobel* first of all arbitrarily rejects chap. xv. 45-47 from the text, in order that he may afterwards be able to speak of it as omitted. Again, with many of the places mentioned as omissions, such as Atbach, Rachal, Siphamoth, etc., it is very questionable whether they were towns at all in Joshua's time, or, at all events, such towns as we should expect to find mentioned. And lastly, not only are no catalogues of towns given at all in the case of Ephraim and Manasseh, but we have only imperfect catalogues in the case of Zebulun, Asher, and Naphtali; and, as we

the nine tribes and a half, and promised him at the same time that He would drive out the Canaanites from those portions of the land that were not yet conquered (ver. 6). The words "*grown old and come into years*" (*vid.* Gen. xxiv. 1, xviii. 11, etc.) denote advanced age in its different stages up to the near approach of death (as, for example, in chap. xxiii. 1). Joshua might be ninety or a hundred years old at this time. The allusion to Joshua's great age serves simply to explain the reason for the command of God. As he was already old, and there still remained much land to be taken, he was to proceed to the division of Canaan, that he might accomplish this work to which he was also called before his death; whereas he might very possibly suppose that, under existing circumstances, the time for allotting the land had not yet arrived.—In vers. 2–6 the districts that were not yet conquered are enumerated separately.—Vers. 2, 3. All the *circles of the Philistines* (*geliloth*, circles of well-defined districts lying round the chief city). The reference is to the five towns of the Philistines, whose princes are mentioned in ver. 3. "*And all Geshuri:*" not the district of Geshur in Peræa

have already observed, this incompleteness and these gaps can be satisfactorily explained from the historical circumstances under which the allotment of the land took place. *Secondly*, *Knobel* also maintains, that "Joshua's conquests did not extend to the Lebanon (chap. xiii. 4, 5), and yet the author mentions towns of the Asherites there (chap. xix. 28, 30): Bethel was not taken till after the time of Joshua (Judg. i. 22 sqq.), and this was also the case with Jerusalem (Judg. i. 8), and in the earliest times of the judges they had no Hebrew inhabitants (Judg. xix. 12), yet the author speaks of both places as towns of the Benjamites (chap. xviii. 22, 28); Jericho and Ai were lying in ruins in Joshua's time (chap. vi. 24, viii. 28), yet they are spoken of here as towns of Benjamin that had been rebuilt (chap. xviii. 21, 23); it is just the same with Hazor in Naphtali (chap. xi. 13, xix. 36); and according to Judg. i. 1, 10 sqq., Hebron and Debir also were not conquered till after Joshua's time." But all this rests (1) upon the false assumption, that the only towns which Joshua distributed by lot among the tribes of Israel were those which he permanently conquered, whereas, according to the command of God, he divided the whole land among the Israelites, whether it was conquered or not; (2) upon the erroneous opinion, that the towns which had been destroyed, such as Jericho, Ai, and Hazor, were allotted to the Israelites as "rebuilt," whereas there is not a word about this in the text. It is just the same with the arguments used by *Knobel* in proof of the composition of chap. xiii.–xxi. from three different documents. The material discrepancies have been forced upon the text, as we shall see when we come to an explanation of the passages in question; and the verbal differences prove nothing more than that the geographical account of the boundaries and towns contains no allusion to the priesthood, to sacrifice, or to certain other things which no one would think of looking for here.

(vers. 11, 13, xii. 5; Deut. iii. 14), but the territory of the Geshurites, a small tribe in the south of Philistia, on the edge of the north-western portion of the Arabian desert which borders on Egypt; it is only mentioned again in 1 Sam. xxvii. 8. The land of the Philistines and Geshurites extended from the Sichor of Egypt (on the south) to the territory of Ekron (on the north). *Sichor* (*Sihor*), *lit.* the black river, is not the Nile, because this is always called נִילוֹס (the river) in simple prose (Gen. xli. 1, 3; Ex. i. 22), and was not "before Egypt," i.e. to the east of it, but flowed through the middle of the land. The "*Sichor before Egypt*" was the brook (*nachal*) of Egypt, the Πυροκορύφα, the modern Wady el Arish, which is mentioned in chap. xv. 4, 47, etc., as the southern border of Canaan towards Egypt (see at Num. xxxiv. 5). *Ekron* (Ἀππακκόν, LXX.), the most northerly of the five chief cities of the Philistines, was first of all allotted to the tribe of Judah (chap. xv. 11, 45), then on the further distribution it was given to Dan (chap. xix. 43); after Joshua's death it was conquered by Judah (Judg. i. 18), though it was not permanently occupied. It is the present Akir, a considerable village in the plain, two hours to the south-west of Ramlah, and on the east of Jamnia, without ruins of any antiquity, with the exception of two old wells walled round, which probably belong to the times of the Crusaders (see *Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 23). "*To the Canaanites is reckoned* (the territory of the) *five lords of the Philistines*," i.e. it was reckoned as belonging to the land of Canaan, and allotted to the Israelites like all the rest. This remark was necessary, because the Philistines were not descendants of Canaan (see at Gen. x. 14), but yet were to be driven out like the Canaanites themselves as being invaders of Canaanitish territory (cf. Deut. ii. 23). סָרִי, from סָרַן, the standing title of the princes of the Philistines (*vid.* Judg. iii. 3, xvi. 5 sqq.; 1 Sam. v. 8), does not mean kings, but princes, and is interchangeable with שָׂרִי (cf. 1 Sam. xxix. 6 with vers. 4, 9). At any rate, it was the native or Philistian title of the Philistine princes, though it is not derived from the same root as *Sar*, but is connected with *seren*, *axis rotæ*, in the tropical sense of *princeps*, for which the Arabic furnishes several analogies (see *Ges. Thes.* p. 972). The capitals of these five princes were the following. *Azzah* (*Gaza*, i.e. the strong): this was allotted to the tribe of Judah and taken by the Judæans (chap. xv. 47; Judg. i. 18), but was not held long. It is at the present time a considerable town of about 15,000 inhabitants, with the old name of *Ghazzeh*, about an hour from the sea, and with a

seaport called *Majuma*; it is the farthest town of Palestine towards the south-west (see *Rob. Pal. ii. pp. 374 sqq.*; *Ritter, Erdk. xvi. pp. 35 sqq.*; *Stark, Gaza, etc., pp. 45 sqq.*). *Ashdod* (*Ἀζωτος, Azotus*): this was also allotted to the tribe of Judah (chap. xv. 46, 47), the seat of Dagon-worship, to which the Philistines carried the ark (1 Sam. v. 1 sqq.). It was conquered by Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 6), was afterwards taken by Tartan, the general of Sargon (Isa. xx. 1), and was besieged by Psammetichus for twenty-nine years (Herod. ii. 157). It is the present *Esdud*, a Mahometan village with about a hundred or a hundred and fifty miserable huts, upon a low, round, wooded height on the road from Jamnia to Gaza, two miles to the south of Jamnia, about half an hour from the sea (*vid. Rob. i. p. 368*). *Ashkalon*: this was conquered by the Judæans after the death of Joshua (Judg. i. 8, 9); but shortly afterwards recovered its independence (*vid. Judg. xiv. 19*; 1 Sam. vi. 17). It is the present *Askulân* on the sea-shore between Gaza and Ashdod, five hours to the north of Gaza, with considerable and widespread ruins (see *v. Raumb. pp. 173-4*; *Ritter, xvi. pp. 69 sqq.*). *Gath* (*Γέθ*): this was for a long time the seat of the Rephaites, and was the home of Goliath (chap. xi. 22; 1 Sam. xvii. 4, 23; 2 Sam. xxi. 19 sqq.; 1 Chron. xx. 5 sqq.); it was thither that the Philistines of Ashdod removed the ark, which was taken thence to Ekron (1 Sam. v. 7-10). David was the first to wrest it from the Philistines (1 Chron. xviii. 1). In the time of Solomon it was a royal city of the Philistines, though no doubt under Israelitish supremacy (1 Kings ii. 39, v. 1). It was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 8), was taken by the Syrians in the time of Joash (2 Kings xii. 18), and was conquered again by Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 6; Amos vi. 2); but no further mention is made of it, and no traces have yet been discovered¹ (see *Rob. ii. p. 420*, and *v.*

¹ According to the *Onom. (s. v. Geth)*, it was a place five Roman miles from Eleutheropolis towards Diospolis, whereas Jerome (on Micah i.) says: "*Gath* was near the border of Judæa, and on the road from Eleutheropolis to Gaza; it is still a very large village;" whilst in the commentary on Jer. xxv. he says: "*Gath* was near to and conterminous with Azotus," from which it is obvious enough that the situation of the Philistine city of Gath was altogether unknown to the Fathers. *Hitzig* and *Knobel* suppose the *Βαρυγάβρα* of *Ptolemy* (v. 16, 6), *Betogabri* in *Tab. Peut.* ix. e. (the Eleutheropolis of the Fathers, and the present *Beit Jibrin*, a very considerable ruin), to be the ancient Gath, but this opinion is only founded upon very questionable etymological combinations; whereas *Thenius* looks for it on the site of the present *Deir Dubban*, though without any tenable ground.

Raumer, Pal. pp. 191-2). "*And the Avvites (Avvæans) towards the south.*" Judging from Deut. ii. 23, the *Avvim* appear to have belonged to those tribes of the land who were already found there by the Canaanites, and whom the Philistines subdued and destroyed when they entered the country. They are not mentioned in Gen. x. 15-19 among the Canaanitish tribes. At the same time, there is not sufficient ground for identifying them with the Geshurites as *Ewald* does, or with the Anakites, as *Bertheau* has done. Moreover, it cannot be decided whether they were descendants of Ham or Shem (see *Stark*. Gaza, pp. 32 sqq.). מִן הַיָּם (from, or on, the south) at the commencement of ver. 4 should be attached to ver. 3, as it is in the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, and joined to הָאֲבִיטִים (the Avvites). The Avvæans dwelt to the south of the Philistines, on the south-west of Gaza. It gives no sense to connect it with what follows, so as to read "*towards the south all the land of the Canaanites;*" for whatever land to the south of Gaza, or of the territory of the Philistines, was still inhabited by Canaanites, could not possibly be called "all the land of the Canaanites." If, however, we were disposed to adopt the opinion held by *Masius* and *Rosenmüller*, and understand these words as relating to the southern boundaries of Canaan, "the possessions of the king of Arad and the neighbouring petty kings who ruled in the southern extremity of Judæa down to the desert of Paran, Zin, Kadesh," etc., the fact that Arad and the adjoining districts are always reckoned as belonging to the Negeb would at once be decisive against it (compare chap. xv. 21 sqq. with chap. x. 40, xi. 16, also Num. xxi. 1). Moreover, according to chap. x. 40, 41, and xi. 16, 17, Joshua had smitten the whole of the south of Canaan from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza and taken it; so that nothing remained unconquered there, which could possibly have been mentioned in this passage as not yet taken by the Israelites. For the fact that the districts, which Joshua traversed so victoriously and took possession of, were not all permanently held by the Israelites, does not come into consideration here at all. If the author had thought of enumerating all these places, he would have had to include many other districts as well.

Beside the territory of the Philistines on the south-west, there still remained to be taken (vers. 4, 5) in the north, "*all the land of the Canaanites;*" i.e. of the Phœnicians dwelling on the coast, and "*the caves which belonged to the Sidonians unto Aphek.*" *Mearah* (the cave) is the present *Mugr Jezzín*, i.e. cave of Jezzín, on the east of

Sidon, in a steep rocky wall of Lebanon, a hiding-place of the Druses at the present time (see at Num. xxxiv. 8; also *F. v. Richter*, *Wallfahrten in Morgenland*, p. 133). *Aphék*, or *Aphik*, was allotted to the tribe of Asher (chap. xix. 30; Judg. i. 31); it was called *Ἀφακα* by the Greeks; there was a temple of Venus there, which Constantine ordered to be destroyed, on account of the licentious nature of the worship (*Euseb. Vita Const.* iii. 55). It is the present *Afka*, a small village, but a place of rare beauty, upon a terrace of Lebanon, near the chief source of the river *Adonis* (*Nahr Ibrahim*), with ruins of an ancient temple in the neighbourhood, surrounded by groves of the most splendid walnut trees on the north-east of Beirut (see *O. F. v. Richter*, pp. 106–7; *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 663; and *V. de Velde*, *Reise.* ii. p. 398). “*To the territory of the Amorites:*” this is obscure. We cannot imagine the reference to be to the territory of Og of Bashan, which was formerly inhabited by Amorites, as that did not extend so far north; and the explanation given by *Knobel*, that farther north there were not Canaanites, but Amorites, who were of Semitic origin, rests upon hypotheses which cannot be historically sustained.—Ver. 5. There still remained to be taken (2) “*the land of the Gíblites,*” i.e. the territory of the population of *Gebal* (1 Kings v. 32; Ezek. xxvii. 9), the *Byblos* of the classics, on the Mediterranean Sea, to the north of Beirut, called *Jebail* by the Arabs, and according to *Edrisi* (*ed. Jaubert*, i. p. 356), “a pretty town on the sea-shore, enclosed in good walls, and surrounded by vineyards and extensive grounds planted with fruit trees” (see also *Abulfed.* *Tab. Syr.* p. 94). It is still a town with an old wall, some portions of which apparently belong to the time of the Crusades (see *Burckhardt*, *Syr.* p. 296, and *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvii. pp. 60 sqq.).¹ “*And all Lebanon toward the sunrising:*” i.e. not Antilibanus (*Knobel*), but the Lebanon which is to the east of the territory of Gebal, “*from Baal-gad under Mount Hermon,*” i.e. *Paneas Banjas* at the foot of Hermon (see at chap. xi. 17), “*unto the entering in to Hamath,*” i.e. as far up as the territory of the kingdom of Hamath, with the capital of the same name on the Orontes (see at Num. xxxiv. 8). Lastly, there still remained (3) “*all the inhabitants of the mountains, from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim,*” i.e. the promontory of *Nakura* (see at chap. xi. 8), namely “*all the Sidonians,*” i.e. all the Phœnicians who dwelt from Lebanon southwards, from the boundary of the territory of Hamath down

¹ The evidence adduced by *Movers* (*Phönizier*, ii. 1, p. 103), that the Gíblites did not belong to the Canaanites, has more plausibility than truth.

to the promontory of Nakura. According to ancient usage, the Sidonians stand for the Phœnicians generally, as in Homer, on account of Sidon being the oldest capital of Phœnicia (see *Ges.* on Is. i. pp. 724 sqq.). All these the Lord would root out before Israel, and therefore Joshua was to divide the whole of northern Canaan, which was inhabited by Phœnicians, among the Israelites. "*Only divide thou it by lot for an inheritance,*" etc. פָּרַךְ, only, *i.e.* although thou hast not yet taken it. פָּרַךְ, to cause it to fall, here used with reference to the lot, *i.e.* to divide by lot. "Fulfil thy duty in the distribution of the land, not even excepting what is still in the firm grasp of the enemy; for I will take care to perform what I have promised. From this we may learn to rely so perfectly upon the word of God, when undertaking any duty, as not to be deterred by doubts or fears" (*Calvin*).

Vers. 8-14. To the command of God to divide the land on this side the Jordan among the nine tribes and a half (ver. 7), the historian appends the remark, that the other two tribes and a half had already received their inheritance from Moses on the other side (ver. 8). This he proceeds to describe in its full extent (vers. 9-13), and then observes that the tribe of Levi alone received no landed inheritance, according to the word of the Lord (ver. 14). After this he gives a description in vers. 15-33 of the land assigned by Moses to each of the two tribes and a half.¹ The remark in ver. 8 is so closely connected with what precedes by the expression "with whom" (*lit. with it*), that this expression must be taken as somewhat indefinite: "with whom," viz. with half Manasseh, really signifying with the *other* half of Manasseh, with which the Reubenites and Gadites had received their inheritance (see Num. xxxii. and Deut. iii. 8-17). The last words of ver. 8, "*as Moses the servant of Jehovah gave them,*" are not a tautological repetition of the clause "which Moses gave them," but simply affirm that these tribes received the land given them by Moses, in the manner commanded by Moses, without any alteration in his arrangements. The boundaries of the land given in vers. 9-13 really agree with those given in chap. xii. 2-5 and Deut. iii. 8, although the expression

¹ *Knobel's* remark, that vers. 8-14 anticipate the following section (vers. 15-33) in an unsuitable manner, rests upon a thorough misunderstanding of the whole; for the account of the division of the land to the east of the Jordan among the two tribes and a half (vers. 15-33) could not be introduced in a more appropriate manner than by a description of the circumference of the land and of its principal parts (vers. 9-13).

varies in some respects. The words of ver. 9, "*the city that is in the midst of the river*," i.e. the city in the valley, viz. *Ar*, are more distinct than those of chap. xii. 2, "and from the middle of the river." "*All the plain*" is the Amoritish table-land, a tract of land for the most part destitute of trees, stretching from the Arnon to Heshbon, and towards the north-east to Rabbath-Ammân (see at Deut. iii. 10), which is called in Num. xxi. 20 the field of Moab. *Medeba*, now called *Medaba* (see at Num. xxi. 30). *Dibon*, now a ruin called *Dibân*, to the north of Arnon (see at Num. xxi. 20).—Ver. 10, as in chap. xii. 2.—Ver. 11. *Gilead* is the whole country of that name on both sides of the Jabbok (see at chap. xii. 2 and Deut. iii. 10), the present Belka and Jebel Ajlun, for the description of which see the remarks at Num. xxxii. 1. "*The territory of the Geshurites and Maachathites*" is referred to in chap. xii. 5 as the boundary of the kingdom of Og, and in Deut. iii. 14 as the boundary of the land which was taken by Jair the Manassite; here it is included in the inheritance of the tribes on the other side of the Jordan, but it was never really taken possession of by the Israelites, and (according to ver. 13) it had probably never been really subject to king Og. The other notices in vers. 11 and 12 are the same as in chap. xii. 4, 5.—Ver. 14. The tribe of Levi was to receive no land, but the firings of Jehovah, i.e. the offerings, including the tithes and first-fruits (Lev. xxvii. 30–32, compared with Num. xviii. 21–32), were to be its inheritance; so that the God of Israel himself is called the inheritance of Levi in ver. 33 as in Num. xviii. 20, to which the words "as He said unto them" refer (see the commentary on Num. xviii. 20).

Vers. 15–33. THE POSSESSIONS OF THE TWO TRIBES AND A HALF.—Vers. 15–23. The tribe of *Reuben* received its inheritance in the south—namely, the territory from Aroër in the Arnon valley, and from Ar in that valley, onwards, and the plain (table-land) by Medeba (see ver. 9), with Heshbon the capital and her towns, i.e. the towns dependent upon it, in the plain. *Heshbon*, almost in the centre between the Arnon and the Jabbok, was situated upon the border of the inheritance of the Reubenites, and was ceded to the Gadites, who gave it up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 39; 1 Chron. vi. 66: see at Num. xxxii. 37). *Dibon*, called Dibon of Gad in Num. xxxiii. 45, because the Gadites had built, i.e. fortified it, was on the south of Heshbon, only an hour from Aroër, on the Arnon (ver. 9). *Bamoth-baal*, also called Bamoth simply (Num. xxi. 20; Isa. xv. 2),

is to be sought for on the Jebel Attarus (see at Num. xxi. 20). It was thence that Balaam saw the end of the Israelitish camp (Num. xxii. 41). *Bethbaal-meon*, the present ruin of *Myun*, three-quarters of an hour S.E. of Heshbon (see at Num. xxxii. 38). *Jahza*, where Sihon was defeated, was to the east of Medeba, according to the *Onom.*; and Dibon was on the border of the desert (see at Num. xxi. 23). *Kedemoth*, on the border of the desert, to the north-west of Kalaat Balua, is to be sought on the northern bank of the Balua, or upper Arnou (see at Num. xxi. 13). *Mephaath*, where there was a garrison stationed (according to the *Onom.*) as a defence against the inhabitants of the desert, is to be sought for in the neighbourhood of Jahza, with which it is always associated (Jer. xlviii. 21). Kedemoth and Mephaath were given up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 37; 1 Chron. vi. 64).—Vers. 19, 20. *Kirjathaim*, where Chedorlaomer defeated the Emim, is probably to be found in the ruins of *et-Teym*, half an hour to the west of Medaba (see at Gen. xiv. 5). *Sibmah* (Num. xxxii. 38), according to *Jerome* (on Isa. xvi. 8), only 500 paces from Heshbon, appears to have hopelessly disappeared. *Zereth-hashachar*, *i.e.* *splendor auroræ*, which is only mentioned here, was situated “upon a mountain of the valley.” According to ver. 27, the valley was the Jordan valley, or rather (according to Gen. xiv. 3, 8) the vale of Siddim, a valley running down on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. *Seetzen* conjectures that the town referred to is the present ruin of *Sarâ*, on the south of Zerka Maein.—*Beth-peor*, opposite to Jericho, six Roman miles higher than (to the east of) *Libias*: see at Num. xxiii. 28. The “*slopes of Pisgah*” (chap. xii. 3; Deut. iii. 17): to the south of the former, on the north-eastern shore of the Dead Sea (see at Num. xxvii. 12). *Beth-jeshimoth* (chap. xii. 3), in the Ghor el Seisabân, on the north-east side of the Dead Sea (see at Num. xxii. 1). In ver. 21a, the places which Reuben received in addition to those mentioned by name are all summed up in the words, “and all the (other) towns of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon,” *sc.* so far as it extended over the plain. These limitations of the words are implied in the context: the first in the fact that towns in the plain are mentioned in ver. 17; the second in the fact that, according to ver. 27, “the rest of the kingdom of Sihon,” *i.e.* the northern portion of it, was given to the Gadites. The allusion to Sihon induced the author to mention his defeat again; see at Num. xxxi., where the five Midianitish vassals who were slain with Sihon are noticed in ver. 8, and the death of Balaam is also mentioned.

"*Dukes of Sihon*," properly vassals of Sihon; נְסִיכִים does not signify anointed, however, but means literally poured out, *i.e.* cast, moulded, enfeoffed. The word points to the "creation of a prince by the communication or pouring in of power" (*Gusset. s. v.*).—Ver. 23. "*And (this) was the boundary of the sons of Reuben, the Jordan and its territory*," *i.e.* the Jordan, or rather land adjoining it. The meaning is, that the territory of Reuben, *viz.* with the places mentioned last (ver. 20), reached to the territory of the Jordan; for so far as the principal part was concerned, it was on the east of the Dead Sea, as it only reached from the Arnon to Heshbon, *i.e.* up to the latitude of the northern extremity of the Dead Sea. "*The towns and their villages*," חֲצִיר, farm premises, used, as in Lev. xxv. 31, to denote places not enclosed by a wall.

Vers. 24–28. Inheritance of the tribe of *Gad*.—This tribe received *Jaëzer* (probably *es Szyr*: see at Num. xxi. 32) and "*all the towns of Gilead*," *i.e.* of the southern half of Gilead, which belonged to the kingdom of Sihon; for the northern half, which belonged to the kingdom of Og, was given to the Manassites (ver. 31), "*and the half of the land of the sons of Ammon, to Aroër before Rabbah*," *i.e.* that portion of the land of the Ammonites between the Arnon and the Jabbok, which the Amorites under Sihon had taken from the Ammonites, namely, the land on the east of Gilead, on the western side of the upper Jabbok (Nahr Ammân: Deut. ii. 37, iii. 16; cf. Judg. xi. 13); for the land of the Ammonites, *i.e.* the land which they still held in the time of Moses, on the eastern side of Nahr Ammân, the Israelites were not allowed to attack (Deut. ii. 19). *Aroër before Rabbah*, *i.e.* Ammân (see Deut. iii. 11), is Aroër of Gad, and must be distinguished from Aroër of Reuben on the Arnon (ver. 16). It is only mentioned again in Judg. xi. 33 and 2 Sam. xxiv. 5, and was situated, according to 2 Sam., in the valley of Gad, that is to say, in a wady or valley through which *Gesenius* supposes an arm of the Jabbok to have flowed, and *Thenius* the Jabbok itself, though neither of them has sufficient ground for his conjecture. It is also not to be identified with the ruin of *Ayra* to the south-west of Szalt, as this is not in a wady at all; but in all probability it is to be sought for to the north-east of Rabbah, in the Wady Nahr Ammân, on the side of the Kalat *Zerka Gadda*, the situation of which suits this verse and 2 Sam. xxiv. 5 very well, and may easily be reconciled with Judg. xi. 33.—In ver. 26 the extent of the territory of Gad is first of all described from north to south: *viz.* from Heshbon (see ver. 17)

to *Ramath-mizpeh*, or *Ramoth* in Gilead (chap. xx. 8), probably on the site of the present *Szalt* (see at Deut. iv. 43), "*and Betonim*," probably the ruin of *Batneh*, on the mountains which bound the Ghor towards the east between the Wady Shaib and Wady Ajlun, in the same latitude as *Szalt* (*V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 298); and then, *secondly*, the northern boundary is described from west to east, "*from Mahanaim to the territory of Lidbir*." *Mahanaim* (double-camp: Gen. xxxii. 2), which was given up by Gad to the Levites (chap. xxi. 30), in which Ishbosheth was proclaimed king (2 Sam. ii. 8, 9), and to which David fled from Absalom (2 Sam. xvii. 24, 27; 1 Kings ii. 8), is not to be sought for, as *Knobel* supposes, in the ruins of *Meysera*, to the south of Jabbok, four hours and a half from *Szalt*, but was on the north of the Jabbok, since Jacob did not cross the ford of the Jabbok till after the angel had appeared to him at Mahanaim (Gen. xxxii. 3, 23). It was in or by the valley of the Jordan (according to 2 Sam. xviii. 23, 24), and has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Mahneh*, the situation of which, however, has not yet been determined (see at Gen. xxxii. 3). *Lidbir* is quite unknown; the *lamed*, however, is not to be taken as a prefix, but forms part of the word. *J. D. Michaelis* and *Knobel* suppose it to be the same as *Lo-debar* in 2 Sam. ix. 4, 5, xvii. 27, a place from which provisions were brought to David at Mahanaim on his flight from Absalom, and which is to be sought for on the east of Mahanaim.—Ver. 27. On the north, the territory of Gad seems to have extended to the Jabbok, and only to have stretched beyond the Jabbok at Mahanaim, which formed the boundary of half-Manasseh, according to ver. 30. In the valley of the Jordan, on the other hand, the boundary reached to the Sea of Galilee. "*The valley*" is the valley of the Jordan, or the Arabah from Wady Hesbân above the Dead Sea up to the Sea of Galilee, along the east side of the Jordan, which belonged to the kingdom of Sihon (chap. xii. 3; Deut. iii. 17). The northern boundary of the tribe of Reuben must have touched the Jordan in the neighbourhood of the Wady Hesbân. In the Jordan valley were *Beth-haram*, the future *Libias*, and present *er Rameh* (see at Num. xxxii. 36); *Beth-nimra*, according to the *Onom.* five Roman miles to the north, the present ruin of *Nimrein* (see at Num. xxxii. 36); *Succoth*, according to the *Onom. trans Jordanem in parte Scythopoleos* (see at Gen. xxxiii. 17); *Zaphon* (i.e. north), probably not far from the southern extremity of the Sea of Galilee. "*The rest of the kingdom of Sihon*," the other part having been given to the Reubenites (ver. 21).

Vers. 29-31. The territory of the *half tribe of Manasseh* extended from Mahanaim onwards, and embraced all Bashan, with the sixty Jair towns and the (northern) half of Gilead (see the comm. on Deut. iii. 13-15).—Ver. 32 is the concluding formula. (For the fact itself, see Num. xxxiv. 14, 15.)—Ver. 33 is a repetition of ver. 14.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE DIVISION OF THE LAND OF CANAAN.
INHERITANCE OF CALEB.—CHAP. XIV.

Vers. 1-5 form the heading and introduction to the account of the division of the land among the nine tribes and a half, which reaches to chap. xix., and is brought to a close by the concluding formula in chap. xix. 51. The division of the land of Canaan according to the boundaries laid down in Num. xxxiv. 2-12 was carried out, in accordance with the instructions in Num. xxxiv. 16-29, by the high priest Eleazar, Joshua, and ten heads of fathers' houses of the nine tribes and a half, whose names are given in Num. xxxiv. 18-28. "*By the lot of their inheritance,*" i.e. by casting lots for it: this is dependent upon the previous clause, "*which they distributed for inheritance to them.*" "*As the Lord commanded through Moses*" (Num. xxvi. 52-56, xxxiii. 54, and xxxiv. 13), "*to the nine tribes and a half*" (this is also dependent upon the clause "*which they distributed for inheritance*").—Vers. 3, 4. So many tribes were to receive their inheritance, for the two tribes and a half had already received theirs from Moses on the other side of the Jordan, and the tribe of Levi was not to receive any land for an inheritance. According to this, there seem to be only eight tribes and a half to be provided for ($2\frac{1}{2} + 1 + 8\frac{1}{2} = 12$); but there were really nine and a half, for the sons of Joseph formed two tribes in consequence of the adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh by the patriarch Jacob (Gen. xlviii. 5). But although the Levites were to have no share in the land, they were to receive towns to dwell in, with pasture adjoining for their cattle; these the other tribes were to give up to them out of their inheritance, according to the instructions in Num. xxxv. 1-8 (see the notes upon this passage).

So far as the division of the land itself was concerned, it was to be distributed by lot, according to Num. xxvi. 52 sqq.; but, at the same time, the distribution was carried out with such special regard to the relative sizes of the different tribes, that the more numerous tribe received a larger share of the land than one that was not so

numerous. This could only be accomplished, however, by their restricting the lot to the discrimination of the relative situation of the different tribes, and then deciding the extent and boundaries of their respective possessions according to the number of families of which they were composed.¹ The casting of the lots was probably effected, as the Rabbins assumed, by means of two urns, one filled with slips having the names of the tribes upon them; the other, with an equal number, representing separate divisions of the land: so that when one slip, with a name upon it, was taken out of one urn, another slip, with a division of the land upon it, was taken from the other. The result of the lot was accepted as the direct decree of God; "for the lot was not controlled in any way by the opinion, or decision, or authority of men" (*Calvin*). See the fuller remarks at Num. xxvi. 56. In the account of the casting of the lots, the first fact which strikes us is, that after the tribes of Judah and Joseph had received their inheritance, an interruption took place, and the camp was moved from Gilgal to Shiloh, and the tabernacle erected there (chap. xviii. 1-9); after which the other tribes manifested so little desire to receive their inheritance, that Joshua reproved them for their indolence (chap. xviii. 3), and directed them to nominate a committee of twenty-one from their own number, whom he sent out to survey the land and divide it into seven parts; and it was not till after this had been done that the casting of the lots was proceeded with, and each of these seven tribes received its inheritance. The reason for this interruption is not given; and the commentators have differed in their opinions as to the cause (see *Keil's* former Comm. on Joshua, pp. 347 sqq.). The following appears to be the most probable supposition. When Joshua received the command from the Lord to divide the land among the tribes, they made an approximative division of the land into nine or ten parts, according to the general idea of its extent and principal features, which they had obtained in connection with the conquest

¹ "This was the force of the lot: there were ten lots cast in such a manner as to decide that some were to be next to the Egyptians, some to have the sea-coasts, some to occupy the higher ground, and some to settle in the valleys. When this was done, it remained for the heads of the nation to determine the boundaries of their different territories according to some equitable standard. It was their place, therefore, to ascertain how many thousand heads there were in each tribe, and then to adjudicate a larger or smaller space according to the size of the tribe" (*Calvin*). Or, as *Clericus* observes (Num. xxvi. 52), "the lot seems to have had respect to the situation alone, and not to the extent of territory at all."

of the country, and then commenced distributing it without any more minute survey or more accurate measurement, simply fixing the boundaries of those districts which came out first according to the size of the tribes upon whom the lots fell. As soon as that was done, these tribes began to move off into the territory allotted to them, and to take possession of it. The exact delineation of the boundaries, however, could not be effected at once, but required a longer time, and was probably not finally settled till the tribe had taken possession of its land. In this manner the tribes of Judah, Ephraim, and half Manasseh had received their inheritance one after another. And whilst they were engaged in taking possession, *Shiloh* was chosen, no doubt in accordance with divine instructions, as the place where the tabernacle was to be permanently erected; and there the sanctuary was set up, the whole camp, of course, removing thither at the same time. But when the casting of the lots was about to be continued for the remainder of the tribes, they showed no great desire for fixed abodes, as they had become so accustomed to a nomad life, through having been brought up in the desert, that they were much more disposed to continue it, than to take possession of a circumscribed inheritance,—a task which would require more courage and exertion, on account of the remaining Canaanites, than a life in tents, in which they might wander up and down in the land by the side of the Canaanites, and supply their wants from its productions, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had formerly done, since the Canaanites who were left were so weakened by the war that the Israelites had no occasion for a moment's anxiety about them, provided they did not attempt to expel or to exterminate them. But Joshua could not rest contented with this, if he would remain faithful to the charge which he had received from the Lord. He therefore reprov'd these tribes for their tardiness, and commanded them to take steps for continuing the casting of lots for the land. But as the tribe of Joseph had expressed its dissatisfaction with the smallness of the inheritance allotted to it, and by so doing had manifested its cowardice, which prevented it from attacking the Canaanites who were still left in the territory that had fallen to their lot, Joshua may possibly have had his eyes opened in consequence to the fact that, if the casting of lots was continued in the manner begun, and with nothing more than an approximative definition of the different portions of the land, there was a possibility of still greater dissatisfaction arising among the other tribes, since some of them at any rate would be sure to receive

portions of the land in which the Canaanites were more numerous and still stronger than in the possessions of Ephraim. He therefore gave orders, that before the casting of lots was proceeded with any further, the rest of the land should be carefully surveyed and divided into seven districts, and that a statement of the result should be laid before him, that these seven districts might be divided by lot among the seven tribes. This survey of the land no doubt very clearly showed that what remained, after deducting the possessions of Judah and Joseph, was too small for the remaining seven tribes, in proportion to what had been already divided. Moreover, it had also been discovered that Judah's share was larger than this tribe required (chap. xix. 9). Consequently it was necessary that certain partial alterations should be made in the arrangements connected with the first division. The lot itself could not be pronounced invalid when it had once been cast, as its falling was regarded as the decision of God himself, and therefore it was impossible to make a fresh division of the *whole* land among all the tribes. The only thing that could be done was to leave the two tribes in those districts which had fallen to them by lot (chap. xviii. 5), but to take certain parts of their territory for the other tribes, which would leave the lot in all its integrity, as the lot itself had not determined either the size or the boundaries. This will serve to explain both the interruption to the casting of the lots, which had been commenced at Gilgal, and also the peculiar manner in which it was continued at Shiloh.

Vers. 6-15. CALEB'S INHERITANCE.—Vers. 6 sqq. Before the casting of the lots commenced, Caleb came to Joshua along with the sons of Judah, and asked for the mountains of Hebron for his possession, appealing at the same time to the fact, that forty-five years before Moses had promised it to him on oath, because he had not discouraged the people and stirred them up to rebellion, as the other spies that were sent from Kadesh to Canaan had done, but had faithfully followed the Lord.¹ This occurred at Gilgal, where

¹ The grounds upon which *Knobel* follows *Maurer* and others, in affirming that this account does not belong to the so-called Elohists, but is merely a fragment taken from the first document of the Jehovists, are formed partly from misinterpretations of particular verses and partly from baseless assumptions. To the former belongs the assertion, that, according to vers. 8, 12, Joshua was not one of the spies (see the remarks on ver. 8); to the latter the assertion, that the Elohists does not represent Joshua as dividing the land, or Caleb as receiving so large a territory (see on the contrary, however, the

the casting of the lots was to take place. *Caleb* was not "the head of the Judahites," as *Knobel* maintains, but simply the head of a father's house of Judah, and, as we may infer from his surname, "the Kenizzite" or descendant of *Kenaz* ("the *Kenizzite*" here and Num. xxxii. 12 is equivalent to "son of *Kenaz*," ch. xv. 17, and Judg. i. 13), head of the father's house which sprang from *Kenaz*, i.e. of a subdivision of the Judahite family of *Hezron*; for *Caleb*, the brother of *Jerahmeel* and father of *Achzah*, according to 1 Chron. ii. 42 (cf. 1 Chron. ii. 49), was the same person as *Caleb* the descendant of *Hezron* mentioned in 1 Chron. ii. 18. From the surname "the *Kenizzite*" we are of course not to understand that *Caleb* or his father *Jephunneh* is described as a descendant of the Canaanitish tribe of *Kenizzites* (Gen. xv. 19); but *Kenaz* was a descendant of *Hezron*, the son of *Perez* and grandson of *Judah* (1 Chron. ii. 5, 18, 25), of whom nothing further is known. Consequently it was not the name of a tribe, but of a person, and, as we may see from 1 Chron. iv. 15, where one of the sons of *Caleb* is called *Kenaz*, the name was repeated in the family. The sons of *Judah* who came to *Joshua* along with *Caleb* were not the *Judahites* generally, therefore, or representatives of all the families of *Judah*, but simply members or representatives of the father's house of *Judah* which took its name from *Kenaz*, and of which *Caleb* was the head at that time. *Caleb* reminded *Joshua* of the word which the Lord had spoken concerning them in *Kadesh-barnea*, i.e. of the promise of God that they should both of them enter the land of *Canaan* (Num. xiv. 24, 30), and then proceeded to observe (ver. 7): "*When I was forty years old, and was sent by Moses as a spy to Canaan, I brought back an answer as it was in my mind,*" i.e. according to the best of my convictions, without fear of man or regard to the favour of the people.—Ver. 8. Whereas the other spies discouraged the people by exaggerated reports concerning the inhabitants of *Canaan*, he had followed the Lord with perfect fidelity (Num. xiii. 31–33). He had not been made to waver in his faithfulness to the Lord and His promises either by the evil reports which the other spies had brought of the land, or by the murmuring and threats of the excited crowd (see Num. xiv. 6–10). "*My brethren*" (ver. 8) are the rest of the spies, of course with the exception of *Joshua*, to whom *Caleb* was speaking.¹ הַבְּסֵי, exposition of ver. 13), as well as the enumeration of all kinds of words which are said to be foreign to the Elohist document.

¹ That *Joshua* was not included was evident from this circumstance alone,

for הַמִּסֵּד (see *Ges.* § 75, anm. 17, and *Ewald*, § 142, a.), from מִסֵּד = מִסָּס (see chap. ii. 11).—Ver. 9. Jehovah swore at that time, that the land upon which his (Caleb's) foot had trodden should be an inheritance for him and his sons for ever. This oath is not mentioned in Num. xiv. 20 sqq., nor yet in Deut. i. 35, 36, where Moses repeats the account of the whole occurrence to the people. For the oath of Jehovah mentioned in Num. xiv. 21, 24, viz. that none of the murmuring people should see the land of Canaan, but that Caleb alone should come thither and his seed should possess it, cannot be the one referred to, as the promise given to Caleb in this oath does not relate to the possession of Hebron in particular, but to the land of Canaan generally, "*the land which Jehovah had sworn to their fathers.*" We must assume, therefore, that in addition to what is mentioned in Num. xiv. 24, God gave a special promise to Caleb, which is passed over there, with reference to the possession of Hebron itself, and that Joshua, who heard it at the time, is here reminded of that promise by Caleb. This particular promise from God was closely related to the words with which Caleb endeavoured to calm the minds of the people when they rose up against Moses (Num. xiii. 30), viz. by saying to them, "We are well able to overcome it," notwithstanding the Anakites who dwelt in Hebron and had filled the other spies with such great alarm on account of their gigantic size. With reference to this the Lord had promised that very land to Caleb for his inheritance. Upon this promise Caleb founded his request (vers. 10-12) that Joshua would give him these mountains, of which Joshua had heard at that time that there were Anakites and large fortified cities there, inasmuch as, although forty-five years had elapsed since God had spoken these words, and he was now eighty-five years old, he was quite as strong as he had been then. From the words, "The Lord hath kept me alive these forty-five years," *Theodoret* justly infers, that the conquest of Canaan by Joshua was completed in seven years, since God spake these words towards the end of the second year after the exodus from Egypt, and therefore thirty-eight years before the entrance into Canaan. The clause אִשְׁרָה הָלַךְ וְנִי (ver. 10)

and consequently it is a complete perversion on the part of *Knobel* to argue, that because the expression is a general one, i.e. because Joshua is not expressly excepted by name, therefore he cannot have been one of the spies, not to mention the fact that the words "concerning me and thee," in ver. 6, are sufficient to show to any one acquainted with the account in Num. xiii., xiv., that Joshua was really one of them.

is also dependent upon *זֶה אַרְבָּעִים וָו'*: viz. "*these forty-five years that Israel has wandered in the desert*" (on this use of *אַרְבָּעִים*, see Ewald, § 331, c.). The expression is a general one, and the years occupied in the conquest of Canaan, during which Israel had not yet entered into peaceful possession of the promised land, are reckoned as forming part of the years of wandering in the desert. As another reason for his request, Caleb adds in ver. 11: "*I am still as strong to-day as at that time; as my strength was then, so is it now for war, and to go out and in*" (see Num. xxvii. 17).—Ver. 12. "*The mountain,*" according to the context, is the mountainous region of Hebron, where the spies had seen the Anakites (Num. xiii. 22, 28). The two clauses, in ver. 12, beginning with *וְ* are not to be construed as subordinate to one another, but are co-ordinate clauses, and contain two distinct motives in support of his petition: viz. "*for thou heardest in that day,*" sc. what Jehovah said to me then, and also "*for (because) the Anakites are there;*" . . . "*perhaps Jehovah is with me* (*אִתִּי* for *אִתִּי*, see Ges. § 103, 1, anm. 1, and Ewald, § 264, b.), and *I root them out*" (vid. chap. xv. 14). The word "perhaps" does not express a doubt, but a hope or desire, or else, as Masius says, "hope mixed with difficulty; and whilst the difficulty detracts from the value, the hope stimulates the desire for the gift."—Ver. 13. Then Joshua blessed Caleb, i.e. implored the blessing of God upon his undertaking, and gave him Hebron for an inheritance. Hebron is mentioned as the chief city, to which the surrounding country belonged; for Caleb had asked for the mountains (ver. 9), i.e. the mountainous country with and around Hebron, which included, for example, the fortified town of Debir also (chap. xv. 15).—Ver. 14. This inheritance, the historian adds, was awarded to Caleb because he had followed the God of Israel with such fidelity.—In ver. 15 there follows another notice of the earlier name of Hebron (see at Gen. xxiii. 2). The expression *לְפָנַי* (before), like the words "to this day," applies to the time when the book was composed, at which time the name *Kirjath-arba* had long since fallen into disuse; so that it by no means follows that the name Hebron was not so old as the name *Kirjath-arba*, which was given to Hebron for the first time when it was taken by Arba, "the great man among the Anakites," i.e. the strongest and most renowned of the Anakites (vid. chap. xv. 13). The remark, "*and the land had rest from war,*" is repeated again at the close of this account from chap. xi. 23, to show that although there were Anakites still dwelling in Hebron whom Caleb

hoped to exterminate, the work of distributing the land by lot was not delayed in consequence, but was carried out in perfect peace

INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH.—CHAP. XV.

Under the superintending providence of God, the inheritance which fell to the tribe of Judah by lot was in the southern part of Canaan, where Caleb had already received his inheritance, so that he was not separated from his tribe. The inheritance of Judah is first of all described according to its boundaries (vers. 1-12); then for the sake of completeness it is stated once more with regard to Caleb, that he received Kirjath-arba for his inheritance, and took possession of it by expelling the Anakites and conquering Debir (vers. 13-20); and after this a list is given of the towns in the different parts (vers. 21-63).

Vers. 1-12 —*Boundaries of the inheritance of the tribe of Judah.*
—Ver. 1. Its situation in the land. “*And there was (i.e. fell, or came out; cf. chap. xvi. 1, xix. 1) the lot to the tribe of Judah according to its families to the frontier of Edom (see at Num. xxxiv. 3), to the desert of Zin southward, against the extreme south*” (lit. from the end or extremity of the south), i.e. its inheritance fell to it, so that it reached to the territory of Edom and the desert of Zin, in which Kadesh was situated (see at Num. xiii. 21), on the extreme south of Canaan.—Vers. 2-4. *The southern boundary.* This was also the southern boundary of the land of Israel generally, and coincided with the southern boundary of Canaan as described in Num. xxxiv. 3-5. It went out “*from the end of the salt sea, namely, from the tongue which turneth to the south,*” i.e. from the southern point of the Dead Sea, which is now a salt marsh.—Vers. 3, 4. Thence it proceeded “*to the southern boundary of the ascent of Akrabbim,*” i.e. the row of lofty whitish cliffs which intersects the Arabah about eight miles below the Dead Sea (see at Num. xxxiv. 4), “*and passed across to Zin,*” i.e. the Wady Murreh (see at Num. xiii. 21), “*and went up to the south of Kadesh-barnea,*” i.e. by Ain Kudes (see at Num. xx. 16), “*and passed over to Hezron, and went up to Adar, and turned to Karkaa, and went over to Azmon, and went out into the brook of Egypt,*” i.e. the Wady el Arish. On the probable situation of Hezron, Adar, Karkaa, and Azmon, see at Num. xxxiv. 4, 5. “*And the outgoings of the boundary were to the sea*” (the Mediterranean). The Wady el Arish, a marked boundary, takes first of all a northerly and then a north-

westerly course, and opens into the Mediterranean Sea (see Pent. vol. ii. p. 58). הָיָה in the singular before the subject in the plural must not be interfered with (see *Ewald*, § 316, a.).—The words “*this shall be your south coast*” point back to the southern boundary of Canaan as laid down in Num. xxxiv. 2 sqq., and show that the southern boundary of the tribe-territory of Judah was also the southern boundary of the land to be taken by Israel.—Ver. 5a. “*The eastern boundary was the salt sea to the end of the Jordan,*” i.e. the Dead Sea, in all its length up to the point where the Jordan entered it.

In vers. 5b–11 we have a description of the *northern* boundary, which is repeated in chap. xviii. 15–19 as the southern boundary of Benjamin, though in the opposite direction, namely, from west to east. It started “*from the tongue of the (salt) sea, the end (i.e. the mouth) of the Jordan, and went up to Beth-hagla,*”—a border town between Judah and Benjamin, which was afterwards allotted to the latter (chap. xviii. 19, 21), the present *Ain Hajla*, an hour and a quarter to the south-east of *Riha* (Jericho), and three-quarters of an hour from the Jordan (see at Gen. i. 11, note),—“*and went over to the north side of Beth-arabah,*” a town in the desert of Judah (ver. 61), afterwards assigned to Benjamin (chap. xviii. 22), and called *Ha-arabah* in chap. xviii. 18, about twenty or thirty minutes to the south-west of *Ain Hajla*, in a “level and barren steppe” (*Seetzen*, R. ii. p. 302), with which the name very well agrees (see also *Rob. Pal.* ii. pp. 268 sqq.). “*And the border went up to the stone of Bohan, the son of Reuben.*” The expression “went up” shows that the stone of *Bohan* must have been on higher ground, i.e. near the western mountains, though the opposite expression “went down” in chap. xviii. 17 shows that it must have been by the side of the mountain, and not upon the top. According to chap. xviii. 18, 19, the border went over from the stone of *Bohan* in an easterly direction “*to the shoulder over against (Beth) Arabah northwards, and went down to (Beth) Arabah, and then went over to the shoulder of Beth-hagla northwards,*” i.e. on the north side of the mountain ridge of *Beth-arabah* and *Beth-hagla*. This ridge is “the chain of hills or downs which runs from *Kasr Hajla* towards the south to the north side of the Dead Sea, and is called *Katar Hhadije*, i.e. a row of camels harnessed together.”—Ver. 7. The boundary ascended still farther to *Debir* from the valley of *Achor*. *Debir* is no doubt to be sought for by the *Wady Daber*, which runs down from the mountains to the Dead Sea

to the south of *Kasr Hajla*, possibly not far from the rocky grotto called *Choret ed Daber*, between the Wady *es Sidr* and the Khan *Chadrur* on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, about half-way between the two. On the valley of *Achor* see at chap. vii. 24. Then "*it turned northwards to Gilgal, opposite to the ascent of Adummim south of the brook.*" *Gilgal*, which must not be confounded, as it is by *Knobel*, with the first encampment of the Israelites in Canaan, viz. the *Gilgal* between Jericho and the Jordan, is called *Geliloth* in chap. xviii. 17. The situation of this place, which is only mentioned again in Judg. iii. 19, and was certainly not a town, probably only a village or farm, is defined more precisely by the clause "*opposite to the ascent of Adummim.*" *Maaleh Adummim*, which is correctly explained in the *Onom.* (s. v. *Adommim*) as ἀνάβασις πύργων, *ascensus rufforum*, "was formerly a small villa, but is now a heap of ruins, which is called even to the present day *Maledomim*—on the road from *Ælia* to Jericho" (*Tobler*). It is mentioned by ancient travellers as an inn called a *terra ruffa*, i.e. "the red earth;" *terra russo*, or "the red house." By later travellers it is described as a small place named *Adommim*, being still called "the red field, because this is the colour of the ground; with a large square building like a monastery still standing there, which was in fact at one time a fortified monastery, though it is deserted now" (*Arvieux*, *Merk. Nachr.* ii. p. 154). It is the present ruin of *Kalaat el Dem*, to the north of the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, or *Kalaat ed Domm*, near the Khan *Chadrur*. *Gilgal*, or *Geliloth* (circle), was probably the "small round valley" or "field of *Adommim*," of which *Pococke* speaks as being at the foot of the hill on which the deserted inn was standing (viz. *ed Domm*; see *Pococke*, *Reise ins Morgenland*, ii. p. 46). The valley (*nachal*, rendered *river*) to the south of which *Gilgal* or the ascent of *Adummim* lay, and which was therefore to the north of these places, may possibly be the Wady *Kelt*, or the brook of Jericho in the upper part of its course, as we have only to go a quarter or half an hour to the east of Khan *Chadrur*, when a wide and splendid prospect opens towards the south across the Wady *Kelt* as far as *Taiyibeh*; and according to *Van de Velde's* map, a brook-valley runs in a northerly direction to the Wady *Kelt* on the north-east of *Kalaat ed Dem*. It is probable, however, that the reference is to some other valley, of which there are a great many in the neighbourhood. The boundary then passed over to the water of *En Shemesh* (sun-fountain), i.e. the present Apostle's Well, *Ain el Hodh*

or *Bir el Khôt*, below Bethany, and on the road to Jericho (*Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 398, 400; *Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 310), and then ran out at the fountain of *Rogel* (the spies), the present deep and copious fountain of *Job* or *Nehemiah* at the south-east corner of Jerusalem, below the junction of the valley of *Hinnom* and the valley of *Jehoshaphat* or *Kedron* valley (see *Rob. Pal.* i. p. 491, and *Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 50 sqq.).—Ver. 8. It then went up into the more elevated valley of *Ben-hinnom*, on the south side of the Jebusite town, i.e. Jerusalem (see at chap. x. 1), and still farther up to the top of the mountain which rises on the west of the valley of *Ben-hinnom*, and at the farthest extremity of the plain of *Rephaim* towards the north. The valley of *Ben-hinnom*, or *Bne-hinnom* (the son or sons of Hinnom), on the south side of Mount Zion, a place which was notorious from the time of Ahaz as the seat of the worship of Moloch (2 Kings xxiii. 10; 2 Chron. xxviii. 3, xxxiii. 6; Jer. vii. 31, etc.), is supposed to have derived its name from a man who had possessions there, but of whom nothing further is known (see *Robinson*, Pal. i. pp. 402 sqq.). The plain of *Rephaim* (LXX. γῆ Παφαίου, in 2 Sam. v. 18, 22, xxiii. 13 κοιλὰς τῶν Τιτάνων), probably named after the gigantic race of *Rephaim*, and mentioned several times in 2 Sam. as a battle-field, is on the west of Jerusalem, and is separated from the edge of the valley of *Ben-hinnom* by a small ridge of rock. It runs southwards to *Mar Elias*, is an hour long, half an hour broad, and was very fertile (Isa. xvii. 5); in fact, even to the present day it is carefully cultivated (see *Rob. Pal.* i. p. 323; *Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 401 sqq.). It is bounded on the north by the mountain ridge already mentioned, which curves westwards on the left side of the road to *Jaffa*. This mountain ridge, or one of the peaks, is "the mountain on the west of the valley of Hinnom," at the northern end of the plain referred to.—Ver. 9. From this mountain height the boundary turned to the fountain of the waters of *Nephtoa*, i.e., according to *Van de Velde's* Mem. p. 336, the present village of *Liftah* (*nun* and *lamed* being interchanged, according to a well-known law), an hour to the north-west of Jerusalem, where there is a copious spring, called by the name of Samuel, which not only supplies large basins, but waters a succession of blooming gardens (*Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 758 sqq.; *Dieterici*, Reisebilder, ii. pp. 221-2). It then "went out to the towns of Mount Ephraim," which is not mentioned again, but was probably the steep and lofty mountain ridge on the west side of the Wady *Beit Hanina* (Tere-

binth valley), upon which *Kulonia*, a place which the road to Joppa passes, *Kastal* on a lofty peak of the mountain, the fortress of *Milane*, *Soba*, and other places stand (*Seetzen*, R. ii. pp. 64, 65; *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 158). The boundary then ran to *Baala*, i.e. *Kirjath-jearim*, the modern *Kureyet el Enab*, three hours to the north-west of Jerusalem (see at chap. ix. 17).—Ver. 10. From this point “the boundary (which had hitherto gone in a north-westerly direction) turned westwards to Mount *Seir*, and went out to the shoulder northwards (i.e. to the northern side) of *Har-jearim*, that is *Chesalon*, and went down to *Beth-shemesh*, and passed over to *Timnah*.” Mount *Seir* is the ridge of rock to the south-west of *Kureyet el Enab*, a lofty ridge composed of rugged peaks, with a wild and desolate appearance, upon which *Saris* and *Mishir* are situated (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 155). *Chesalon* is the present *Kesla* on the summit of a mountain, an elevated point of the lofty ridge between *Wady Ghurâb* and *Ismail*, south-west of *Kureyet el Enab* (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 154). *Beth-shemesh* (i.e. sun-house), a priests’ city in the territory of Judah (chap. xxi. 16; 1 Chron. vi. 44), is the same as *Ir-shemesh* (chap. xix. 41), a place on the border of Dan, where the ark was deposited by the Philistines (1 Sam. vi. 9 sqq.), and where Amaziah was slain by Joash (2 Kings xiv. 11, 12; 2 Chron. xxv. 21). It was conquered by the Philistines in the time of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 18). According to the *Onom.* it was ten Roman miles, i.e. four hours, from Eleutheropolis towards Nicopolis. It is the present *Ain Shems*, upon a plateau in a splendid situation, two hours and a half to the south-west of *Kesla* (*Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 17; *Bibl. Res.* p. 153). *Timnah*, or *Timnatah*, belonged to Dan (chap. xix. 43); and it was thence that Samson fetched his wife (Judg. xiv. 1 sqq.). It is the present *Tibneh*, three-quarters of an hour to the west of *Ain Shems* (*Rob. Pal.* i. p. 344).—Ver. 11. Thence “the border went out towards the north-west to the shoulder of *Ekron* (*Akir*: see at chap. xiii. 3), then bent to *Shichron*, passed over to Mount *Baalah*, and went out to *Jabneel*.” *Shichron* is possibly *Sugheir*, an hour to the south-west of *Jebna* (*Knobel*). But if this is correct, the mountain of *Baalah* cannot be the short range of hills to the west of *Akir* which runs almost parallel with the coast (*Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 21), as *Knobel* supposes; but must be a mountain on the south side of the *Wady Surar*, since the boundary had already crossed this wady between *Ekron* and *Shichron*. *Jabneel* is the Philistine town of *Jabneh*, the walls of which were demolished by Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 6), a place frequently men-

tioned in the books of Maccabees as well as by *Josephus* under the name of *Jamnia*. It still exists as a good-sized village, under the name of *Jebnah*, upon a small eminence on the western side of Nahr Rubin, four hours to the south of Joppa, and an hour and a half from the sea (*Rob. Pal. iii. p. 22*). From Jabneh the boundary went out to the (Mediterranean) Sea, probably along the course of the great valley, *i.e.* the *Nahr Rubin*, as *Robinson* supposes (*Pal. ii. p. 343*). The *western boundary* was the Great Sea, *i.e.* the Mediterranean.

Vers. 13–19. The account of the conquest of the inheritance, which Caleb asked for and received before the lots were cast for the land (chap. xiv. 6–15), by the extermination of the Anakites from Hebron, and the capture of the fortified town of Debir, is repeated with very slight differences in *Judg. i. 10–15*, in the enumeration of the different conflicts in which the separate tribes engaged after the death of Joshua, in order to secure actual possession of the inheritance which had fallen to them by lot, and is neither copied from our book by the author of the book of Judges, nor taken from Judges by the author of Joshua; but both of them have drawn it from one common source, upon which the accounts of the conquest of Canaan contained in the book of Joshua are generally founded.—Ver. 13. As an introduction to the account of the conquest of Hebron and Debir, the fact that they gave Caleb his portion among the sons of Judah, namely Hebron, is first of all repeated from chap. xiv. 13. נָתַן *impers.*, they gave, *i.e.* Joshua (chap. xiv. 13). The words “according to the command of Jehovah to Joshua” are to be explained from chap. xiv. 9–12, according to which Jehovah had promised, in the hearing of Joshua, to give Caleb possession of the mountains of Hebron, even when they were at Kadesh (chap. xiv. 12). The “father of Anak” is the tribe father of the family of Anakites in Hebron, from whom this town received the name of *Kirjath-arba*; see at *Num. xiii. 22* and *Gen. xxiii. 2*.—Ver. 14. Thence, *i.e.* out of Hebron, Caleb drove (עָרָץ, *i.e.* rooted out: cf. עָרָץ, *Judg. i. 10*) the three sons of Anak, *i.e.* families of the Anakites, whom the spies that were sent out from Kadesh had already found there (*Num. xiii. 22*). Instead of Caleb, we find the sons of Judah (*Judæans*) generally mentioned in *Judg. i. 10* as the persons who drove out the Anakites, according to the plan of the history in that book, to describe the conflicts in which the several tribes engaged with the Canaanites. But the one does not preclude the other. Caleb did not take Hebron as an

individual, but as the head of a family of Judæans, and with their assistance. Nor is there any discrepancy between this account and the fact stated in chap. xi. 21, 22, that Joshua had already conquered Hebron, Debir, and all the towns of that neighbourhood, and had driven out the Anakites from the mountains of Judah, and forced them back into the towns of the Philistines, as *Knobel* fancies. For that expulsion did not preclude the possibility of the Anakites and Canaanites returning to their former abodes, and taking possession of the towns again, when the Israelitish army had withdrawn and was engaged in the war with the Canaanites of the north; so that when the different tribes were about to settle in the towns and districts allotted to them, they were obliged to proceed once more to drive out or exterminate the Anakites and Canaanites who had forced their way in again (see the remarks on chap. x. 38, 39, p. 117; note).—Vers. 15, 16. From Hebron Caleb went against the inhabitants of *Debir*, to the south of Hebron. This town, which has not yet been discovered (see at chap. x. 38), must have been very strong and hard to conquer; for Caleb offered a prize to the conqueror, promising to give his daughter Achzah for a wife to any one that should take it, just as Saul afterwards promised to give his daughter to the conqueror of Goliath (1 Sam. xvii. 25, xviii. 17).—Ver. 17. Othniel took the town and received the promised prize. *Othniel*, according to Judg. iii. 9 the first judge of the Israelites after Joshua's death, is called בֶּן־כְּנַז, *i.e.* either "the son of Kenaz (and) brother of Caleb," or "the son of Kenaz the brother of Caleb." The second rendering is quite admissible (comp. 2 Sam. xiii. 3, 32, with 1 Chron. ii. 13), but the former is the more usual; and for this the Masorites have decided, since they have separated *achi Caleb* from *ben-Kenaz* by a *tiphchah*. And this is the correct one, as "the son of Kenaz" is equivalent to "the Kenizzite" (chap. xiv. 6). According to Judg. i. 13 and iii. 9, Othniel was Caleb's younger brother. Caleb gave him his daughter for a wife, as marriage with a brother's daughter was not forbidden in the law (see my Bibl. Archäol. ii. § 107, note 14).—Vers. 18, 19. When Achzah had become his wife ("as she came," *i.e.* on her coming to Othniel, to live with him as wife), she urged him to ask her father for a field. "*A field*:" in Judg. i. 14 we find "the field," as the writer had the particular field in his mind. This was not "the field belonging to the town of Debir" (*Knobel*), for Othniel had no need to ask for this, as it naturally went with the town, but a piece of land that could be cultivated, or, as is shown

in what follows, one that was not deficient in springs of water. What Othniel did is not stated, but only what Achzah did to attain her end, possibly because her husband could not make up his mind to present the request to her father. She sprang from the ass upon which she had ridden when her father brought her to Othniel. צָנָה, which only occurs again in Judg. iv. 21, and in the parallel passage, Judg. i. 14, is hardly connected with עָנָה, to be lowly or humble (*Ges.*); the primary meaning is rather that suggested by *Fürst*, to force one's self, to press away, or further; and hence in this case the meaning is, to spring down quickly from the animal she had ridden, like נָפַח in Gen. xxiv. 64. Alighting from an animal was a special sign of reverence, from which Caleb inferred that his daughter had some particular request to make of him, and therefore asked her what she wanted: "*What is to thee?*" or, "*What wilt thou?*" She then asked him for a blessing (as in 2 Kings v. 15); "*for,*" she added, "*thou hast given me into barren land.*" אֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב (rendered a south land) is *accus. loci*; so that *negeb* is not to be taken as a *proper name*, signifying the southernmost district of Canaan (as in ver. 21, etc.), but as an appellative, "the dry or arid land," as in Ps. cxxvi. 4. "*Give me springs of water,*" i.e. a piece of land with springs of water in it. Caleb then gave her the "*upper springs and lower springs:*" this was the name given to a tract of land in which there were springs on both the higher and lower ground. It must have been somewhere in the neighbourhood of Debir, though, like the town itself, it has not yet been found.—Ver. 20 contains the closing formula to vers. 1–19, i.e. to the description of the territory of Judah by its boundaries (*vid.* chap. xviii. 20).

In vers. 21–63 there follows a *list of the towns* of the tribe of Judah, arranged in the four districts into which the land was divided, according to the nature of the soil, viz. the south-land (*negeb*), the lowland (*shephelah*) on the Mediterranean Sea, the mountains, and the desert of Judah.

Vers. 21–32. The towns in the *south land*.—*Negeb* (south-land) was the name given to the southernmost district of Canaan in its full extent, from the Arabah, at the southern end of the Dead Sea, right across to the coast of the Mediterranean, and from the southern border of Canaan, as described in vers. 2–4, as far north as Wady *Sheriah*, below Gaza, on the western side, and up to the mountains and desert of Judah on the east, stretching across the wadys of *es Seba*, *Milh*, and *Eldeib*, above which that part of

Palestine commences where rain is more abundant, and to which, as we have already observed at Num. xiii. 17, the *Negeb* formed a kind of intermediate link between the fertile land and the desert. It was a line of steppe-land, with certain patches here and there that admitted of cultivation, but in which tracts of heath prevailed, for the most part covered with grass and bushes, where only grazing could be carried on with any success. The term which *Eusebius* and *Jerome* employ for *Negeb* in the *Onom.* is *Daromas*, but they carry it farther northwards than the *Negeb* of the Old Testament (see *Reland*, Pal. III. pp. 185 sqq.). The numerous towns mentioned in vers. 21-32 as standing in the *Negeb*, may none of them have been large or of any importance. In the list before us we find that, as a rule, several names are closely connected together by the copula *vav*, and in this way the whole may be divided into four separate groups of towns.

Vers. 21-23. *First group of nine places.*—Ver. 21. The towns “from,” i.e. at “the end of the tribe-territory of Judah, towards the territory of Edom.” *Kabzeel*: the home of the hero Benaiah (2 Sam. xxiii. 20), probably identical with *Jekabzeel*, which is mentioned in Neh. xi. 25 in connection with *Dibon*, but has not been discovered. This also applies to *Eder* and *Jagur*.—Ver. 22. *Kinah*: also unknown. *Knobel* connects it with the town of the *Kenites*, who settled in the domain of Arad, but this is hardly correct; for with the exception of Judg. i. 16, where the *Kenites* are said to have settled in the south of Arad, though not till after the division of the land, the *Kenites* are always found in the western portion of the *Negeb* (1 Sam. xv. 6, xxvii. 10, xxx. 29), whereas *Kinah* is unquestionably to be looked for in the east. *Dimonah*, probably the same as *Dibon* (Neh. xi. 25); possibly the ruins of *el Dheib*, on the south side of the wady of the same name, to the north-east of Arad (*V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 252), although *Robinson* (Pal. ii. p. 473) writes the name *Ehdeib*. *Adadah* is quite unknown.—Ver. 23. *Kedesh*, possibly *Kadesh-barnea* (ver. 3). *Hazor* might then be *Hezron*, in the neighbourhood of *Kadesh-barnea* (ver. 3). *Ithnan* is unknown.

Vers. 24, 25. *Second group of five or six places.*—Of these, *Ziph* and *Telem* are not met with again, unless *Telem* is the same as *Telaim*, where Saul mustered his army to go against the *Amalekites* (1 Sam. xv. 4). Their situation is unknown. There was another *Ziph* upon the mountains (see ver. 55). *Knobel* supposes the one mentioned here to be the ruins of *Kuseifeh*, to the

south-west of Arad (*Rob. Pal. ii. p. 620*). *Ziph* would then be contracted from *Ceziph*; but the contraction of *Achzib* (chap. xix. 29) into *Zib* does not present a corresponding analogy, as in that case the abbreviated form is the later one, whereas in the case of *Ziph* a lengthening of the name must have taken place by the addition of a *K*. *Bealoth*, probably the same as the Simeonitish *Baaloth-beer* (chap. xix. 8), which is called *Baal* simply in 1 Chron. iv. 33, and which was also called *Ramath-negeb* (chap. xix. 8) and *Ramoth-negeb* (1 Sam. xxx. 27). It is not to be identified with *Baalath*, however (chap. xix. 45; 1 Kings ix. 18), as *V. de Velde* supposes (*Reise, ii. pp. 151-2*). *Knobel* fancies it may be the ridge and place called *Kubbet el Baul*, between *Milh* and *Kurnub* (*Rob. ii. p. 617*); but *Baul* and *Baal* are very different. *Hazor Hadatta* (*Chazor Chadathah*), i.e. new Hazor, might be the ruins of *el Hudhaira* on the south of *Jebel Khulil* (*Rob. Appendix*). *Kenoth* was supposed by *Robinson* (*Pal. ii. p. 472*, and *Appendix*) to be the ruins of *el Kuryetein*, on the north-east of Arad and at the foot of the mountains, and with this *V. de Velde* agrees. *Reland* (*Pal. p. 708*) connects the following word *Hezron* with *Kenoth*, so as to read *Kenoth-hezron*, i.e. *Hezron's towns*, also called *Hazor*. This is favoured by the *Sept.* and *Syriac*, in which the two words are linked together to form one name, and probably by the Chaldee as well, also by the absence of the copula *vav* (*and*) before *Hezron*, which is not omitted anywhere else throughout this section, except at the beginning of the different groups of towns, as, for example, before *Ziph* in ver. 24, and *Amam* in ver. 26, and therefore ought to stand before *Hezron* if it is an independent town. The Masoretic pointing cannot be regarded as a decisive proof of the contrary.

Vers. 26-28. *Third group of nine towns.*—Ver. 26. *Amam* is not mentioned again, and is quite unknown. *Shema*, which is called *Sheba* in chap. xix. 2, and is mentioned among the towns of the Simeonites between *Beersheba* and *Moladah*, is supposed by *Knobel* to be the ruins of *Saawe* (*Sawe*) between *Milh* and *Beersheba* (see *V. de Velde, ii. p. 148*). *Molada*, which was given to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 2; 1 Chron. iv. 28) and was still inhabited by Jews after the captivity (*Neh. xi. 26*), was the later *Málada*, an Idumæan fortress (*Josephus, Ant. xviii. 6, 2*), which *Eusebius* and *Jerome* describe as being twenty Roman miles, i.e. eight hours, to the south of *Hebron* on the road to *Aila* (*Elath*). It has been identified by *Robinson* (*Pal. ii. p. 621*) in the ruins of *el Milh*, by

the Wady *Malath* or *Malahh*.—Ver. 27. *Hazar-gaddah*, *Heshmon*, and *Beth-palet* have not yet been identified. The last of the three is mentioned again in Neh. xi. 26, by the side of Molada, as still inhabited by Judæans.—Ver. 28. *Hazar-shual*, i.e. fox-court, which was assigned to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 3) and still inhabited after the captivity (Neh. xi. 27), answers, so far as the name is concerned, to the ruins of *Thály* (*Rob. Pal. iii. App.*). *Beersheba*, which was a well-known place in connection with the history of the patriarchs (Gen. xxi. 14 sqq., xxii. 19, etc.), and is frequently mentioned afterwards as the southern boundary of the land of Israel (Judg. xx. 1; 2 Sam. xvii. 11, etc.), was also given up to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 2), and still inhabited after the captivity (Neh. xi. 27). It is the present *Bir es Seba* on the Wady *es Seba* (see at Gen. xxi. 31). *Bizjothjah* is unknown.

Vers. 29-32. The *four groups* of thirteen towns in the western portion of the Negeb.—Ver. 29. *Baalah*, which was assigned to the Simeonites, is called *Balah* in chap. xix. 3, and *Bilbah* in 1 Chron. iv. 29. *Knobel* identifies it with the present *Deir Belah*, some hours to the south-west of Gaza (*Rob. iii. App.*; *Ritter, Erdk. xvi. pp. 41, 42*); but it cannot have been so far to the west, or so near the coast as this. *Iim* (or *Ivvim*, according to the *Αἰεῖμ* of the LXX.) is probably the ruins of *Beit-auwa* (*Rob. iii. App.*). *Azem*, which was also given up to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 3; 1 Chron. iv. 29), is supposed by *Knobel* to be *Eboda*, the present *Abdeh*, eight hours to the south of *Elusa*, a considerable mass of ruins on a ridge of rock (*Rob. i. p. 287*), because the name signifies firmness or strength, which is also the meaning of the Arabic name—a very precarious reason.—Ver. 30. *Eltolad*, which was given to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 4), and is called *Tolad* (without the Arabic article) in 1 Chron. iv. 29, has not been discovered. *Chesil*, for which the LXX. have *Βαιθήλ*, is probably, as *Reland* supposes, simply another name, or as *Knobel* suggests a corrupt reading, for *Bethul* or *Bethuel*, which is mentioned in chap. xix. 4 and 1 Chron. iv. 30, between *Eltolad* and *Hormah*, as a town of the Simeonites, and the same place as *Beth-el* in 1 Sam. xxx. 27. As this name points to the seat of some ancient sanctuary, and there was an idol called *Khalasa* worshipped by the Arabs before the time of Mahomet, and also because *Jerome* observes (*vita Hilar. c. 25*) that there was a temple of Venus at *Elusa*, in which the Saracens worshipped Lucifer (see *Tuch, Deutsch. Morgenl. Ztschr. iii. pp. 194 sqq.*), *Knobel* supposes *Bethul* (*Chesil*) to be *Elusa*, a

considerable collection of ruins five hours and a half to the south of Beersheba (see *Rob.* i. p. 296): assuming first of all that the name *el Khulasa*, as the Arabs called this place, was derived from the Mahometan idol already referred to; and secondly, that the Saracen Lucifer mentioned by *Jerome* was the very same idol whose image and temple *Janhari* and *Kamus* call *el Khalasa*. *Hormah*: i.e. *Zephoth*, the present *Sepata* (see at chap. xii. 14). *Ziklag*, which was assigned to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 5; 1 Chron. iv. 30), burnt down by the Amalekites (1 Sam. xxx. 1 sqq.), and still inhabited after the captivity (Neh. xi. 28), is supposed by *Rowland* to be the ancient place called *Asluj* or *Kasluj*, a few hours to the east of *Zepata*, with which *Knobel*, however, in a most remarkable manner, identifies the *Asluj* to the south-west of *Milh* on the road to *Abdeh*, which is more than thirty-five miles distant (see *Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 621). Both places are too far to the south and east to suit *Ziklag*, which is to be sought for much farther west. So far as the situation is concerned, the ruins of *Tell Sheriah* or *Tell Mellala*, one of which is supposed by *V. de Velde* to contain the relics of *Ziklag*, would suit much better; or even, as *Ritter* supposes (*Erdk.* xvi. pp. 132-3), *Tell el Hasy*, which is half an hour to the south-west of *Ajlan*, and in which *Felix Fabri* found the ruins of a castle and of an ancient town, in fact of the ancient *Ziklag*, though *Robinson* (i. pp. 389 sqq.) could discover nothing that indicated in any way the existence of a town or building of any kind. *Madmannah* and *Sansannah* cannot be traced with any certainty. *Madmannah*, which is confounded in the *Onom.* (s. v. *Medemena*) with *Madmena*, a place to the north of Jerusalem mentioned in Isa. x. 31, though elsewhere it is correctly described as *Menois oppidum juxta civitatem Gazam*, has probably been preserved in the present *Miniay* or *Minieh*, to the south of Gaza. *Sansannah*, *Knobel* compares with the *Wady Suni*, mentioned by *Robinson* (i. p. 299), to the south of Gaza, which possibly received its name from some town in the neighbourhood. But in the place of them we find *Beth-marcaboth* (i.e. carriage-house) and *Hazar-susa* (i.e. horse-court) mentioned in chap. xix. 5 and 1 Chron. iv. 31 among the towns of the Simeonites, which *Reland* very properly regards as the same as *Madmannah* and *Sansannah*, since it is very evident from the meaning of the former names that they were simply secondary names, which were given to them as stations for carriages and horses.—Ver. 32. *Lebaoth*, one of the Simeonite towns, called *Beth-lebaoth* (i.e. lion-house) in chap. xix. 6, and *Beth-birei* in 1 Chron. iv. 31, has

not been discovered yet. *Shilchim*, called *Sharuchen* in chap. xix. 6, and *Shaaraim* in 1 Chron. iv. 31, may possibly have been preserved in Tell *Sheriah*, almost half-way between Gaza and Beersheba (*V. de Velde*, ii. p. 154). *Ain* and *Rimmon* are given as Simeonite towns, and being written without the copula, are treated as one name in chap. xix. 7 and 1 Chron. iv. 32, although they are reckoned as two separate towns in chap. xix. 7. But as they were also called *En Rimmon* after the captivity, and are given as one single place in Neh. xi. 29, they were probably so close together that in the course of time they grew into one. *Rimmon*, which is mentioned in Zech. xiv. 10 as the southern boundary of Judah, probably the *Eremmon* of the *Onom.* ("a very large village of the Judæans, sixteen miles to the south of Eleutheropolis in Daroma"), was probably the present ruin called *Um er Rummanim*, four hours to the north of Beersheba (*Rob.* iii. p. 8). Not more than thirty or thirty-five minutes distant from this, between Tell *Khuweilifeh* (*Rob.* iii. p. 8) or *Chewelfeh* (*V. de Velde*) and Tell *Hhora*, you find a large old but half-destroyed well, the large stones of which seem to belong to a very early period of the Israelitish history (*V. de Velde*, ii. p. 153). This was mentioned as a very important drinking-place even in the lifetime of Saladin, whilst to the present day the Tiyâlah Arabs water their flocks there (see *Rob.* iii. p. 8). To all appearance this was *Ain* (see *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 344). "*All the cities were twenty and nine, and their villages.*" This does not agree with the number of towns mentioned by name, which is not twenty-nine, but thirty-six; so that the number twenty-nine is probably an error of the text of old standing, which has arisen from a copyist confounding together different numeral letters that resembled one another.¹

¹ Some commentators and critics explain this difference on the supposition that originally the list contained a smaller number of names (only twenty-nine), but that it was afterwards enlarged by the addition of several other places by a different hand, whilst the number of the whole was left just as it was before. But such a conjecture presupposes greater thoughtlessness on the part of the editor than we have any right to attribute to the author of our book. If the author himself made these additions to his original sources, as *Hävernick* supposes, or the Jehovist completed the author's list from his second document, as *Knobel* imagines, either the one or the other would certainly have altered the sum of the whole, as he has not proceeded in so thoughtless a manner in any other case. The only way in which this conjecture could be defended, would be by supposing, as *J. D. Michaelis* and others have done, that the names added were originally placed in the margin, and that these marginal glosses were afterwards interpolated by some thoughtless copyist into the

Vers. 33-47. Towns in the *lowland* or *shephelah*.—The lowland (*shephelah*), which is generally rendered ἡ πεδινή in the *Sept.*, rarely τὸ πεδίων (Deut. i. 7), but which is transferred as a proper name ἡ Σεφηλά in Obad. 19, Jer. xxxii. 44, xxxiii. 13, as well as in 1 Macc. xii. 38, where even *Luther* has *Sephela*, is the name given to the land between the mountains of Judah and the Mediterranean Sea,—a broad plain of undulating appearance, intersected by heights and low ranges of hills, with fertile soil, in which corn fields alternate with meadows, gardens, and extensive olive groves. It is still tolerably well cultivated, and is covered with villages, which are situated for the most part upon the different hills. Towards the south, the *shephelah* was bounded by the Negeb (ver. 21); on the north, it reached to Ramleh and Lydda, or Diospolis, where the plain of Sharon began,—a plain which extended as far as Carmel, and was renowned for the beauty of its flowers. Towards the east the hills multiply and shape themselves into a hilly landscape, which forms the intermediate link between the mountains and the plain, and which is distinguished from the *shephelah* itself, in chap. x. 40 and xii. 8, under the name of *Ashedothe*, or *slopes*, whereas here it is reckoned as forming part of the *shephelah*. This hilly tract is more thickly studded with villages than even the actual plain. (See *Rob. Pal.* ii. p. 363, and iii. p. 29.) The towns in the *shephelah* are divided into four groups.

Vers. 33-36. The *first* group contains the towns in the northern part of the hilly region or slopes, which are reckoned as forming part of the lowland: in all, fourteen towns. The most northerly part of this district was given up to the tribe of Dan on the second division (chap. xix. 41 sqq.). *Eshtaol* and *Zoreah*, which were assigned to the tribe of Dan (chap. xix. 41), and were partly in-text. But this conjecture is also rendered improbable by the circumstance that, in the lists of towns contained in our book, not only do other differences of the same kind occur, as in ver. 36, where we find only fourteen instead of fifteen, and in chap. xix. 6, where only thirteen are given instead of fourteen, but also differences of the very opposite kind,—namely, where the gross sum given is larger than the number of names, as, for example, in chap. xix. 15, where only five names are given instead of twelve, and in chap. xix. 38, where only sixteen are given instead of nineteen, and where it can be shown that there are gaps in the text, as towns are omitted which the tribes actually received and ceded to the Levites. If we add to this the fact that there are two large gaps in our Masoretic text in chap. xv. 69, 60, and xxi. 35, which proceed from copyists, and also that many errors occur in the numbers given in other historical books of the Old Testament, we are not warranted in tracing the differences in question to any other cause than errors in the text.

habited by Danites (Judg. xiii. 25, xviii. 2, 8, 11) and partly by families of Judah, who had gone out from Kirjath-jearim (1 Chron. ii. 53, iv. 2), probably after the removal of the 600 Danites to Laish-Dan (chap. xix. 47; Judg. xviii.), were situated, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Esthaul* and *Saara*), ten Roman miles to the north of Eleutheropolis, on the road to Nicopolis. *Zoreah*, the home of Samson, who was buried between Zoreah and Eshtaol (Judg. xiii. 2, xvi. 31), was fortified by Rehoboam, and still inhabited by Judæans after the captivity (2 Chron. xi. 10; Neh. xi. 29); it has been preserved in the ruins of *Surá*, at the south-western end of the mountain range which bounds the Wady es Surar on the north (*Rob.* ii. p. 341, and *Bibl. Res.* p. 153). *Eshtaol* has probably been preserved in *Um Eshteiyeh*, to the south-west (*Rob.* ii. p. 342). *Ashnah* is possibly to be read *Ashvah*, according to the LXX., Cod. Vat. (Ἀσσα). In that case it might resemble a town on the east of Zorea (*Tobler*, p. 180), as *Knobel* supposes.—Ver. 34. *Zanoah* was still inhabited by Judæans after the captivity (Neh. xi. 30, iii. 13), and is the present *Zanua*, not far from Zoreah, towards the east (see *Rob.* ii. p. 343). *Engannim* and *Tappuah* are still unknown. *Enam*, the same as *Enaim* (Gen. xxxviii. 14: rendered “an open place”), on the road from Adullam to Timnah on the mountains (ver. 57), has not yet been discovered.—Ver. 35. *Jarmuth*, i.e. *Jarmúk*; see chap. x. 3. *Adullam* has not yet been discovered with certainty (see at chap. xii. 15). *Socoh*, which was fortified by Rehoboam, and taken by the Philistines in the reign of Ahaz (2 Chron. xi. 7, xxviii. 18), is the present *Shuweikeh* by the Wady Sumt, half an hour to the south-west of *Jarmúk*, three hours and a half to the south-west of Jerusalem (see *Rob.* ii. pp. 343, 349). The *Onom.* (s. v. *Socoh*) mentions two *viculi* named *Sochoth*, one upon the mountain, the other in the plain, nine Roman miles from Eleutheropolis on the road to Jerusalem. On *Azekah*, see at chap. x. 10.—Ver. 36. *Sharaim*, which was on the west of Socoh and Azekah, according to 1 Sam. xvii. 52, and is called *Σακαρίμ* or *Σαρυαπέμ* in the *Sept.*, is probably to be sought for in the present Tell *Zakariya* and the village of *Kefr Zakariya* opposite, between which there is the broad deep valley called Wady Sumt, which is only twenty minutes in breadth (*Rob.* ii. p. 350). This is the more probable as the Hebrew name is a dual. *Adithaim* is unknown. *Gederah* is possibly the same as the *Gederoth* which was taken by the Philistines in the time of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 18), and the *Gedrus* of the *Onom.* (s. v. *Gædur*, or *Gahedur*), ten Roman miles

to the south of Diospolis, on the road to Eleutheropolis, as the *Gederoth* in ver. 41 was in the actual plain, and therefore did not stand between Diospolis and Eleutheropolis. *Gederothaim* is supposed by *Winer*, *Knobel*, and others, to be an ancient gloss. This is possible no doubt, but it is not certain, as neither the omission of the name from the *Sept.*, nor the circumstance that the full number of towns is given as fourteen, and that this is not the number obtained if we reckon *Gederothaim*, can be adduced as a decisive proof, since this difference may have arisen in the same manner as the similar discrepancy in ver. 32.

Vers. 37–41. The *second* group, containing the towns of the actual plain in its full extent from north to south, between the hilly region and the line of coast held by the Philistines: *sixteen* towns in all.—Ver. 37. *Zenan*, probably the same as *Zaanan* (Micah i. 11), is supposed by *Knobel* to be the ruins of *Chirbet-es-Senat*, a short distance to the north of Beit-jibrin (*Tobler*, *Dritte Wand*. p. 124). *Hadashah*, according to the *Mishnah Erub*. v. vi. the smallest place in Judah, containing only fifty houses, is unknown, and a different place from the *Adasa* of 1 Macc. vii. 40, 45, and *Joseph. Ant.* xii. 10, 5, as this was to the north of Jerusalem (*Onom.*).—*Migdal-gad* is unknown. *Knobel* supposes it to be the small hill called *Jedeideh*, with ruins upon it, towards the north of Beit-jibrin (*V. de Velde*, R. ii. pp. 162, 188).—Ver. 38. *Dilean* is unknown; for *Bet Dula*, three full hours to the east of Beit-jibrin, with some relics of antiquity (*Tobler*, pp. 150–1), with which *Knobel* identifies it, is upon the mountains and not in the plain. *Mizpeh*, i.e. *specula*, a different place from the *Mizpeh* of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 26), was on the north of Eleutheropolis, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Maspha*), and therefore may possibly be the castle *Alba Specula*, or *Alba Custodia* of the middle ages, the present Tell *es Saphieh*, in the middle of the plain and upon the top of a lofty hill, from which there is an extensive prospect in all directions (see *Rob.* ii. p. 363). *Joktheel* has possibly been preserved in the ruins of *Keitulaneh* (*Rob.* Pal. iii. App.), which are said to lie in that neighbourhood.—Ver. 39. *Lachish*, i.e. *Um Lakis* (see at chap. x. 3). *Bozkath* is unknown: according to *Knobel*, it may possibly be the ruins of *Tubakah*, on the south of Um Lakis and Ajlan (*Rob.* ii. pp. 388, 648). *Eglon*, i.e. *Ajlan*; see at chap. x. 3.—Ver. 40. *Cabbon*, probably the heap of ruins called *Kubeibeh* or *Kebeibeh*, “which must at some time or other have been a strong fortification, and have formed the key to the central mountains of Judah” (*V. de*

Velde, R. ii. p. 156), and which lie to the south of Beit-jibrin, and two hours and a half to the east of Ajlan (*Rob. Pal.* ii. p. 394). *Lachmas*: according to *Knobel* a corruption of Lachmam, which is the reading given in many MSS. and editions, whilst the *Vulgate* has *Leheman*, and *Luther* (and the *Eng. Ver.*) *Lahmam*. *Knobel* connects it with the ruins of *el Lahem* to the south of Beit-jibrin (*Tobler*). *Kithlish* (*Chitlis*) is unknown, unless it is to be found in Tell *Chilchis*, to the S.S.E. of Beit-jibrin (*V. de Velde*, R. ii. p. 157).—Ver. 41. *Gederoth*, *Beth-dagon*, and *Naamah* have not yet been traced. The village mentioned in the *Onom.* (s. v. *Beth-dagon*) as *grandis vicus Capher-dagon*, and said to lie between Diospolis and *Jamnia*, the present *Beit-dejan* (*Rob.* iii. p. 30), was far beyond the northern boundary of the tribe of Judah. *Mak-kedah*: see at chap. x. 10.

Vers. 42-44. The *third* group, consisting of the towns in the southern half of the hilly region: nine towns.—Ver. 42. *Libnah*: see at chap. x. 29. *Ether* and *Ashan*, which were afterwards given to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 7), and are probably to be sought for on the border of the Negeb, have not yet been discovered. The conjecture that *Ether* is connected with the ruins of *Attârah* (*Rob.* iii. App.) in the province of Gaza, is a very uncertain one. *Ashan*, probably the same as *Kor-ashan* (1 Sam. xxx. 30), became a priests' city afterwards (1 Chron. vi. 44; see at chap. xxi. 16).—Ver. 43. *Jiphtah*, *Ashnah*, and *Nezib* have not yet been traced. *Beit-nesib*, to the east of Beit-jibrin on the Wady Sur (*Rob.* ii. p. 344, and iii. p. 13), the *Neesib* of the *Onom.*, seven Roman miles to the east of Eleutheropolis, does not suit this group so far as its situation is concerned, as it lies within the limits of the first group.—Ver. 44. *Keilah*, which is mentioned in the history of David (1 Sam. xxiii.), and then again after the captivity (Neh. iii. 17), is neither the *Κεελά*, *Ceila* of the *Onom.*, on the east of Eleutheropolis, the present *Kila* (*Tobler*, *Dritte Wand.* p. 151), which lies upon the mountains of Judah; nor is it to be found, as *Knobel* supposes, in the ruins of *Jugaleh* (*Rob.* iii. App.), as they lie to the south of the mountains of Hebron, whereas *Keilah* is to be sought for in the *shephelah*, or at all events to the west or south-west of the mountains of Hebron. *Achzib* (Micah i. 14), the same as *Chesib* (Gen. xxxviii. 5), has been preserved in the ruins at *Kussâbeh*, a place with a fountain (*Rob.* ii. p. 391), i.e. the fountain of *Kesâba*, about five hours south by west from Beit-jibrin. *Mareshah*, which was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 8; cf. Micah i. 15), and was the place where

Asa defeated Zerah the Ethiopian (2 Chron. xiv. 9), the home of Eliezer (2 Chron. xx. 37), and afterwards the important town of *Marissa* (see *v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 211–12), was between Hebron and Ashdod, since Judas Maccabæus is represented in 1 Macc. v. 65–68 (where the reading should be *Μαρίσσαν* instead of *Σαμάρειαν*, according to *Joseph. Ant.* xii. 8, 6) as going from Hebron through *Marissa* into the land of the Philistines, and turning to *Ashdod*. According to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Mareshah*), it was lying in ruins in the time of *Eusebius*, and was about two Roman miles from Eleutheropolis,—a description which applies exactly to the ruins of *Maresh*, twenty-four minutes to the south of Beit-jibrin, which *Robinson* supposes for this reason to be *Maresa* (*Rob.* ii. p. 422), whereas *Knobel* finds it in *Beit-mirsim*, a place four hours to the south of Beit-jibrin.¹

Vers. 45–47. The *fourth* group, consisting of the towns of the Philistine line of coast, the northern part of which was afterwards given up to the tribe of Dan (chap. xix. 43), but which remained almost entirely in the hands of the Philistines (see at chap. xiii. 3).²—Ver. 45. *Ekron*, i.e. *Akir* (see chap. xiii. 3). “*Her daughters*” are the other towns of the principality of Ekron that were dependent upon the capital, and הָעִירִים the villages and farms.—Ver. 46. Judah was also to receive “*from Ekron westwards all that lay on the side of Ashdod and their* (i.e. Ekron’s and Ashdod’s) *villages.*” The different places in this district are not given, because Judah never actually obtained possession of them.—Ver. 47. *Ashdod*, now *Esdūd*, and *Gaza*, now *Ghuzzeh*: see at chap. xiii. 3. Also “*the daughter towns*

¹ *Knobel* founds his opinion partly upon 2 Chron. xiv. 9, according to which *Mareshah* was in the valley of *Zephatah*, which is the basin-like plain at *Mirsim*, and partly upon the fact that the *Onom.* also places *Moraste* on the east (south-east) of Eleutheropolis; and *Jerome* (ad Mich. i. 1) describes *Morasthi* as *haud grandem viculum juxta Eleutheropolin*, and as *sepulcrum quondam Michæ prophetæ nunc ecclesiam* (ep. 108 ad *Eustoch.* § 14); and this *ecclesia* is in all probability the ruins of a church called *Santa Hanneh*, twenty minutes to the south-east of Beit-jibrin, and only ten minutes to the east of *Marash*, which makes the assumption a very natural one, that the *Maresa* and *Morasthi* of the fathers are only different parts of the same place, viz. of *Moreseth-gath*, the home of *Micah* (*Micah* i. 1, 14; *Jer.* xxvi. 18). But neither of these is decisive. The valley of *Zephatah* might be the large open plain which *Robinson* mentions (ii. p. 355) near Beit-jibrin; and the conjecture that *Morasthi*, which *Euseb.* and *Jer.* place πρὸς ἀνατολὰς, contra orientem Eleutheropoleos, is preserved in the ruins which lie in a straight line towards the south from Beit-jibrin, and are called *Marash*, has not much probability in it.

² There is no force in the reasons adduced by *Ewald*, *Bertheau*, and *Knobel*,

and villages, unto the brook of Egypt (*Wady el Arish*: see ver. 4), and the great sea with its territory," i.e. the tract of land lying between Gaza and the coast of the Mediterranean. Gath and Askalon are not mentioned, because they are both of them included in the boundaries named. Askalon was between Ashdod and Gaza, by the sea-coast (see at chap. xiii. 3), and Gath on the east of Ekron and Ashdod (see chap. xiii. 3), so that, as a matter of course, it was assigned to Judah.

Vers. 48-60. The towns on the *mountains* are divided into five, or more correctly, into six groups. The mountains of Judah, which rise precipitously from the Negeb, between the hilly district on the west, which is reckoned as part of the *shephelah*, and the desert of Judah, extending to the Dead Sea on the east (ver. 61), attain the height of 3000 feet above the level of the sea, in the neighbourhood of Hebron, and run northwards to the broad wady of Beit-hanina, above Jerusalem. They are a large rugged range of limestone mountains, with many barren and naked peaks, whilst the sides are for the most part covered with grass, shrubs, bushes, and trees, and the whole range is intersected by many very fruitful valleys. *Josephus* describes it as abounding in corn, fruit, and wine; and to the present day it contains many orchards, olive grounds, and vineyards, rising in terraces up the sides of the mountains, whilst the valleys and lower grounds yield plentiful harvests of wheat, millet, and other kinds of corn. In ancient times, therefore, the whole of this district was thickly covered with towns (see *Rob.* ii. pp. 185, 191-2, and *C. v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 45 sqq.).

for regarding these verses as spurious, or as a later interpolation from a different source. For the statement, that the "Elohists" merely mentions those towns of which the Hebrews had taken possession, and which they held either partially or wholly in his own day, and also that his list of the places belonging to Judah in the *shephelah* never goes near the sea, are assertions without the least foundation, which are proved to be erroneous by the simple fact, that according to the express statement in ver. 12, the Mediterranean Sea formed the western boundary of the tribe of Judah; and according to chap. xiii. 6, Joshua was to distribute by lot even those parts of Canaan which had not yet been conquered. The difference, however, which actually exists between the verses before us and the other groups of towns, namely, that in this case the "towns" (or daughters) are mentioned as well as the villages, and that the towns are not summed up at the end, may be sufficiently explained from the facts themselves, namely, from the circumstance that the Philistine cities mentioned were capitals of small principalities, which embraced not only villages, but also small towns, and for that very reason did not form connected groups, like the towns of the other districts.

Vers. 48–51. The first group consists of eleven towns on the south-west of the mountains.—Ver. 48. *Shamir* has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Um Shaumerah*, mentioned by *Robinson* (iii. App.), though the situation of these ruins has not yet been precisely determined. *Jattir*, which was given up to the priests (chap. xxi. 14), and is mentioned again in 1 Sam. xxx. 27, is described in the *Onom.* (s. v. *Jether*) as a large place inhabited by Christians, twenty miles from Eleutheropolis, in *interiori Daroma juxta Malathan*,—a description which suits the ruins of *Attir*, in the southern portion of the mountains (see *Rob.* ii. p. 194; called *Ater* by *Seetzen*, R. iii. p. 6). *Socoh*, two hours N.W. of this, the present *Shuweikeh* (*Rob.* ii. p. 194), called *Sutche* by *Seetzen* (R. iii. p. 29), a village about four hours from Hebron.—Ver. 49. *Dannah* (*Sept.*, *Syr.*, *Renna*) is unknown. *Knobel* imagines that *Dannah* should be *Danah*, for *Deanah*, plur. *Deanoth*, which would then be suggestive of *Zanute*, the last inhabited place upon the mountains, five hours from Hebron, between *Shuweikeh* and *Attir* (see *Rob.* ii. p. 626; *Seetzen*, iii. pp. 27, 29). *Kirjath-sannah*, or *Debir*, has not been traced (see at chap. x. 38).—Ver. 50. *Anab*, on the north-east of *Socoh* (see at chap. xi. 21). *Eshtemoh*, or *Eshtemoa*, which was ceded to the priests (chap. xxi. 14; 1 Chron. vi. 42), and is mentioned again in 1 Sam. xxx. 28, 1 Chron. iv. 17, 19, is the present *Semua*, an inhabited village, with remains of walls, and a castle of ancient date, on the east of *Socoh* (*Rob.* ii. pp. 194, 626; *Seetzen*, iii. 28; and v. *Schubert*, R. ii. p. 458). *Anim*, contracted, according to the probable conjecture of *Wilson*, from *Ayanim* (fountains), a place still preserved in the ruins of the village of *el Ghuwein*, on the south of *Semua*, though *Robinson* erroneously connects it with *Ain* (ver. 32: see *Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 626).—Ver. 51. *Goshen*, *Holon*, and *Giloh*, are still unknown. On *Goshen*, see at chap. x. 41. *Holon* was given up to the priests (chap. xxi. 15; 1 Chron. vi. 43); and *Giloh* is mentioned in 2 Sam. xv. 12 as the birth-place of *Ahithophel*.

Vers. 52–54. The second group of nine towns, to the north of the former, in the country round Hebron.—Ver. 52. *Arab* is still unknown; for we cannot connect it, as *Knobel* does, with the ruins of *Husn el Ghurab* in the neighbourhood of *Semua* (*Rob.* i. p. 312), as these ruins lie within the former group of towns. *Duma*, according to *Eusebius* the largest place in the *Daromas* in his time, and seventeen miles from Eleutheropolis, is probably the ruined village of *Daumeh*, by the Wady *Dilbeh* (*Rob.* i. p. 314), which is fourteen miles in a straight line to the south-east of Eleutheropolis according

to the map. *Es'an* (Eshean) can hardly be identified with *Asar*. (1 Chron. iv. 32), as *Van de Velde* supposes, but is more likely *Korasan* (1 Sam. xxx. 30). In that case we might connect it with the ruins of *Khursah*, on the north-west of Daumeh, two hours and a half to the south-west of Hebron (*Rob.* iii. p. 5). As the Septuagint reading is *Σομά*, *Knobel* conjectures that Eshean is a corrupt reading for *Shema* (1 Chron. ii. 43), and connects it with the ruins of *Simia*, on the south of Daumeh (*Seetzen*, iii. 28, and *Rob.* iii. App.).—Ver. 53. *Janum* is still unknown. *Beth-tappuah* has been preserved in the village of *Teffuh*, about two hours to the west of Hebron (*Rob.* ii. p. 428). *Apheka* has not been discovered.—Ver. 54. *Humtah* is also unknown. *Kirjath-arba*, or *Hebron*: see at chap. x. 3. *Zior* has also not been traced; though, "so far as the name is concerned, it might have been preserved in the heights of *Tugra*, near to Hebron" (*Knobel*).

Vers. 55-57. The *third* group of ten towns, to the east of both the former groups, towards the desert.—Ver. 55. *Maon*, the home of Nabal (1 Sam. xxv. 2), on the border of the desert of Judah, which is here called the desert of Maon (1 Sam. xxiii. 25), has been preserved in Tell *Máin*, on a conical mountain commanding an extensive prospect, east by north of Semua, three hours and three-quarters to the s.s.e. of Hebron (*Rob.* ii. p. 193). *Carmel*, a town and mountain mentioned in the history of David, and again in the time of Uzziah (1 Sam. xv. 12, xxv. 2 sqq.; 2 Chron. xxvi. 10). In the time of the Romans it was a large place, with a Roman garrison (*Onom.*), and is the present *Kurmul*, on the north-west of Maon, where there are considerable ruins of a very ancient date (*Rob.* ii. pp. 196 sqq.). *Ziph*, in the desert of that name, to which David fled from Saul (1 Sam. xxiii. 14 sqq., xxvi. 2, 3), was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 8), and has been preserved in the ruins upon the hill *Ziph*, an hour and three-quarters to the south-east of Hebron (*Rob.* ii. p. 191). *Juttah*, which was assigned to the priests (chap. xxi. 16), and was a *vicus prægrandis Judæorum* in the time of the fathers (*Onom.* s. v. *Jethan*), was eighteen Roman miles to the south (south-east) of Eleutheropolis, and is the present *Jutta* or *Jitta*, a large Mahometan place with ruins, an hour and three-quarters to the south of Hebron (*Seetzen*, iii. p. 8; *Rob.* ii. pp. 191, 628).—Ver. 56. *Jezreel*, the home of Ahinoam (1 Sam. xxv. 43, xxvii. 3, etc.), a different place from the Jezreel in the plain of Esdraelon, has not yet been discovered. This also applies to *Jokdeam* and *Zanoah*, which are only met with here.—Ver. 57. *Cain*

(*Hakkain*) is possibly the same as *Jukin*, on the south-east of Hebron (*Rob.* ii. p. 449). *Gibeah* cannot be the *Gabatha* near Bethlehem, mentioned in the *Onom.* (s. v. *Gabathon*), or the *Gibea* mentioned by *Robinson* (ii. p. 327), i.e. the village of *Jeba*, on a hill in the Wady el Musurr, as this does not come within the limits of the present group; it must rather be one of the two places (*Gebaa* and *Gebatha*) described as *viculi contra orientalem plagam Daromæ*, though their situation has not yet been discovered. *Timnah*, probably the place already mentioned in Gen. xxxviii. 12 sqq., has not been discovered.

Vers. 58, 59. The *fourth* group of six towns, on the north of Hebron or of the last two groups.—*Halhul*, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Elul*) a place near Hebron named *Alula*, has been preserved in the ruins of *Halhûl*, an hour and a half to the north of Hebron (*Rob.* i. p. 319, ii. p. 186, and *Bibl. Res.* p. 281). *Beth-zur*, which was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 7), and is frequently mentioned in the time of the Maccabees as a border defence against the Idumæans (1 Macc. iv. 29, 61, etc.), was twenty (? fifteen) Roman miles from Jerusalem, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Beth-zur*), on the road to Hebron. It is the present heap of ruins called *Beit-zur* on the north-west of *Halhûl* (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 276-7; *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. pp. 236, 267-8). *Gedor*, the ruins of *Jedûr*, an hour and a half to the north-west (*Rob.* ii. p. 338; *Bibl. Res.* pp. 282-3).—Ver. 59. *Maarath* and *Eltekon* have not yet been discovered. *Beth-anoth* (probably a contraction of *Beth-ayanoth*) has been discovered by *Wolcott* in the ruins of *Beit-anum*, on the east of *Halhûl* (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 279; cf. *Pal.* ii. p. 186).

Between vers. 59 and 60, the *fifth* group of towns given in the Septuagint is wanting in the Masoretic text. This group lay to the north of the fourth, and reached as far as Jerusalem. It comprised a district in which even now there are at least fifteen places and ruins, so that we have not an arbitrary interpolation made by the LXX., as *Jerome* assumed, but rather a gap in the Hebrew text, arising from the fact that an ancient copyist passed by mistake from the word יְרֵחוֹ in ver. 59 to the same word at the close of the missing section. In the Alexandrian version the section reads as follows in *Cod. Al.* and *Vat.*: Θεκὼ καὶ Ἐφραθά, αὕτη ἐστὶ Βαιθλεεμ, καὶ Φαγὼρ καὶ Αἰτὰν καὶ Κουλὸν καὶ Τατὰμ καὶ Θωβῆς (Cod. Al. Σωρῆς) καὶ Καρὲμ καὶ Γαλὲμ καὶ Θεθῆρ (Cod. Al. Βαιθῆρ) καὶ Μανοχώ, πόλεις ἑνδεκα καὶ αἱ κῶμαι αὐτῶν.—*Theko*, the well-known Tekoah, the home of the wise woman and of the

prophet Amos (2 Sam. xiv. 2 ; Amos i. 1), was fortified by Rehoboam, and still inhabited after the captivity (2 Chron. xi. 6 ; Neh. iii. 5, 27). It is the present *Tekua*, on the top of a mountain covered with ancient ruins, two hours to the south of Bethlehem (*Rob.* ii. pp. 181–184 ; *Tobler*, Denksbl. aus Jerus. pp. 682 sqq.). *Ephratah*, i.e. *Bethlehem*, the family seat of the house of David (Ruth i. 1, iv. 11 ; 1 Sam. xvi. 4, xvii. 12 sqq. ; Micah v. 2), was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 6), and is a place frequently mentioned. It was the birth-place of Christ (Matt. ii. 1 sqq. ; Luke ii. 4), and still exists under the ancient name of *Beit-lahm*, two hours to the south of Jerusalem (*Seetzen*, ii. pp. 37 sqq. ; *Rob.* ii. pp. 159 sqq. ; *Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 464 sqq.). *Bethlehem* did not receive the name of *Ephratah* for the first time from the Calebite family of Ephrathites (1 Chron. ii. 19, 50, iv. 4), but was known by that name even in Jacob's time (Gen. xxxv. 19, xlviii. 7). *Phagor*, which was near to Bethlehem according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Fogor*), and is also called *Phaora*, is the present *Faghur*, a heap of ruins to the south-west of Bethlehem (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 275). *Aetan* was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 6), and has been preserved in the *Wady* and *Ain Attan* between Bethlehem and *Faghur* (*Tobler*, dritte Wand. pp. 88, 89). *Kulon*, the present village of *Kulomeh*, an hour and a half west by north from Jerusalem on the road to *Ramleh* (see *Rob.* ii. p. 146 ; Bibl. Res. p. 158 : it is called *Kolony* by *Seetzen*, ii. p. 64). *Tatam* cannot be traced. *Sores* (for *Thobes* appears to be only a copyist's error) is probably *Saris*, a small village four hours to the east of Jerusalem, upon a ridge on the south of *Wady Aly* (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 154–5). *Karem*, now *Ain Karim*, a large flourishing village two hours to the west of Jerusalem, with a Franciscan convent dedicated to John the Baptist in the middle, and a fountain (*Rob.* ii. p. 141 ; Bibl. Res. p. 271). *Galem*, a different place from the *Gallim* on the north of Jerusalem (Isa. x. 30), has not yet been discovered. *Baither*, now a small dirty village called *Bettir* or *Bittir*, with a beautiful spring, and with gardens arranged in terraces on the western slope of the *Wady Bittir*, to the south-west of Jerusalem (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 266). *Manocho*, possibly the same place as *Manachat* (1 Chron. viii. 6), has not been found.

Ver. 60. The *sixth* group of only two towns, to the west of Jerusalem, on the northern border of the tribe of Judah.—*Kirjath-baal*, or *Kirjath-jearim*, the present *Kureyet el Enab* ; see at ver. 9, and chap. ix. 17. *Rabbah* (*Ha-rabbah*, the great) is quite unknown.

Vers. 61, 62. The *towns in the desert of Judah*, which ran along the Dead Sea from the northern border of Judah (vers. 6, 7) to Wady Fikreh on the south, and reached to the districts of Maon, Ziph, Tekoah, and Bethlehem towards the west. This tract of land is for the most part a terrible desert, with a soil composed of chalk, marl, and limestone, and with bald mountains covered with flint and hornstone, and without the slightest trace of vegetation on the side bordering on the Dead Sea (see *v. Schubert*, *Reise*, iii. pp. 94, 96; *Rob.* ii. pp. 202, 475, 477). Yet wherever there are springs even this desert is covered with a luxuriant vegetation, as far as the influence of the water extends (*Seetzen*, ii. pp. 249, 258); and even in those parts which are now completely desolate, there are traces of the work of man of a very ancient date in all directions (*Rob.* ii. p. 187). Six towns are mentioned in the verses before us. *Beth-arabah*: see at ver. 6. *Middin* and *Secaca* are unknown. According to *Knobel*, *Middin* is probably the ruins of *Mird* or *Mardeh*, to the west of the northern end of the Dead Sea (*Rob.* ii. p. 270).—Ver. 62. *Nibsan*, also unknown. The city of salt (salt town), in which the Edomites sustained repeated defeats (2 Sam. viii. 13; Ps. lx. 2; 2 Kings xiv. 7; 1 Chron. xviii. 12; 2 Chron. xxv. 11), was no doubt at the southern end of the Dead Sea, in the Salt Valley (*Rob.* ii. p. 483). *Engedi*, on the Dead Sea (*Ezek.* xlvii. 10), to which David also fled to escape from Saul (1 Sam. xxiv. 1 sqq.), according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Engaddi*) a *vicus prægrandis*, the present *Ain-Jidi*, a spring upon a shelf of the high rocky coast on the west of the Dead Sea, with ruins of different ancient buildings (see *Seetzen*, ii. pp. 227–8; *Rob.* ii. pp. 214 sqq.; *Lynch*, pp. 178–9, 199, 200).—In ver. 63 there follows a notice to the effect that the Judæans were unable to expel the Jebusites from Jerusalem, which points back to the time immediately after Joshua, when the Judæans had taken Jerusalem and burned it (*Judg.* i. 8), but were still unable to maintain possession. This notice is not at variance with either chap. xviii. 28 or *Judg.* i. 21, since it neither affirms that Jerusalem belonged to the tribe of Judah, nor that Judah alone laid claim to the possession of the town to the exclusion of the Benjamites (see the explanation of *Judg.* i. 8).

INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBE OF JOSEPH.—CHAP. XVI. XVII.

The descendants of Joseph drew one lot, that the inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh might not be separated from that of the tribe of Ephraim. But the territory was immediately divided between the two separate tribes of the children of Joseph, Ephraim receiving the southern portion of the land that had fallen to it by lot, and half Manasseh the northern. Accordingly we find the southern boundary of the whole territory described first of all in chap. xvi. 1-4, both the boundary which separated it from the tribe of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 11 sqq.), and that which divided it from Dan (chap. xix. 40 sqq.); then the territory of Ephraim is given, with a minute description of the northern boundary (chap. xvi. 5-10); and finally the territory assigned to the families of Manasseh (chap. xvii. 1-13), without any precise delineation of its northern boundaries, all that is stated being that the Manassites touched Asher and Issachar towards the north, and also received some scattered towns with their villages in the territory of both those tribes (chap. xvii. 10, 11). To this there is appended in vers. 14-18 the complaint of the children of Joseph concerning the inheritance that had fallen to them.

Chap. xvi. 1-4. *Territory of the Tribe of Joseph.*—Ver. 1. “*And there came out the lot of the children of Joseph from Jordan by Jericho.*” “The lot came out,” viz. from the urn (cf. chap. xix. 1, 17, 24). The expression “came up” is used in the same sense in chap. xviii. 11. The connection of these two words with the rest of the sentence, “*from Jordan by Jericho,*” may be explained on the supposition that the lot which came out of the urn determined the inheritance that fell to the tribe, so that we might paraphrase the verse in this manner: “There came out the lot to the children of Joseph, namely, the inheritance, which goes out from, or whose boundary commences at, the Jordan by Jericho,” i.e. from that part of the Jordan which is opposite to Jericho, and which is still more precisely defined by the additional clause, “by the water of Jericho eastward.” The water of Jericho is the present fountain of *es Sultan*, half an hour to the north-west of *Riha*, the only large fountain in the neighbourhood of Jericho, whose waters spread over the plain, and form a small brook, which no doubt flows in the rainy season through the Wady Kelt into the Jordan (see *Rob.* ii. pp. 283-4; *Tobler*, *Topogr.* v. *Jerus.* ii. pp. 558-9). “*The wilderness*” is in opposition to “the lot,” so that the sense is, “namely, the desert

going up from Jericho to the mountains to Bethel." According to chap. xviii. 12, the reference is to the desert of Beth-aven, which was on the east of Bethel, between the Wady Suwar (*Tuwar*) and Mutyah (see at chap. vii. 2). Towards the east this desert terminates with the Jebel Kuruntul (Quarantana) on the north-west of Jericho, where it descends precipitously into the valley of the Jordan, or v. v., where it rises out of the Jordan valley. According to chap. xviii. 12, the same boundary went up by the shoulder of Jericho towards the north, *i.e.* along the northern range of mountains by Jericho, which cannot be any other than the "conspicuous double height, or rather group of heights," in front of the mountain of Quarantana, at the eastern foot of which lies the fountain of Ain es Sultan (*Rob.* ii. p. 284). In all probability, therefore, the boundary ran up towards the north-west, from the Sultan fountain to Ain Duk, and thence in a westerly direction across to Abu Seba (along which road *Robinson* had a frightful desert on his right hand: *Pal.* ii. p. 310), and then again towards the north-west to Beitin (Bethel), according to chap. xviii. 13, along the southern shoulder (or side) of Luz, *i.e.* Bethel.—Ver. 2. "*And it went out from Bethel to Luz.*" Bethel is distinguished from Luz in this passage, because the reference is not to the town of Bethel, which was called Luz by the Canaanites (*vid.* Gen. xxviii. 19), but to the southern range of mountains belonging to Bethel, from which the boundary ran out to the town of Luz, so that this town, which stood upon the border, was allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 22). From this point the boundary went over "*to the territory of the Arkite to Ataroth.*" We know nothing further about the Arkite than that David's friend Hushai belonged to that family (2 Sam. xv. 32, xvi. 16; 1 Chron. xxvii. 33). Ataroth, called Ataroth-Adar in chap. xviii. 13, was not the present village of Atâra, an hour and a half to the south of Jiljilia (*Rob.* iii. p. 80), as I once supposed, but the ruins of Atâra, three-quarters of an hour to the south of Bireh (Beeroth, *Rob.* ii. p. 314), with which the expression "*descended*" in chap. xviii. 13 perfectly harmonizes. Consequently the boundary was first of all drawn in a south-westerly direction from Beitin to Bireh (chap. xviii. 25), and then southwards to Atârah.—Ver. 3. From this point "*it went down westward to the territory of the Japhletites to the territory of lower Beth-horon,*" or, according to chap. xviii. 13, "*to the mountain (or range) which is on the south by lower Beth-horon.*" The Japhletite is altogether unknown, as the Asherite of this name cannot possibly be thought of (1 Chron.

vii. 32, 33). *Lower Beth-horon* is the present *Beit-Ur Tachta*, a village upon a low ridge. It is separated from Upper Beth-horon, which lies farther east, by a deep wady (see at chap. x. 10, and *Rob.* iii. p. 59). "*And to Gezer*," which was probably situated near the village of *el Kubab* (see at chap. x. 33). "*And the goings out thereof are at the sea*" (the Mediterranean), probably running towards the north-west, and following the Wady Muzeireh to the north of Japho, which was assigned to the Danites, according to chap. xix. 46.—Ver. 4. The territory commencing at the boundary lines mentioned was allotted to Ephraim and Manasseh as their inheritance.

Vers. 5-10. *Territory of the tribe of Ephraim*, according to its families.—Ver. 5. "*The border of their inheritance was from the east Atroth-addar and (along the line) to Upper Beth-horon*,"—a brief description of the southern boundary, which is more minutely described in vers. 1-3. Upper Beth-horon is mentioned here instead of Lower Beth-horon (ver. 3). This makes no difference, however, as the two places stood quite close to one another (see at chap. x. 10). In vers. 6-8 the northern boundary of Ephraim is given, namely, from the middle, or from "a central point near the watershed" (*Knobel*), first towards the east (vers. 6 and 7), and then towards the west (ver. 8). The eastern half of the northern boundary went *מִן הַיָּם*, i.e. when regarded from the west, or looked at towards the west, to the north side of *Michmethah*. According to chap. xvii. 7, this place was before Shechem, and therefore in any case it was not far from it, though it has not been discovered yet. *Knobel* supposes it to have been on the site of the present *Kabate* (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 166), *Kubatiyeh*, an hour and a half to the south of *Jenin* (*Rob.* iii. 154), assuming that *Michmethah* might also have been pronounced *Chemathah*, and that *b* may have been substituted for *m*. But *Kabate* is six hours to the north of Shechem, and therefore was certainly not "*before Shechem*" (chap. xvii. 7). It then turned "*eastward to Taanath-shiloh*" (*Τηνὰθ Σηλώ*, LXX.), according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Thenath*) ten Roman miles from Neapolis (Sichem), on the way to the Jordan, most probably the *Thena* of *Ptol.* (v. 16, 5), the present *Tana*, *Ain Tana*, a heap of ruins on the south-east of Nablus, where there are large cisterns to be found (see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 295; *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xv. p. 471). And "*then went by on the east to Janoah*" (i.e. *Jano* in *Acrabittena regione*, twelve Roman miles from Neapolis: *Onom.*), the present ruins of *Janân*, a miserable village, with extensive ruins of great antiquity, about three

hours to the south-east of Nabulus, three-quarters of an hour to the north-east of Akraheh (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 297 ; *Van de Velde*, R. ii. p. 268).—Ver. 7. From Janoah the boundary went down “to *Ataroth and Naarath*.” *Ataroth*, a different place from the *Ataroth* or *Atroth-addar* mentioned in vers. 3 and 5, is apparently to be sought for on the eastern slope of the mountains by the side of the Ghor, judging from the expression “went down ;” but it has not yet been discovered. *Naarath*, probably the same as *Naaran*, in eastern Ephraim (1 Chron. vii. 28), is described in the *Onom.* (s. v. *Naaratha*) as *viculus Judæorum Naorath*, five Roman miles (i.e. two hours) from Jericho, probably on the north-east. The boundary line then touched Jericho, i.e. the district of Jericho, namely on the north side of the district, as Jericho was allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 21). At this point it also coincided with the southern boundary of the tribe of Joseph (ver. 1) and the northern boundary of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 12).—Ver. 8. The western half of the northern boundary went from *Tappuah* westwards to the Cane-brook, and terminated at the sea. *Tappuah*, called *En-tappuah* in chap. xvii. 7, as the southern boundary of Manasseh, which is there described, and which ran from Michmethah to En-tappuah, coincides with the northern boundary of Ephraim, must not be identified with the royal town of that name mentioned in chap. xii. 17, and therefore was not *Kefr Kud* (*Capercota*), on the west of Jenin (Gināa). This place was so far to the north, viz. seven hours to the north of Nabulus, that the boundary from Michmethah, in the neighbourhood of Shechem (Nabulus) onwards, would have run from south to north instead of in a westerly direction. Still less can *En-tappuah* be found, as *Van de Velde* supposes, in the old well of the deserted village of *Ataf*, five hours to the east of Nabulus. It must have been to the west of Shechem; but it has not yet been discovered, as the country to the west of Nabulus and Sebastieh has “not been examined” (*Van de Velde*). The *Cane-brook* is no doubt the brook of that name mentioned by *Bohad*. (*vita Salad.* pp. 191, 193); only it is not quite clear “whether the *Abu Zabura* is intended, or a brook somewhat farther south, where there is still a *Nahr el Kassab*.”—Ver. 9. The tribe of Ephraim also received some scattered towns in the territory of the tribe of Manasseh, in fact all those towns to which *Tappuah* belonged, according to chap. xvii. 8, with the dependent villages.¹—

¹ The reason why the Ephraimites received scattered towns and villages in the tribe-territory of Manasseh, is supposed by *Calvin*, *Masius*, and others, to

Ver. 10. From Gezer, however (see ver. 3), they could not drive out the Canaanites, so that they still dwelt among the Ephraimites, but were reduced to a state of serfdom. This notice resembles the one in chap. xv. 63, and is to be interpreted in the same way.

Chap. xvii. 1-13. *The inheritance of Manasseh on this side of the Jordan* was on the north of Ephraim.—Vers. 1b-6. Before proceeding to the more detailed description of the inheritance, the historian thinks it necessary to observe that the Manassites received a double inheritance. This remark is introduced with the words “for he was the first-born of Joseph.” On this account, in addition to the territory already given to him in Gilead and Bashan, he received a second allotment of territory in Canaan proper. With the word לַמַּכִּיר (for Machir) the more minute account of the division of the Manassites commences. לַמַּכִּיר וְנֹ is first of all written absolutely at the beginning of the sentence, and then resumed in וְנֹ : “to Machir, the first-born of Manasseh . . . to him were Gilead and Bashan assigned, because he was a man of war,” i.e. a warlike man, and had earned for himself a claim to the inheritance of Gilead and Bashan through the peculiar bravery which he had displayed in the conquest of those lands. By Machir, however, we are not to understand the actual son of Manasseh, but his family; and אֲבִי הַגִּלְעָד does not mean “father of Gilead,” but lord (possessor) of Gilead, for Machir’s son Gilead is always called גִּלְעָד without the article (*vid.* chap. xvii. 3; Num. xxvi. 29, 30, xxvii. 1, xxxvi. 1; 1 Chron. vii. 17), whereas the country of that name is just as constantly called הַגִּלְעָד (see ver. 1, the last clause, ver. 5, chap. xiii. 11, 31; Num. xxxii. 40; Deut. iii. 10 sqq.). “And there came, i.e. the lot fell (the lot is to be repeated from ver. 1), to the other descendants of Manasseh according to their families,” which are then enumerated as in Num. xxvi. 30-32. “These are the male descendants of Manasseh.” הַזְּכָרִים must not be altered, notwithstanding the fact that it is preceded and followed by הַנְּקִיבוֹת; it is evidently used deliberately as an antithesis to the female descendants of Manasseh mentioned in ver. 3.—Vers. 3 sqq. Among the six families of Manasseh (ver. 2), Zelophehad, a descendant of Hephher, left no son; but he had five daughters, whose names are given in ver. 3

have been, that after the boundaries had been arranged, on comparing the territory allotted to each with the relative numbers of the two tribes, it was found that Ephraim had received too small a possession. This is quite possible; at the same time there may have been other reasons which we cannot discover now, as precisely the same thing occurs in the case of Manasseh (chap. xvii. 11).

(as in Num. xxvi. 33, xxvii. 1, xxxvi. 10). These daughters had petitioned Moses for a separate portion in the promised land, and their request had been granted (Num. xxvii. 2 sqq., compared with chap. xxxvi.). They therefore came before the committee appointed for dividing the land and repeated this promise, which was at once fulfilled. Consequently there were ten families of Manasseh who had received portions by the side of Ephraim, five male and five female. "*And (ver. 5) there fell the measurements of Manasseh (as) ten,*" i.e. ten portions were assigned to the Manassites (on the west of the Jordan), beside the land of Gilead, because (as is again observed in ver. 6) the daughters of Manasseh, i.e. of Zelophehad the Manassite, received an inheritance among his sons (i.e. the rest of the Manassites).

Vers. 7-13. *Boundaries and extent of the inheritance of the ten families of Manasseh.*—Vers. 7-10a, the southern boundary, which coincides with the northern boundary of Ephraim described in chap. xvi. 6-8, and is merely given here with greater precision in certain points. It went "*from Asher to Michmethah, before Shechem.*" *Asher* is not the territory of the tribe of Asher, but a distinct locality; according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Asher*) a place on the high road from Neapolis to Scythopolis, fifteen Roman miles from the former. It is not to be found, however, in the ruins of Tell *Um el Aschera* (*V. de Velde*) or Tell *Um Ajra* (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 310, 327), an hour to the south of Beisan, as *Knobel* supposes, but in the village of *Yasir*, where there are magnificent ruins, about five hours and ten minutes from Nabulus on the road to Beisan (*V. de Velde*, *Mem.* pp. 237, 289; *R. ii.* p. 295). *Michmethah*, before *Shechem*, is still unknown (see chap. xvi. 6). *Shechem* was founded by the Hivite prince Shēchem (Gen. xxxiii. 18), and is frequently mentioned in the book of Genesis. It stood between Ebal and Gerizim, was given up by Ephraim to the Levites, and declared a free city (city of refuge: chap. xxi. 21, xx. 7). It was there that the ten tribes effected their separation from Judah (1 Kings xii. 1 sqq.), and Jeroboam resided there (1 Kings xii. 25). In later times it was the chief city of the country of Samaria, and the capital of the Samaritans (John iv. 5); and the name of *Neapolis*, or *Flavia Neapolis*, from which the present *Nabulus* or *Nablus* has come, was given to it in honour of Vespasian (see v. *Raumer*, *Pal.* pp. 161 sqq.). From this point the boundary went אֶל-הַיְמִינִי (i.e. either "*to the right side,*" the south side, or *to Yamin*), "*to the inhabitants of En-tappuah.*" Whether *Yamin* is an appella-

tive or a proper name is doubtful. But even if it be the name of a place, it is quite certain that it cannot be the village of *Yamón*, an hour to the south-east of *Taanuk* (*Rob.* iii. pp. 161, 167, etc.), as this is much too far north, and, judging from ver. 11, belonged to the territory of Asher. In the case of *En-tappuah*, the inhabitants are mentioned instead of the district, because the district belonged to Manasseh, whilst the town on the border of Manasseh was given to the Ephraimites. The situation of the town has not yet been discovered: see at chap. xvi. 8. From this point the boundary ran down to the Cane-brook (see chap. xvi. 8), namely to the south side of the brook. "*These towns were assigned to Ephraim in the midst of the towns of Manasseh, and (but) the territory of Manasseh was on the north of the brook.*" The only possible meaning of these words is the following: From Tappuah, the boundary went down to the Cane-brook and crossed it, so that the south side of the brook really belonged to the territory of Manasseh; nevertheless the towns on this south side were allotted to Ephraim, whilst only the territory to the north of the brook fell to the lot of the Manassites. This is expressed more plainly in ver. 10a: "*To the south (of the brook the land came) to Ephraim, and to the north to Manasseh.*" In ver. 10b the northern and eastern boundaries are only briefly indicated: "*And they (the Manassites) touched Asher towards the north, and Issachar towards the east.*" The reason why this boundary was not described more minutely, was probably because it had not yet been fixed. For (ver. 11) Manasseh also received towns and districts in (within the territory of) Issachar and Asher, viz. Beth-shean, etc. *Beth-shean*, to the wall of which Saul's body was fastened (1 Sam. xxxi. 10 sqq.; 2 Sam. xxi. 12), was afterwards called *Scythopolis*. It was in the valley of the Jordan, where the plain of Jezreel slopes off into the valley; its present name is *Beisan*, a place where there are considerable ruins of great antiquity, about two hours from the Jordan (*vid. Seetzen*, ii. pp. 162 sqq.; *Rob.* iii. p. 174; *Bibl. Res.* p. 325; *v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 150-1). This city, with its daughter towns, was in the territory of Issachar, which was on the east of Manasseh, and may have extended a considerable distance towards the south along the valley of the Jordan, as the territory of Manasseh and Ephraim did not run into the valley of the Jordan; but Asher (*Yasir*) is mentioned in ver. 7 as the most easterly place in Manasseh, and, according to chap. xvi. 6, 7, the eastern boundary of Ephraim ran down along the eastern edge of the mountains as far as Jericho, without including the Jordan valley. At the same

time, the Ghor on the western side of the Jordan below Beisan, as far as the plain of Jericho, was of no great value to any tribe, as this district, according to *Josephus* (de Bell. Jud. iv. 8, 2, and iii. 10, 7), was uninhabited because of its barrenness. The other towns, *Ibleam*, etc., with the exception of *Endor* perhaps, were in the territory of *Asher*, and almost all on the south-west border of the plain of *Esdraelon*. *Ibleam*, called *Bileam* in 1 Chron. vi. 55 (70), a Levitical town (see at chap. xxi. 25), was not very far from *Megiddo* (2 Kings ix. 27), and has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Khirbet-Belameh*, half an hour to the south of *Jenin*; according to *Schultz*, it is the same place as *Belamon*, *Belmen*, or *Belthem* (*Judith* iv. 4, vii. 3, viii. 3). With וְאֶחָד־יָשְׁבֵי דֹר the construction changes, so that there is an anacolouthon, which can be explained, however, on the ground that הָיָה לִי may not only mean to be assigned to, but also to receive or to have. In this last sense וְאֶחָד is attached. The inhabitants are mentioned instead of the towns, because the historian had already the thought present in his mind, that the *Manassites* were unable to exterminate the *Canaanites* from the towns allotted to them. *Dor* is the present *Tortura* (see at chap. xi. 2). *Endor*, the home of the witch (1 Sam. xxviii. 7), four Roman miles to the south of *Tabor* (*Onom.*), at present a village called *Endôr*, on the northern shoulder of the *Duhy* or *Little Hermon* (see *Rob.* iii. p. 225; *Bibl. Res.* p. 340). *Taanach* and *Megiddo*, the present *Taanuk* and *Lejun* (see at chap. xii. 21). The three last towns, with the places dependent upon them, are connected more closely together by שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַנָּפְתָּלִים, the three-hill-country, probably because they formed a common league.—Vers. 12, 13. The *Manassites* were unable to exterminate the *Canaanites* from these six towns, and the districts round; but when they grew stronger, they made them tributary slaves (cf. chap. xvi. 10).

Vers. 14–18. *Complaint of the Descendants of Joseph respecting the inheritance allotted to them.*—Ver. 14. As the descendants of *Joseph* formed two tribes (*Ephraim* and *Manasseh*), they gave utterance to their dissatisfaction that *Joshua* had given them (“me,” the house of *Joseph*, ver. 17) but one lot, but one portion (הֶחָלֶק, a measure, then the land measured off), for an inheritance, although they were a strong and numerous people. “So far hath *Jehovah* blessed me hitherto.” עַד־אִשָּׁר, to this (sc. numerous people), is to be understood *de gradu*; עַד־כֹּה, hitherto, *de tempore*. There was no real ground for this complaint. As *Ephraim* numbered only 32,500 and *Manasseh* 52,700 at the second census in the time

of Moses (Num. xxvi.), and therefore Ephraim and half Manasseh together did not amount to more than 58,000 or 59,000, this tribe and a half were not so strong as Judah with its 76,500, and were even weaker than Dan with its 64,400, or Issachar with its 64,300 men, and therefore could not justly lay claim to more than the territory of a single tribe. Moreover, the land allotted to them was in one of the most fertile parts of Palestine. For although as a whole the mountains of Ephraim have much the same character as those of Judah, yet the separate mountains are neither so rugged nor so lofty, there being only a few of them that reach the height of 2500 feet above the level of the sea (see *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xv. pp. 475 sqq.; *V. de Velde*, *Mem.* pp. 177 sqq.); moreover, they are intersected by many broad valleys and fertile plateaux, which are covered with fruitful fields and splendid plantations of olives, vines, and fig trees (see *Rob.* iii. p. 78, *Bibl. Res.* pp. 290 sqq.; *Seetzen*, ii. pp. 165 sqq., 190 sqq.). On the west the mountains slope off into the hill country, which joins the plain of Sharon, with its invariable fertility. "The soil here is a black clay soil of unfathomable depth, which is nearly all ploughed, and is of such unusual fertility that a cultivated plain here might furnish an almost unparalleled granary for the whole land. Interminable fields full of wheat and barley with their waving ears, which were very nearly ripe, with here and there a field of millet, that was already being diligently reaped by the peasants, presented a glorious sight" (*Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. pp. 567-8).—Ver. 15. Joshua therefore sent them back with their petition, and said, "*If thou art a strong people, go up into the wood and cut it away,*" i.e. make room for houses, fields, and meadows, by clearing the forests, "*in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaim, if the mountain of Ephraim is too narrow for thee.*" The name "mountain of Ephraim" is used here in a certain sense proleptically, to signify the mountain which received its name from the tribe of Ephraim, to which it had only just been allotted. This mountain, which is also called the mountain of Israel (chap. xi. 16, 21), was a limestone range running from Kirjath-jearim, where the mountains of Judah terminate (see at chap. xi. 21), to the plain of Jezreel, and therefore embracing the greater part of the tribe-territory of Benjamin. The wood, which is distinguished from the mountain of Ephraim, and is also described in ver. 18 as a mountainous land, is either the mountainous region extending to the north of Yasir as far as the mountains of Gilboa, and lying to the west of Beisan, a region which has not

yet been thoroughly explored, or else, as *Knobel* supposes, "the broad range of woody heights or low woody hills, by which the mountains of Samaria are connected with Carmel on the north-west (*Rob.* iii. p. 189), between Taanath and Mcgiddo on the east, and Cæsarea and Dor on the west." Possibly both may be intended, as the children of Joseph were afraid of the Canaanites in Beisan and in the plain of Jezreel (ver. 16). The Rephaim were dwelling there, a tribe of gigantic stature (see at *Gen.* xiv. 5), also the Perizzites (see at *Gen.* xiii. 7).—Vcr. 16. The children of Joseph replied that the mountain (allotted to them) would not be enough for them (אֲרָצָא, as in *Num.* xi. 22; *Zech.* x. 10); and that all the Canaanites who dwelt in the land of the plain had iron chariots, both those in Beth-shean and its daughter towns, and those in the valley of Jezreel. אֲרָצָא הַשְּׁמֹנִית, the land of the plain or valley land, includes both the valley of the Jordan near Beisan, and also the plain of Jezreel, which opens into the Jordan valley in the neighbourhood of Beisan (*Rob.* iii. p. 173). The plain of Jezreel, so called after the town of that name, is called the "great field of Esdrelom" in *Judith* i. 4, and τὸ μέγα πεδῖον by *Josephus*. It is the present *Merj* (i.e. pasture-land) *Ibn Amer*, which runs in a south-westerly direction from the Mediterranean Sea above Carmel, and reaches almost to the Jordan. It is bounded on the south by the mountains of Carmel, the mountain-land of Ephraim and the range of hills connecting the two, on the north by the mountains of Galilee, on the west by the southern spurs of the Galilean highland, and on the east by the mountains of Gilboa and the Little Hermon (Jebel Duhy). Within these boundaries it is eight hours in length from east to west, and five hours broad; it is fertile throughout, though very desolate now (see *v. Raumer*, *Pal.* iii. pp. 39 sqq.). "Iron chariots" are not scythe chariots, for these were introduced by Cyrus, and were unknown to the Medes, Persians, and Arabians, i.e. to the early Asiatics before his time (*Xen. Cyr.* vi. 1, 27, 30), as well as to the ancient Egyptians (see *Wilkinson*, *Manners and Customs*, i. p. 350); they were simply chariots tipped with iron, just as the Egyptian war-chariots were made of wood and strengthened with metal nails and tips (*Wilkinson*, pp. 342, 348).—Vers. 17, 18. As the answer of the children of Joseph indicated cowardice and want of confidence in the help of God, Joshua contented himself with repeating his first reply, though more fully and with the reasons assigned. "Thou art a strong people, and hast great power; there will not be one lot to thee:" i.e.

because thou art a numerous people and endowed with strength, there shall not remain one lot to thee, thou canst and wilt extend thine inheritance. "*For the mountain will be thine, for it is forest, and thou wilt hew it out, and its goings out will become thine.*" By the mountain we are not to understand the mountains of Ephraim which were assigned to the Ephraimites by the lot, but the wooded mountains mentioned in ver. 15, which the children of Joseph were to hew out, so as to make outlets for themselves. "*The outgoings of it*" are the fields and plains bordering upon the forest. For the Canaanites who dwelt there (ver. 15) would be driven out by the house of Joseph, just because they had iron chariots and were strong, and therefore only a strong tribe like Joseph was equal to the task. "Not one of the tribes of Israel is able to fight against them (the Canaanites) because they are strong, but you have strength enough to be able to expel them (*Rashi*).

THE TABERNACLE SET UP AT SHILOH. SURVEY OF THE LAND THAT HAD STILL TO BE DIVIDED. INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN.—CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. THE TABERNACLE SET UP AT SHILOH.—As soon as the tribe of Ephraim had received its inheritance, Joshua commanded the whole congregation to assemble in Shiloh, and there set up the tabernacle, in order that, as the land was conquered, the worship of Jehovah might henceforth be regularly observed in accordance with the law. The selection of Shiloh as the site for the sanctuary was hardly occasioned by the fitness of the place for this purpose, on account of its being situated upon a mountain in the centre of the land, for there were many other places that would have been quite as suitable in this respect; the reason is rather to be found in the name of the place, viz. *Shiloh*, i.e. rest, which called to mind the promised Shiloh (Gen. xlix. 10), and therefore appeared to be pre-eminently suitable to be the resting-place of the sanctuary of the Lord, where His name was to dwell in Israel, until He should come who was to give true rest to His people as the Prince of Peace. In any case, however, Joshua did not follow his own judgment in selecting Shiloh for this purpose, but acted in simple accordance with the instructions of God, as the Lord had expressly reserved to himself the choice of the place where His name should dwell (Deut. xii. 11). *Shiloh*, according to the *Onom.*,

was twelve Roman miles or five hours to the south of Neapolis (Nablus), and about eight hours to the north of Jerusalem; at present it is a heap of ruins, bearing the name of *Seilun* (see *Rob.* iii. p. 85). The tabernacle continued standing at Shiloh during the time of the judges, until the ark of the covenant fell into the hands of the Philistines, in the lifetime of Eli, when the holy tent was robbed of its soul, and reduced to the mere shadow of a sanctuary. After this it was removed to Nob (1 Sam. xxi. 2); but in consequence of the massacre inflicted by Saul upon the inhabitants of this place (1 Sam. xxii. 19), it was taken to Gibeon (1 Kings iii. 4: see *Keil*, *Bibl. Arch.* i. § 22). From this time forward Shiloh continued to decline, because the Lord had rejected it (Ps. lxxviii. 60; Jer. vii. 12, xxvi. 6). That it was destroyed by the Assyrians, as *Knobel* affirms, is not stated in the history.

Vers. 2-10. SURVEY OF THE LAND THAT HAD YET TO BE DIVIDED.—Ver. 2. After the tabernacle had been set up, the casting of the lots and division of the land among the other seven tribes were to be continued; namely at Shiloh, to which the congregation had removed with the sanctuary.—Vers. 3, 4. But, for the reasons explained in chap. xiv. 1, these tribes showed themselves “*slack to go to possess the land which the Lord had given them,*” i.e. not merely to conquer it, but to have it divided by lot, and to enter in and take possession. Joshua charged them with this, and directed them to appoint three men for each of the seven tribes, that they might be sent out to go through the land, and describe it according to the measure of their inheritance. “*According to their inheritance,*” i.e. with special reference to the fact that seven tribes were to receive it for their inheritance. The description was not a formal measurement, although the art of surveying was well known in Egypt in ancient times, and was regularly carried out after the annual inundations of the Nile (*Herod.* ii. 109; *Strabo*, xvii. 787; *Diod. Sic.* i. 69); so that the Israelites might have learned it there. But *קָבַץ* does not mean to measure; and it was not a formal measurement that was required, for the purpose of dividing the land that yet remained into seven districts, since the tribes differed in numerical strength, and therefore the boundaries of the territory assigned them could not be settled till after the lots had been cast. The meaning of the word is to describe; and according to ver. 9, it was chiefly to the towns that reference was made: so that the description required by Joshua in all probability consisted simply in the preparation of

lists of the towns in the different parts of the land, with an account of their size and character; also with "notices of the quality and condition of the soil; what lands were fertile, and what they produced; where the country was mountainous, and where it was level; which lands were well watered, and which were dry; and any other things that would indicate the character of the soil, and facilitate a comparison between the different parts of the land" (*Rosenmüller*). The reasons which induced Joshua to take steps for the first time now for securing a survey of the land, are given in chap. xiv. 1. The men chosen for the purpose were able to carry out their task without receiving any hindrance from the Canaanites. For whilst the latter were crushed, if not exterminated, by the victories which the Israelites had gained, it was not necessary for the twenty-one Israelitish men to penetrate into every corner of the land, and every town that was still inhabited by the Canaanites, in order to accomplish their end.—Vers. 5, 6. "*And divide it into seven parts,*" viz. for the purpose of casting lots. Judah, however, was still to remain in its land to the south, and Ephraim in its territory to the north. The seven portions thus obtained they were to bring to Joshua, that he might then cast the lot for the seven tribes "before the Lord," i.e. before the tabernacle (chap. xix. 51).—Ver. 7. There were only seven tribes that had still to receive their portions; for the tribe of Levi was to receive no portion in the land (*vid.* chap. xiii. xiv.), and Gad, Renben, and half Manasseh had received their inheritance already on the other side of the Jordan.—Vers. 8, 9. Execution of this command.—Ver. 10. Joshua finishes the casting of the lots at Shiloh.

Vers. 11-28. INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN.—Vers. 11-20. *Boundaries* of the inheritance.—Ver. 11. The territory of their lot (i.e. the territory assigned to the Benjaminites by lot) came out (through the falling out of the lot) between the sons of Judah and the sons of Joseph.—Vers. 12, 13. The *northern boundary* ("the boundary towards the north side") therefore coincided with the southern boundary of Ephraim as far as Lower Beth-horon, and has already been commented upon in the exposition of chap. xvi. 1-3. The *western boundary* follows in ver. 14. At Beth-horon the boundary curved round and turned southwards on the western side, namely from the mountain before (in front of) Beth-horon southwards; and "*the goings out thereof were at Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim,*" the town of the Judæans mentioned

in chap. xv. 60, the present *Kureyet el Enab* (see at chap. ix. 17).—Vers. 15–19. “*As for the southern boundary from the end of Kirjath-jearim onwards, the (southern) boundary went out on the west (i.e. it started from the west), and went out (terminated) at the fountain of the water of Nephtoah.*” Consequently it coincided with the northern boundary of Judah, as described in chap. xv. 5–9, except that it is given there from east to west, and here from west to east (see at chap. xv. 5–9). In the construction תְּצַאֲוֹתַי הַנֶּגְבֹל, the noun הַנֶּגְבֹל is in apposition to the suffix: the outgoings of it, namely of the border (see *Ewald*, § 291, b.).—Ver. 20. The eastern boundary was the Jordan.

Vers. 21–28. The towns of Benjamin are divided into two groups. The first group (vers. 21–24) contains twelve towns in the eastern portion of the territory. *Jericho*: the present *Riha* (see at chap. ii. 1). *Beth-hoglah*, now *Ain Hajla* (see chap. xv. 6). *Emek-Keziz*: the name has been preserved in the *Wady el Kaziz*, on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, on the south-east of the Apostle’s Well (see *Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 328).—Ver. 22. *Beth-arabah*: see at chap. xv. 6. *Zemaruim*, probably the ruins of *es Sumrah*, on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, to the east of *Khan Hadhur*, on *Van de Velde’s* map. *Bethel*: now *Beitin* (see chap. vii. 2).—Ver. 23. *Avvim* (i.e. ruins) is unknown. *Phara* has been preserved in the ruins of *Fara*, on *Wady Fara*, three hours to the north-east of Jerusalem, and the same distance to the west of Jericho. *Ophrah* is mentioned again in 1 Sam. xiii. 17, but it is a different place from the *Ophrah* of Gideon in Manasseh (Judg. vi. 11, 24, viii. 27). According to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Aphra*), it was a κώμη Ἀφρήλ in the time of *Eusebius* (*Jer. vicus Effrem*), five Roman miles to the east of Bethel; and according to *Van de Velde*, v. *Raumer*, and others, it is probably the same place as *Ephron* or *Ephrain*, which Abijah took from Jeroboam along with *Jeshanah* and *Bethel* (2 Chron. xiii. 19), also the same as *Ephraim*, the city to which Christ went when He withdrew into the desert (John xi. 54), as the *Onom.* (s. v. *Ephron*) speaks of a *villa prægrandis Ephræa nomine* (Ἐφραῖμ in *Euseb.*), although the distance given there, viz. twenty Roman miles to the north of Jerusalem, reaches far beyond the limits of Benjamin.—Ver. 24. *Chephar-haammonai* and *Ophni* are only mentioned here, and are still unknown. *Gaba*, or *Geba* of Benjamin (1 Sam. xiii. 16; 1 Kings xv. 22), which was given up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 17; 1 Chron. vi. 45), was in the neighbourhood of Ramah (1 Kings xv. 22, 2 Chron. xvi. 6). It is mentioned in 2 Kings xxiii. 8, Zech.

xiv. 10, as the northern boundary of the kingdom of Judah, and was still inhabited after the captivity (Neh. vii. 30). It is a different place from *Gibeah*, and is not to be found, as I formerly supposed, in the Moslem village of *Jibia*, by the Wady el Jib, between Beitin and Sinjil (*Rob.* iii. p. 80), but in the small village of *Jeba*, which is lying half in ruins, and where there are relics of antiquity, three-quarters of an hour to the north-east of er-Râm (Ramah), and about three hours to the north of Jerusalem, upon a height from which there is an extensive prospect (*vid. Rob.* ii. pp. 113 sqq.). This eastern group also included the two other towns *Anathoth* and *Almon* (chap. xxi. 18), which were given up by Benjamin to the Levites. *Anathoth*, the home of the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. i. 1, xi. 21 sqq.), which was still inhabited by Benjaminites after the captivity (Neh. xi. 32), is the present village of Anâta, where there are ruins of great antiquity, an hour and a quarter to the north of Jerusalem (*Rob.* ii. pp. 109 sqq.). *Almon*, called *Allemeth* in 1 Chron. vi. 45, has been preserved in the ruins of Almit (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 287 sqq.), or *el-Mid* (*Tobler, Denkbl.* p. 631), on the south-east of Anâta.—Vers. 25-28. The *second* group of fourteen towns in the western portion of Benjamin.—Ver. 25. *Gibeon*, the present *Jib*: see at chap. ix. 3. *Ramah*, in the neighbourhood of Gibeah and Geba (Judg. xix. 13; Isa. x. 29; 1 Kings xv. 17; Ezra ii. 26), most probably the *Ramah* of Samuel (1 Sam. i. 19, ii. 11, xxv. 1, xxviii. 3), is the present village of er-Râm, upon a mountain with ruins between Gibeon and Geba, half an hour to the west of the latter, two hours to the north of Jerusalem (see *Rob.* ii. p. 315). *Beeroth*, the present *Bireh*: see at chap. ix. 17.—Ver. 26. *Mizpeh*, commonly called *Mizpah*, where the war with Benjamin was decided upon (Judg. xx. xxi.), and where Samuel judged the people, and chose Saul as king (1 Sam. vii. 5 sqq., x. 17), was afterwards the seat of the Babylonian governor Gedaliah (2 Kings xxv. 23; Jer. xl. 6 sqq.). According to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Massepha*), it was near Kirjath-jearim, and *Robinson* (ii. p. 139) is no doubt correct in supposing it to be the present *Neby Samvil* (i.e. prophet Samuel), an hour and a quarter to the east of Kureyet Enab (Kirjath-jearim), two hours to the north-west of Jerusalem, half an hour to the south of Gibeon, a place which stands like a watch-tower upon the highest point in the whole region, and with a mosque, once a Latin church, which is believed alike by Jews, Christians, and Mahometans to cover the tomb of the prophet Samuel (see *Rob.* ii. pp. 135 sqq.). *Chephirah*, i.e. *Kefir*: see

at chap. ix. 17. *Mozah* is only mentioned here, and is still unknown. Ver. 27. This also applies to *Rekem*, *Irpeel*, and *Taralah*.—Ver. 28 *Zelah*, the burial-place of Saul and his family (2 Sam. xxi. 14), is otherwise unknown. *Gibeath* or *Gibeah*, *i.e.* Gibeah of Benjamin, which was destroyed by the other tribes of Israel in the time of the judges, on account of the flagrant crime which had been committed there (Judg. xix. xx.), is also called *Gibeah of Saul*, as being the home and capital of Saul (1 Sam. x. 26, xi. 4, etc.), and was situated, according to Judg. xix. 13 and Isa. x. 29, between Jerusalem and Ramah, according to *Josephus* (Bell. Jud. v. 2, 1, 8) about twenty or thirty stadia from Jerusalem. These statements point to the *Tell* or *Tuleil el Phul*, *i.e.* bean-mountain, a conical peak about an hour from Jerusalem, on the road to er-Râm, with a large heap of stones upon the top, probably the ruins of a town that was built of unhewn stones, from which there is a very extensive prospect in all directions (*Rob.* ii. p. 317). Consequently modern writers have very naturally agreed in the conclusion, that the ancient Gibeah of Benjamin or Saul was situated either by the side of or upon this Tell (see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 286; *Strauss*, Sinai, etc., p. 331, ed. 6; *v. Raumer*, Pal. p. 196). *Kirjath* has not yet been discovered, and must not be confounded with *Kirjath-jearim*, which belonged to the tribe of Judah (ver. 14; cf. chap. xv. 60).

INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBES OF SIMEON, ZEBULUN, ISSACHAR,
ASHER, NAPHTALI, AND DAN.—CHAP. XIX.

Vers. 1-9. The INHERITANCE OF SIMEON fell within the inheritance of the children of Judah, because the land allotted to them at Gilgal was larger than they required (ver. 9). Thus the curse pronounced upon Simeon by Jacob of dispersion in Israel (Gen. xlix. 7) was fulfilled upon this tribe in a very peculiar manner, and in a different manner from that pronounced upon Levi. The towns allotted to the tribe of Simeon are divided into two groups, the first (vers. 2-6) consisting of thirteen or fourteen towns, all situated in the Negeb (or south country); the second (ver. 7) of four towns, two of which were in the *Negeb* and two in the *shephelah*. All these eighteen towns have already been enumerated among the towns of Judah (chap. xv. 26-32, 42), and are mentioned again in 1 Chron. iv. 28-32, in just the same order, and with only slight differences in the spelling of some of the names. If the classification of the names in two groups might

seem to indicate that Simeon received a connected portion of land in Judah, this idea is overthrown at once by the circumstance that two of the four towns in the second group were in the south land and two in the lowland, and, judging from chap. xv. 32, 42, at a great distance from one another. At the same time, we cannot decide this point with any certainty, as the situation of several of the towns is still unknown.—Ver. 2. *Beersheba*: see at chap. xv. 28. *Sheba* is wanting in the Chronicles, but has no doubt been omitted through a copyist's error, as *Shema* answers to it in chap. xv. 26, where it stands before *Moladah* just as *Sheba* does here.—On the names in vers. 3-6a, see the exposition of chap. xv. 28-32.—The sum total given in ver. 6b, viz. thirteen towns, does not tally, as there are fourteen names. On these differences, see the remarks on chap. xv. 32 (p. 163, the note).—Ver. 7. *Ain* and *Rimmon* were in the south land (chap. xv. 32), *Ether* and *Ashan* in the lowlands (chap. xv. 42).—Vers. 8, 9. In addition to the towns mentioned, the Simeonites received all the villages round about the towns to *Baalath-beer*, the *Ramah of the south*. This place, up to which the territory of the Simeonites extended, though without its being actually assigned to the Simeonites, is simply called *Baal* in 1 Chron. iv. 33, and is probably the same as *Bealoth* in chap. xv. 24, though its situation has not yet been determined (see at chap. xv. 24). It cannot be identified, however, with *Ramet el Khulil*, an hour to the north of Hebron, which *Roediger* supposes to be the *Ramah of the south*, since the territory of Simeon, which was situated in the Negeb, and had only two towns in the *shephelah*, cannot possibly have extended into the mountains to a point on the north of Hebron. So far as the situation is concerned, *V. de Velde* would be more likely to be correct, when he identifies *Rama of the south* with *Tell Lekiyeh* on the north of Beersheba, if this conjecture only rested upon a better foundation than the untenable assumption, that *Baalath-beer* is the same as the *Baalath of Dan* in ver. 44.

Vers. 10-16. The INHERITANCE OF ZEBULUN fell above the plain of Jezreel, between this plain and the mountains of Naphtali, so that it was bounded by Asher on the west and north-west (ver. 27), by Naphtali on the north and north-east (ver. 34), and by Issachar on the south-east and south, and touched neither the Mediterranean Sea nor the Jordan. It embraced a very fertile country, however, with the fine broad plain of *el Buttauf*, the *μέγας*

πεδίου above Nazareth called *Asochis* in *Joseph. vita*, § 41, 45 (see *Rob.* iii. p. 189, *Bibl. Res.* pp. 105 sqq.; *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. pp. 742, 758-9).—Ver. 10. “*And the boundary (the territory) of their inheritance was (went) to Sarid.*” This is no doubt the centre of the southern boundary, from which it is traced in a westerly direction in ver. 11, and in an easterly direction in ver. 12, in the same manner as in chap. xvi. 6. Unfortunately, *Sarid* cannot be determined with certainty. *Knobel’s* opinion is, that the name, which signifies “hole” or “incision,” after the analogy of שָׂרִיד, *perforavit*, and שָׂרִיד, *incidit*, does not refer to a town, but to some other locality, probably the southern opening of the deep and narrow wady which comes down from the basin of Nazareth, and is about an hour to the south-east of Nazareth, between two steep mountains (*Seetzen*, ii. pp. 151-2; *Rob.* iii. p. 183). This locality appears suitable enough. But it is also possible that *Sarid* may be found in one of the two heaps of ruins on the south side of the *Mons præcipitii* upon *V. de Velde’s* map (so called from Luke iv. 29).—Ver. 11. From this point “*the border went up westwards, namely to Mar’ala, and touched Dabbasheth, and still farther to the brook of Jokneam.*” If *Jokneam* of Carmel has been preserved in the Tell *Kaimûn* (see at chap. xii. 22), the brook before *Jokneam* is probably the Wady *el Milh*, on the eastern side of which, near the point where it opens into the plain, stands *Kaimûn*, and through which the road runs from Acca to Ramleh, as this wady separates Carmel from the small round hills which run to the south-east (see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 114, and *V. de Velde*, i. p. 249). Here the boundaries of Zebulun and Asher met (ver. 27). *Mar’ala* and *Dabbasheth* are to be sought for between *Kaimûn* and *Sarid*. The *Cod. Vat.* has Μαγεδδά instead of Μαριλά. Now, however little importance we can attach to the readings of the LXX. on account of the senseless way in which its renderings are made,—as, for example, in this very passage, where עַד-שָׂרִיד : עַד-יֶזְרַע is rendered Ἐσεδεκγῶλα,—the name *Magelda* might suggest a Hebrew reading *Magedlah* or *Mageldah*, and thus lead one to connect the place with the village of *Mejeidil* (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 114), or *Mshedil* (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 143), on the west of *Mons præcipitii*, though neither of these travellers visited the place, or has given us any minute description of it. Its situation upon a mountain would suit *Mar’ala*, to which the boundary went up from *Sarid*. In the case of *Dabbasheth*, the name, which signifies “lump” (see Isa. xxx. 6), points to a mountain. Upon this *Knobel* has founded the conjecture that *Gibeah*

or *Gibeath* took the place of this uncommon word, and that this is connected with the *Gabathon* of the *Onom.* (*juxta campum Legionis*), the present *Jebâta* between Mejeidil and Kaimûn, upon an isolated height on the edge of the mountains which skirt the plain of Jezreel, where there are signs of a remote antiquity (*Rob.* iii. p. 201, and *Bibl. Res.* p. 113; *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. p. 700); although Tell *Thureh* (i.e. mountain) might be intended, a village upon a low and isolated hill a little farther south (see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 116, and *Ritter*, *ut sup.*).—Ver. 12. “*And from Sarid the boundary turned eastwards toward the sun-rising to the territory of Chisloth-tabor, and went out to Dabrath, and went up to Japhia.*” *Chisloth-tabor*, i.e. according to *Kimchi’s* explanation *lumbi Taboris* (French, *les flancs*), was at any rate a place on the side of Tabor, possibly the same as *Kesulloth* in ver. 18, as *Masius* and others suppose, and probably the same place as the *Xaloth* of *Josephus* (*Bell. Jnd.* iii. 3, 1), which was situated in the “great plain,” and the *vicus Chasalus* of the *Onom.* (*juxta montem Thabor in campetribus*), i.e. the present village of *Iksâl* or *Ksâl*, upon a rocky height on the west of Thabor, with many tombs in the rocks (*Rob.* iii. p. 182). *Dabrath*, a place in the tribe of Issachar that was given up to the Levites (*chap. xxi. 28*; *1 Chron. vi. 57*), called *Dabaritta* in *Josephus* (*Bell. Jud.* ii. 21, 3) and *Dabira* in the *Onom.* (*villula in monte Thabor*), the present *Deburieh*, an insignificant village which stands in a very picturesque manner upon a stratum of rock at the western foot of Tabor (*Rob.* iii. p. 210; *V. de Velde*, *R.* ii. p. 324). *Japhia* certainly cannot be the present *Hepha* or *Haifa* (*Khaifa*) on the Mediterranean, and near to Carmel (*Rel. Pal.* p. 826, and *Ges. Thes. s. v.*); but it is just as certain that it cannot be the present *Jafa*, a place half an hour to the south-west of Nazareth, as *Robinson* (*Pal.* iii. p. 200) and *Knobel* suppose, since the boundary was running eastwards, and cannot possibly have turned back again towards the west, and run from *Deburieh* beyond *Sarid*. If the positions assigned to *Chisloth-tabor* and *Dabrath* are correct, *Japhia* must be sought for on the east of *Deburieh*.—Ver. 13. “*From thence it went over towards the east to the sun-rising to Gath-hepther, to Eth-kazin, and went out to Rimmon, which is marked off to Neah.*” *Gath-hepther*, the home of the prophet *Jonah* (*2 Kings xiv. 25*), was “*haud grandis viculus Geth*” in the time of *Jerome* (see *prol. ad Jon.*). It was about two miles from *Sephoris* on the road to *Tiberias*, and the tomb of the prophet was shown there. It is the present village of *Meshed*, a place

about an hour and a quarter to the north of Nazareth (*Rob.* iii. p. 209; *V. de Velde*, *Mem.* p. 312). *Eth-kazin* is unknown. *Rimmon*, a Levitical town (*chap.* xxi. 35; 1 *Chron.* vi. 62), has probably been preserved in the village of *Rummaneh*, about two hours and a half to the north of Nazareth (*Rob.* iii. p. 195). *Ham-methoar* is not a proper name, but the participle of מָתַר, with the article in the place of the relative pronoun, "bounded off," or pricked off. *Neah* is unknown; it is possibly the same place as *Neiel* in the tribe of Asher (*ver.* 27), as *Knobel* supposes.—*Ver.* 14. "And the boundary turned round it (round *Rimmon*), on the north to *Channathon*, and the outgoings thereof were the valley of *Jiphtah-el*." Judging from the words נֶחַם and נֶחֱמָה, this verse apparently gives the north-west boundary, since the last definition in *ver.* 13, "to *Gath-hepher*," etc., points to the eastern boundary. *Jiphtah-el* answers no doubt to the present *Jefât*, two hours and a half to the north of *Sefurieh*, and is the *Jotapata* which was obstinately defended by *Josephus* (*Bell. Jud.* iii. 7, 9: see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 104 sqq.). Consequently the valley of *Jiphtah-el*, at which *Zebulun* touched *Asher* (*ver.* 27), is probably "no other than the large *Wady Abilin*, which takes its rise in the hills in the neighbourhood of *Jefât*" (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 107). And if this be correct, *Channathon* (LXX. Ἐνναθών) is probably *Cana* of *Galilee*, the home of *Nathanael* (*John* ii. 1, 11, iv. 46, xxi. 2), the present *Kana el Jelil*, between *Rummaneh* and *Yefât*, on the northern edge of the plain of *Buttauf*, upon a *Tell*, from which you overlook the plain, fully two hours and a half in a straight line from *Nazareth*, and directly north of that place, where there are many ruins found (see *Rob.* iii. p. 204; *Bibl. Res.* p. 108).—*Ver.* 15. The towns of *Zebulun* were the following. *Kattath*, probably the same as *Kitron*, which is mentioned in *Judg.* i. 30 in connection with *Nahalol*, but which is still unknown. *Nehalal*, or *Nahalol* (*Judg.* i. 30), is supposed by *V. de Velde* (*Mem.* p. 335), who follows *Rabbi Schwartz*, to be the present village of *Maalul*, a place with ruins on the south-west of *Nazareth* (see *Sectzen*, ii. p. 143; *Rob.* iii. App.; and *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. p. 700). *Simron* is supposed by *Knobel* to be the village of *Semunieh* (see at *chap.* xi. 1). But neither of these is very probable. *Idalah* is supposed by *V. de Velde* to be the village of *Jeda* or *Jeida*, on the west of *Semunieh*, where are a few relics of antiquity, though *Robinson* (*Bibl. Res.* p. 113) states the very opposite. *Bethlehem* (of *Zebulun*), which many regard as the home of the judge *Ibzan* (*Judg.* xii. 8), has been preserved under the old name in a miser-

able village on the north of Jeida and Semunieh (see *Seetzen*, ii. p. 139; *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 113). The number of the towns is given as *twelve*, though only five are mentioned by name. It is true that some commentators have found the missing names in the border places mentioned in vers. 11-14, as, after deducting Chisloth-tabor and Dabrath, which belonged to Issachar, the names Sarid, Maralah, Dabbasheth, Japhia, Gittah-hepher, Eth-kazin, and Channathon give just seven towns. Nevertheless there is very little probability in this conjecture. For, in the first place, not only would it be a surprising thing to find the places mentioned as boundaries included among the towns of the territory belonging to the tribe, especially as some of the places so mentioned did not belong to Zebulun at all; but the copula *vav*, with which the enumeration of the towns commences, is equally surprising, since this is introduced in other cases with *וְהָיוּ הָעָרִים* (וְהָיוּ), e.g. chap. xviii. 21, xv. 21. And, in the second place, it is not a probable thing in itself, that, with the exception of the five towns mentioned in ver. 15, the other towns of Zebulun should all be situated upon the border. And lastly, the towns of *Kartah* and *Dimnah*, which Zebulun gave up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 34), are actually wanting. Under these circumstances, it is a natural conclusion that there is a gap in the text here, just as in chap. xv. 59 and xxi. 36.

Vers. 17-23. THE INHERITANCE OF ISSACHAR.—In this instance only towns are given, and the boundaries are not delineated, with the exception of the eastern portion of the northern boundary and the boundary line; at the same time, they may easily be traced from the boundaries of the surrounding tribes. Issachar received for the most part the large and very fertile plain of Jezreel (see at chap. xvii. 16, and *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. pp. 689 sqq.), and was bounded on the south by Manasseh, on the west by Manasseh and Asher, on the north by Zebulun, and farther east by Naphtali also, and on the east by the Jordan.—Ver. 18. “*And their boundary was towards Jezreel*,” i.e. their territory extended beyond Jezreel. *Jezreel*, the summer residence of Ahab and his house (1 Kings xviii. 45, 46, etc.), was situated upon a mountain, with an extensive and splendid prospect over the large plain that was called by its name. It was afterwards called *Esdraela*, a place described in the *Onom.* (s. v. *Jezreel*) as standing between Scythopolis and Legio; it is the present Zerîn, on the north-west of the mountains of Gilboa (see *Seetzen*, ii. pp. 155-6; *Rob.* iii. pp. 161 sqq.; *Van de Velde*, R. ii.

pp. 320 sqq.). *Chesulloth*, possibly the same as *Chisloth-tabor* (see at ver. 12). *Sunem*, the home of Abishag (1 Kings i. 3-15, etc.), also mentioned in 1 Sam. xxviii. 4 and 2 Kings iv. 8, was situated, according to the *Onom.*, five Roman miles (two hours) to the south of Tabor; it is the present *Solam* or *Sulem*, at the south-western foot of the Duhy or Little Hermon, an hour and a half to the north of Jezreel (see *Rob.* iii. pp. 170 sqq.; *Van de Velde*, R. ii. p. 323).—Ver. 19. *Haphraim*, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Aphraim*) *villa Affaræa*, six Roman miles to the north of Legio, is identified by *Knobel* with the village of *Afuleh*, on the west of *Sulem*, and more than two hours to the north-east of *Lejun* (*Rob.* iii. pp. 163, 181). *Sion*, according to the *Onom.* *villa juxta montem Thabor*, has not yet been discovered. *Anaharath* is supposed by *Knobel* to be *Na'urah*, on the eastern side of the Little Hermon (*Bibl. Res.* p. 337); but he regards the text as corrupt, and following the *Cod. Al.* of the LXX., which has *Περάθ* and *Ἀρράνέθ*, maintains that the reading should be *Archanath*, to which *Arâneh* on the north of *Jenin* in the plain corresponds (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 156; *Rob.* iii. p. 157). But the circumstance that the *Cod. Al.* has two names instead of one makes its reading very suspicious.—Ver. 20. *Harabbit* is supposed by *Knobel* to be *Araboneh*, on the north-east of *Arâneh*, at the southern foot of *Gilboa* (*Rob.* iii. p. 157). *Kishion*, which was given up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 28) and is erroneously written *Kedesh* in 1 Chron. vi. 57, is unknown. This also applies to *Abez* or *Ebez*, which is never mentioned again.—Ver. 21. *Remeth*, for which *Jarmuth* stands in the list of Levitical towns in chap. xxi. 29, and *Ramoth* in 1 Chron. vi. 58, is also unknown.¹ *En-gannim*, which was also allotted to the Levites (chap. xxi. 29; also 1 Chron. v. 58, where it is called *Anem*), has been associated by *Robinson* (iii. p. 155) with the *Tivala* of *Josephus*, the present *Jenin*. The name *En-gannim* signifies fountain of gardens, and *Jenin* stands at the southern side of the plain of Jezreel in the midst of gardens

¹ *Knobel* imagines *Remeth*, whose name signifies height, to be the village of *Wezar*, on one of the western peaks of *Gilboa* (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 156; *Rob.* iii. p. 166, and *Bibl. Res.* p. 339), as the name also signifies "a lofty, inaccessible mountain, or a castle situated upon a mountain." This is certainly not impossible, but it is improbable. For this Mahometan village evidently derived its name from the fact that it has the appearance of a fortification when seen from a distance (see *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xv. p. 422). The name has nothing in common therefore with the Hebrew *Remeth*, and the travellers quoted by him say nothing at all about the ruins which he mentions in connection with *Wezar* (*Wusar*).

and orchards, which are watered by a copious spring (see *Seetzen*, ii. pp. 156 sqq.); "unless perhaps the place referred to is the heap of ruins called *Um el Ghanim*, on the south-east of Tabor, mentioned by *Berggren*, ii. p. 240, and *Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 142" (*Knobel*). *En-chadda* and *Beth-pazzez* are only mentioned here, and have not yet been discovered. According to *Knobel*, the former of the two may possibly be either the place by Gilboa called *Judeideh*, with a fountain named *Ain Judeideh* (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 337), or else *Beit-kad* or *Kadd* near Gilboa, mentioned by *Seetzen* (ii. p. 159) and *Robinson* (iii. p. 157).—Ver. 22. "*And the boundary touched Tabor, Sahazim, and Beth-shemesh.*" Tabor is not the mountain of that name, but a town upon the mountain, which was given to the Levites, though not by Issachar but by Zebulun (1 Chron. vi. 62), and was fortified afresh in the Jewish wars (*Josephus*, Bell. Jud. iv. 1, 8). In this passage, however, it appears to be reckoned as belonging to Issachar, since otherwise there are not sixteen cities named. At the same time, as there are several discrepancies between the numbers given and the names actually mentioned, it is quite possible that in this instance also the number sixteen is incorrect. In any case, Tabor was upon the border of Zebulun (ver. 12), so that it might have been allotted to this tribe. There are still the remains of old walls and ruins of arches, houses, and other buildings to be seen upon Mount Tabor; and round the summit there are the foundations of a thick wall built of large and to a great extent fluted stones (see *Rob.* iii. pp. 453 sqq.; *Seetzen*, ii. p. 148; *Buckingham*, Syr. i. pp. 83 sqq.). The places which follow are to be sought for on the east of Tabor towards the Jordan, as the boundary terminated at the Jordan. *Sachazim* (*Shahazimah*) *Knobel* connects with *el Hazetheh*, as the name, which signifies heights, points to a town situated upon hills; and *el Hazetheh* stands upon the range of hills, bounding the low-lying land of Ard el Hamma, which belonged to Naphtali. The reason is a weak one, though the situation would suit. There is more probability in the conjecture that *Beth-shemesh*, which remained in the hands of the Canaanites (*Judg.* i. 33), has been preserved in the ruined village of *Bessum* (*Rob.* iii. p. 237), and that this new name is only a corruption of the old one, like *Beth-shean* and *Beisan*. It is probable that the eastern portion of the northern boundary of Issachar, towards Naphtali, ran in a north-easterly direction from Tabor through the plain to Kcfr Sabt, and thence to the Jordan along the Wady Bessum. It is not stated how far the territory of Issachar

ran down the valley of the Jordan (see the remarks on chap. xvii. 11, p. 182).

Vers. 24–31. THE INHERITANCE OF ASHER.—Asher received its territory along the Mediterranean Sea from Carmel to the northern boundary of Canaan itself. The description commences with the central portion, viz. the neighbourhood of *Acco* (ver. 25), going first of all towards the south (vers. 26, 27), and then to the north (vers. 28, 30).—Ver. 25. The territory of the Asherites was as follows. *Helkath*, which was given up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 31, and 1 Chron. vi. 75, where *Hukok* is an old copyist's error), is the present *Jelka*, three hours to the east of *Acco* (*Akka*: *Scholz*, *Reise*, p. 257), or *Jerka*, a Druse village situated upon an eminence, and judging from the remains, an ancient place (*Van de Velde*, R. i. p. 214; *Rob.* iii. App.). *Hali*, according to *Knobel* possibly *Julis*, between *Jerka* and *Akka*, in which case the present name arose from the form *Halit*, and *t* was changed into *s*. *Beten*, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Barvat*: *Bathne*) a *vicus Bethbeten*, eight Roman miles to the east of *Ptolemais*, has not yet been found. *Achshaph* is also unknown (see at chap. xi. 1). The *Onom.* (s. v. *Achsaph*) says nothing more about its situation than that it was in *tribu Aser*, whilst the statement made s. v. *Acsaph* (*Ακσάφ*), that it was *villula Chasalus* (*κώμη Ἐξάδους*), eight Roman miles from *Diocæsarea ad radicem montis Thabor*, leads into the territory of *Zebulun*.—Ver. 26. *Alammalech* has been preserved, so far as the name is concerned, in the *Wady Malek* or *Malik* (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 110), which runs into the *Kishon*, since in all probability the wady was named after a place either near it or within it. *Amad* is supposed by *Knobel* to be the present *Haifa*, about three hours to the south of *Acre*, on the sea, and this he identifies with the sycamore city mentioned by *Strabo* (xvi. 758), *Ptolemy* (v. 15, 5), and *Pliny* (h. n. v. 17), which was called *Epha* in the time of the Fathers (see *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. pp. 722 sqq.). In support of this he adduces the fact that the Hebrew name resembles the Arabic noun for sycamore,—an argument the weakness of which does not need to be pointed out. *Misheal* was assigned to the Levites (chap. xxi. 30, and 1 Chron. vi. 74, where it is called *Mashal*). According to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Masan*) it was on the sea-coast near to *Carmel*, which is in harmony with the next clause, “and reacheth to *Carmel westwards*, and to *Shihor-libnath*.” *Carmel* (i.e. fruit-field), which has acquired celebrity from the history of *Elijah* (1 Kings

xviii. 17 sqq.), is a wooded mountain ridge which stretches in a north-westerly direction on the southern side of the Kishon, and projects as a promontory into the sea. Its name, "fruit-field," is well chosen; for whilst the lower part is covered with laurels and olive trees, the upper abounds in figs and oaks, and the whole mountain is full of the most beautiful flowers. There are also many caves about it (*vid. v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 43 sqq.; and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 705-6). The *Shihor-libnath* is not the *Belus*, or glass-river, in the neighbourhood of Acre, but is to be sought for on the south of Carmel, where Asher was bounded by Manasseh (chap. xvii. 10), *i.e.* to the south of Dor, which the Manassites received in the territory of Asher (chap. xvii. 11); it is therefore in all probability the *Nahr Zerka*, possibly the crocodile river of *Pliny* (*Reland*, Pal. p. 730), which is three hours to the south of Dor, and whose name (*blue*) might answer both to *shihor* (black) and *libnath* (white).—Ver. 27. From this point the boundary "*turned towards the east*," probably following the river Libnath for a short distance upwards, "*to Beth-dagon*," which has not yet been discovered, and must not be identified with Beit Dejan between Yafa and Ludd (Diospolis), "*and touched Zebulun and the valley of Jiphtah-el on the north of Beth-emek, and Nehiël, and went out on the left to Cabul*," *i.e.* on the northern side of it. The north-west boundary went from Zebulun into the valley of *Jiphtah-el*, *i.e.* the upper part of the Wady *Abiân* (ver. 14). Here therefore the eastern boundary of Asher, which ran northwards from Wady Zerka past the western side of Issachar and Zebulun, touched the north-west corner of Zebulun. The two places, *Beth-emek* and *Nehiël* (the latter possibly the same as *Neah* in ver. 13), which were situated at the south of the valley of *Jiphtah-el*, have not been discovered; they may, however, have been upon the border of Zebulun and yet have belonged to Asher. *Cabul*, the *κόμμη Χαβωλῶ* of *Josephus* (Vit. § 43), in the district of Ptolemais, has been preserved in the village of *Kabul*, four hours to the south-east of Acre (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 88, and *Van de Velde*, R. i. p. 218).

In vers. 28-30 the towns and boundaries in the northern part of the territory of Asher, on the Phœnician frontier, are given, and the Phœnician cities Sidon, Tyre, and Achzib are mentioned as marking the boundary. First of all we have four towns in ver. 28, reaching as far as Sidon, no doubt in the northern district of Asher. *Ebron* has not yet been traced. As *Abdon* occurs among the towns

which Asher gave up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 30; 1 Chron. vi. 59), and in this verse also twenty MSS. have the reading *Abdon*, many writers, like *Reland* (Pal. p. 514), regard *Ebron* as a copyist's error for *Abdon*. This is possible enough, but it is by no means certain. As the towns of Asher are not all given in this list, since *Acco*, *Achlab*, and *Helba* (Judg. i. 31) are wanting, *Abdon* may also have been omitted. But we cannot attach any importance to the reading of the twenty MSS., as it may easily have arisen from chap. xxi. 30; and in addition to the Masoretic text, it has against it the authority of all the ancient versions, in which the reading *Ebron* is adopted. But even *Abdon* cannot be traced with certainty. On the supposition that *Abdon* is to be read for *Ebron*, *Knobel* connects it with the present *Abbadiyeh*, on the east of Beirut (*Rob.* iii. App.; *Ritter*, Erdk. xvii. pp. 477 and 710), or with *Abidat*, on the east (not the north) of Jobail (Byblus), mentioned by *Burckhardt* (Syr. p. 296) and *Robinson* (iii. App.); though he cannot adduce any other argument in support of the identity of *Abdon* with these two places, which are only known by name at present, except the resemblance in their names. On the supposition, however, that *Abdon* is not the same as *Ebron*, *Van de Velde's* conjecture is a much more natural one; namely, that it is to be found in the ruins of *Abdeh*, on the Wady Kurn, to the north of *Acca*. *Rehob* cannot be traced. The name occurs again in ver. 30, from which it is evident that there were two towns of this name in the territory of Asher (see at ver. 30). *Schultz* and *Van de Velde* connect it with the village of *Hamûl* by the wady of that name, between *Ras el Abyad* and *Ras en Nakura*; but this is too far south to be included in the district which reached to great Sidon. *Knobel's* suggestion would be a more probable one, namely, that it is connected with the village of *Hammana*, on the east of Beirut, in the district of *el Metn*, on the heights of Lebanon, where there is now a Maronite monastery (*vid. Seetzen*, i. p. 260; *Rob.* iii. App.; and *Ritter*, xvii. pp. 676 and 710), if it could only be shown that the territory of Asher reached as far to the east as this. *Kana* cannot be the village of *Kâna*, not far from Tyre (*Rob.* iii. p. 384), but must have been farther north, and near to Sidon, though it has not yet been discovered. For the supposition that it is connected with the existing place called *Ain Kanieh* (*Rob.* iii. App.; *Ritter*, xvii. pp. 94 and 703), on the north of Jezzîn, is overthrown by the fact that that place is too far to the east to be thought of in this connection; and neither *Robinson* nor *Ritter* makes any allusion to "*Ain Kana*, in the neighbourhood of

Jurjera, six hours to the south-east of Sidon," which *Knobel* mentions without quoting his authority, so that the existence of such a place is very questionable. On *Sidon*, now *Saida*, see at chap. xi. 8.—Ver. 29. "And the boundary turned (probably from the territory of Sidon) to *Ramah*, to the fortified town of *Zor*." *Robinson* supposes that *Rama* is to be found in the village of *Rameh*, on the south-east of Tyre, where several ancient sarcophagi are to be seen (*Bibl. Res.* p. 63). "The fortified town of *Zor*," i.e. Tyre, is not the insular Tyre, but the town of Tyre, which was on the mainland, the present *Sur*, which is situated by the sea-coast, in a beautiful and fertile plain (see *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvii. p. 320, and *Movers*, *Phönizier*, ii. 1, pp. 118 sqq.). "And the boundary turned to *Hosah*, and the outgoings thereof were at the sea, by the side of the district of *Achzib*." *Hosah* is unknown, as the situation of *Kausah*, near to the *Rameh* already mentioned (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 61), does not suit in this connection. מִחְבֵּל, *lit.* from the district, i.e. by the side of it. *Achzib*, where the *Asherites* dwelt with the *Canaanites* (*Judg.* i. 31, 32), is the *Ekdippa* of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Achziph*) nine Roman miles, or according to the *Itiner. Hieros.* p. 584, twelve miles to the north of *Acco* by the sea, the present *Zib*, a very large village, three good hours to the north of *Acre*,—a place on the sea-coast, with considerable ruins of antiquity (see *Ges. Thes.* p. 674; *Seetzen*, ii. p. 109; *Ritter*, xvi. pp. 811-12).—In ver. 30 three separate towns are mentioned, which were probably situated in the eastern part of the northern district of *Asher*, whereas the border towns mentioned in vers. 28 and 29 describe this district in its western half. *Ummah* (LXX. Ἀμμά) may perhaps have been preserved in *Kefr Ammeih*, upon the *Lebanon*, to the south of *Hammana*, in the district of *Jurd* (*Rob.* iii. App.; *Ritter*, xvii. p. 710). *Aphek* is the present *Afka* (see at chap. xiii. 4). *Rehob* cannot be traced with certainty. If it is *Hub*, as *Knobel* supposes, and the name *Hub*, which is borne by a *Maronite* monastery upon *Lebanon*, in the diocese of *el-Jebail* (to the north-east of *Jebail*), is a corruption of *Rehob*, this would be the northernmost town of *Asher* (see *Seetzen*, i. pp. 187 sqq., and *Ritter*, xvii. p. 791). The number "twenty-two towns and their villages" does not tally, as there are twenty-three towns mentioned in vers. 26-30, if we include *Sidon*, *Tyre*, and *Achzib*, according to *Judg.* i. 31, 32. The only way in which the numbers can be made to agree is to reckon *Nehiel* (ver. 27) as identical with *Neah* (ver. 13). But this point cannot be determined with certainty, as the *Asherites* received

other towns, such as Acco and Aclaph, which are wanting in this list, and may possibly have simply fallen out.

Vers. 32–39. THE INHERITANCE OF NAPHTALI.—This fell between Asher and the upper Jordan. It reached northwards to the northern boundary of Canaan, and touched Zebulun and Issachar on the south. In vers. 33 and 34 the boundary lines are given: viz. in ver. 33 the western boundary towards Asher, with the northern and eastern boundaries: in ver. 34 the southern boundary; but with the uncertainty which exists as to several of the places named, it cannot be traced with certainty.—Ver. 33. “*Its boundary was (its territory reached) from Heleph, from the oak-forest at Zaanannim, and Adami Nekeb and Jabneel to Lakkum; and its outgoings were the Jordan.*” *Heleph* is unknown, though in all probability it was to the south of *Zaanannim*, and not very far distant. According to Judg. iv. 11, the *oak-forest* (*allon*: see the remarks on Gen. xii. 6) at *Zaanannim* was near *Kedesh*, on the north-west of Lake Huleh. There are still many oaks in that neighbourhood (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 386); and on the south of *Bint Jebail* *Robinson* crossed a low mountain-range which was covered with small oak trees (*Pal. iii.* p. 372). *Adami hannekeb*, i.e. *Adami* of the pass (*Nekeb*, judging from the analogy of the Arabic, signifying *foramen, via inter montes*), is supposed by *Knobel* to be *Deir-el-ahmar*, i.e. red cloister, a place which is still inhabited, three hours to the north-west of *Baalbek*, on the pass from the cedars to *Baalbek* (*Seetzen*, i. pp. 181, 185; *Burckhardt*, *Syr.* p. 60; and *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvii. p. 150), so called from the reddish colour of the soil in the neighbourhood, which would explain the name *Adami*. *Knobel* also connects *Jabneel* with the lake *Jemun*, *Jemuni*, or *Jammune*, some hours to the north-west of *Baalbek*, on the eastern side of the western Lebanon range (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 548; *Ritter*, xvii. pp. 304 sqq.), where there are still considerable ruins of a very early date to be found, especially the ruins of an ancient temple and a celebrated place of pilgrimage, with which the name “*God’s building*” agrees. And lastly, he associates *Lakkum* with the mountains of *Lokham*, as the northern part of Lebanon on the Syrian mountains, from the latitude of *Laodicea* to that of *Antioch* on the western side of the *Orontes*, is called by the Arabian geographers *Isztachri*, *Abulfeda*, and others. So far as the names are concerned, these combinations seem appropriate enough, but they are hardly tenable. The resemblance between the names *Lakkum* and *Lokham*

is only in appearance, as the Hebrew name is written with *p* and the Arabic with *ṣ*. Moreover, the mountains of Lokham are much too far north for the name to be adduced as an explanation of Lakkum. The interpretation of *Adami Nekeb* and *Jabneel* is also irreconcilable with the circumstance that the lake *Jamun* was two hours to the west of the red convent, so that the boundary, which starts from the west, and is drawn first of all towards the north, and then to the north-east and east, must have run last of all from the red convent, and not from the *Jamun* lake to the Jordan. As *Jabneel* is mentioned after *Adami Nekeb*, it must be sought for to the east of *Adami Nekeb*, whereas the *Jamun* lake lies in the very opposite direction, namely, directly to the west of the red convent. The three places mentioned, therefore, cannot be precisely determined at present. The Jordan, where the boundary of Asher terminated, was no doubt the upper Jordan, or rather the *Nahr Hasbany*, one of the sources of the Jordan, which formed, together with the Huleh lake and the Jordan itself, between Lake Huleh and the Sea of Tiberias, and down to the point where it issues from the latter, the eastern boundary of Asher.—Ver. 34. From the Jordan below the Lake of Tiberias, or speaking more exactly, from the point at which the Wady *Bessum* enters the Jordan, “the boundary (of Asher) turned westwards to *Asnoth-tabor*, and went thence out to *Hukkuk*.” This boundary, i.e. the southern boundary of Asher, probably followed the course of the Wady *Bessum* from the Jordan, which wady was the boundary of Issachar on the north-east, and then ran most likely from *Kefr Sabt* (see at ver. 22) to *Asnoth-tabor*, i.e., according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Azanoth*), a *vicus ad regionem Diocæsareæ pertinens in campestribus*, probably on the south-east of *Diocæsarea*, i.e. *Sepphoris*, not far from Tabor, to which the boundary of Issachar extended (ver. 22). *Hukkuk* has not yet been traced. *Robinson* (Bibl. Res. p. 82) and *Van de Velde* (Mem. p. 322) are inclined to follow *Rabbi Parchi* of the fourteenth century, and identify this place with the village of *Yakûk*, on the north-west of the Lake of Gennesareth; but this village is too far to the north-east to have formed the terminal point of the southern boundary of Naphtali, as it ran westwards from the Jordan. After this Naphtali touched “*Zebulun on the south, Asher on the west, and Judah by the Jordan toward the sun-rising or east.*” “The Jordan” is in apposition to “Judah,” in the sense of “Judah of the Jordan,” like “Jordan of Jericho” in Num. xxii. 1, xxvi. 3, etc. The Masoretic pointing, which separates these two words, was founded upon some

false notion respecting this definition of the boundary, and caused the commentators great perplexity, until *C. v. Raumer* succeeded in removing the difficulty, by showing that the district of the sixty towns of Jair, which was upon the eastern side of the Jordan, is called Judah here, or reckoned as belonging to Judah, because Jair, the possessor of these towns, was a descendant of Judah on the father's side through Hezron (1 Chron. ii. 5, 21, 22); whereas in chap. xiii. 30, and Num. xxxii. 41, he is reckoned *contra morem*, i.e. against the rule laid down in Num. xxxvi. 7, as a descendant of Manasseh, on account of his descent from Machir the Manassite, on his mother's side.¹

Vers. 35 sqq. The fortified towns of Naphtali were the following. *Ziddim*: unknown, though *Knobel* suggests that "it may possibly be preserved in *Chirbet es Saudeh*, to the west of the southern extremity of the Lake of Tiberias (*Rob.* iii. App.);" but this place is to the west of the Wady Bessum, i.e. in the territory of Issachar. *Zer* is also unknown. As the LXX. and Syriac give the name as *Zor*, *Knobel* connects it with *Kerak*, which signifies fortress as well as *Zor* (= מצור), a heap of ruins at the southern end of the lake (*Rob.* iii. p. 263), the place which *Josephus* calls *Taricheæ* (see *Reland*, p. 1026),—a very doubtful combination! *Hammath* (i.e. *thermæ*), a Levitical town called *Hammoth-dor* in chap. xxi. 32, and *Hammon* in 1 Chron. vi. 61, was situated, according to statements in the Talmud, somewhere near the later city of Tiberias, on the western shore of the Lake of Gennesareth, and was no doubt identical with the κόμη Ἀμμαούς in the neighbourhood of Tiberias, a place with warm baths (*Jos. Ant.* xviii. 2, 3; *Bell. Jud.* iv. 1, 3). There are warm springs still to be found half an hour to the south of Tabaria, which are used as baths (*Burckhardt*, *Syr.* pp. 573–4; *Rob.* iii. pp. 258 sqq.). *Rakkath* (according to the *Talm.* and *Rabb. ripa littus*) was situated, according to rabbinical accounts, in the immediate neighbourhood of Hammath, and was the same place as *Tiberias*; but the account given by *Josephus* (*Ant.* xviii. 2, 3; cf. *Bell. Jud.* ii. 9, 1) respecting the founding of *Tiberias* by Herod the tetrarch is at variance with this; so that the rabbinical statements appear to have no other foundation than the etymology of the name

¹ See *C. v. Raumer's* article on "Judæa on the east of Jordan," in *Tholuck's litt. Anz.* 1834, Nos. 1 and 2, and his *Palästina*, pp. 233 sqq. ed. 4; and for the arbitrary attempts that had been made to explain the passage by alterations of the text and in other ways, see *Rosenmüller's Bibl. Alterthk.* ii. 1, pp. 301–2; and *Keil's Comm.* on Joshua, pp. 438–9.

Rakkath. *Chinnereth* is given in the Targums as גִּינוֹסֶר, גִּינוֹסֶר, i.e. Γεννησάρ. According to *Josephus* (Bell. Jud. iii. 10, 8), this name was given to a strip of land on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, which was distinguished for its natural beauty, its climate, and its fertility, namely the long plain, about twenty minutes broad and an hour long, which stretches along the western shore of this lake, from el-Mejdel on the south to Khan Minyeh on the north (*Burckhardt*, Syr. pp. 558-9; *Rob.* iii. pp. 279, 290). It must have been in this plain that the town of *Chinnereth* stood, from which the plain and lake together derived the name of *Chinnereth* (Deut. iii. 17) or *Chinneroth* (chap. xi. 2), and the lake alone the name of "Sea of Chinnereth," or "Sea of Chinneroth" (chap. xii. 3, xiii. 27; Num. xxxiv. 11).—Ver. 36. *Adamah* is unknown. *Knobel* is of opinion, that as *Adamah* signifies red, the place referred to may possibly be *Ras el Ahmar*, i.e. red-head, on the north of Safed (*Rob.* iii. p. 370; *Bibl. Res.* p. 69). *Ramah* is the present *Rameh* (*Ramea*), a large well-built village, inhabited by Christians and Druses, surrounded by extensive olive plantations, and provided with an excellent well. It stands upon the slope of a mountain, in a beautiful plain on the south-west of Safed, but without any relics of antiquity (see *Seetzen*, ii. p. 129; *Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 78-9). *Hazor* has not yet been traced with certainty (see at chap. xi. 1).—Ver. 37. *Kedesh* (see at chap. xii. 2). *Edrei*, a different place from the town of the same name in Bashan (chap. i. 2, 4), is still unknown. *En-hazor* is probably to be sought for in *Tell Hazur* and *Ain Hazur*, which is not very far distant, on the south-west of Rameh, though the ruins upon *Tell Hazur* are merely the ruins of an ordinary village, with one single cistern that has fallen to pieces (*Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 80, 81).—Ver. 38. *Jireon* (*Iron*) is probably the present village of *Jarân*, an hour to the south-east of Bint-Jebeil, with the ruins of an ancient Christian church (*Seetzen*, ii. pp. 123-4; *Van de Velde*, R. i. p. 133). *Migdal-el*, so far as the name is concerned, might be *Magdala* (Matt. xv. 39), on the western shore of the Lake of Gennesareth, between Capernaum and Tiberias (*Rob.* iii. pp. 279 sqq.); the only difficulty is, that the towns upon this lake have already been mentioned in ver. 35. *Knobel* connects *Migdal-el* with *Chorem*, so as to form one name, and finds *Migdal el Chorem* in the present *Mejdel Kerum*, on the west of Rameh (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 130; *Van de Velde*, i. p. 215), a common Mahometan village. But there is nothing to favour this combination, except the similarity in sound between the two names; whereas it has against it not only the situation of the village, which

was so far to the west, being not more than three hours from Acca, that the territory of Naphtali can hardly have reached so far, but also the very small resemblance between *Chorem* and *Kerum*, not to mention the fact that the accents separate *Chorem* from *Migdal-el*, whilst the omission of the copula (*vav*) before *Chorem* cannot have any weight, as the copula is also wanting before *Zer* and *Rakkath*. *Chorem* and *Beth-anath* have not yet been discovered. From the latter place Naphtali was unable to expel the Canaanites (Judg. i. 33). *Beth-shemesh*, a different place from the town of the same name in Issachar (ver. 22), is also still unknown. The total number of towns is given as nineteen, whereas only sixteen are mentioned by name. It is hardly correct to seek for the missing places among the border towns mentioned in vers. 33 and 34, as the enumeration of the towns themselves is introduced by *וְעַרֵי מְבַצֵּר* in ver. 35, and in this way the list of towns is separated from the description of the boundaries. To this we may add, that the town of Karthan or Kirjathaim, which Naphtali gave up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 32; 1 Chron. vi. 61), does not occur either among the border towns or in the list of towns, from which we may see that the list of towns is an imperfect one.

Vers. 40-48. THE INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBE OF DAN.—This fell to the west of Benjamin, between Judah and Ephraim, and was formed by Judah giving up some of its northern towns, and Ephraim some of its southern towns, to the Danites, so as to furnish them with a territory proportionate to their number. It was situated for the most part in the lowland (*shephelah*), including, however, the hill country between the Mediterranean and the mountains, and extended over a portion of the plain of Sharon, so that it belonged to one of the most fruitful portions of Palestine. The boundaries are not given, because they could be traced from those of the adjoining territories.—Ver. 41. From Judah the families of Dan received *Zorea* and *Eshtaol* (see at chap. xv. 33), and *Ir-shemesh*, also called *Beth-shemesh* (1 Kings iv. 9), on the border of Judah (see chap. xv. 10); but of these the Danites did not take possession, as they were given up by Judah to the Levites (chap. xxi. 16: see at chap. xv. 10). *Saalabbin*, or *Saalbim*, which remained in the hands of the Canaanites (Judg. i. 35), is frequently mentioned in the history of David and Solomon (2 Sam. xxiii. 32; 1 Chron. xi. 33; 1 Kings iv. 9). It may possibly be the present *Selbit* (*Rob.* iii. App.; *Bibl. Res.* p. 144), some distance to the north

of the three places mentioned (*Knobel*). *Ajalon*, which was also not taken from the Canaanites (Judg. i. 35), was assigned to the Levites (chap. xxi. 24; 1 Chron. vi. 54). It is mentioned in the wars with the Philistines (1 Sam. xiv. 31; 1 Chron. viii. 13), was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 10), and was taken by the Philistines from King Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 18). It has been preserved in the village of *Yalo* (see at chap. x. 12). *Jethlah* is only mentioned here, and has not yet been discovered. So far as the name is concerned, it may possibly be preserved in the Wady *Atallah*, on the west of *Yalo* (Bibl. Res. pp. 143-4).—Ver. 43. *Elon*, which is mentioned again in 1 Kings iv. 9, with the addition of *Beth-hanan*, has not yet been traced; according to *Knobel*, it “may possibly be *Ellin*, near Timnath and Beth-shemesh, mentioned by *Robinson* in his Pal. vol. iii. App.” *Thinna* (*Thimnathah*) and *Ekron*, on the boundary of Judah (see at chap. xv. 10, 11).—Ver. 44. *Eltekeh* and *Gibbethon*, which were allotted to the Levites (chap. xxi. 23), have not yet been discovered. Under the earliest kings of Israel, *Gibbethon* was in the hands of the Philistines (1 Kings xv. 27, xvi. 15, 17). *Baalath* was fortified by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 18). According to *Josephus* (Ant. viii. 6, 1), it was “*Baleth in the neighbourhood of Geser*,” probably the same place as *Baalath*, on the border of Judah (chap. xv. 11).—Ver. 45. *Jehud* has probably been preserved in the village of *Jehudieh* (*Hudieh*), two hours to the north of Ludd (Diospolis), in a splendidly cultivated plain (*Berggren*, R. iii. p. 162; *Rob.* iii. p. 45, and App.). *Bene-berak*, the present *Ibn Abrak*, an hour from *Jehud* (*Scholz*, R. p. 256). *Gath-rimmon*, which was given to the Levites (chap. xxi. 24; 1 Chron. vi. 54), is described in the *Onom.* (s. v.) as *villa prægrandis in duodecimo milliario Diospoleos pergentibus Eleutheropolin*,—a statement which points to the neighbourhood of Timnath, though it has not yet been discovered.—Ver. 46. *Me-jarkon*, i.e. *aquæ flavedinis*, and *Rakkon*, are unknown; but from the clause which follows, “*with the territory before Japho*,” it must have been in the neighbourhood of Joppa (Jaffa). “*The territory before Japho*” includes the places in the environs of Joppa. Consequently *Joppa* itself does not appear to have belonged to the territory of Dan, although, according to Judg. v. 17, the Danites must have had possession of this town. *Japho*, the well-known port of Palestine (2 Chron. ii. 15; Ezra iii. 7; Jonah i. 3), which the Greeks called *Ἰόππη* (Joppa), the present *Jaffa* (see v. *Raumer*, Pal. pp. 204-5, and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 574 sqq.).—Ver. 47. Besides this inheritance, the Danites

of Zorea and Eshtaol went, after Joshua's death, and conquered the town of *Leshem* or *Laish*, on the northern boundary of Canaan, and gave it the name of *Dan*, as the territory which was allotted to them under Joshua was too small for them, on account of their inability to drive out the Amorites from several of their towns (Judg. i. 34, 35, xviii. 2). For further particulars concerning this conquest, see Judg. xviii. *Leshem* or *Laish* (Judg. xviii. 7, 27), i.e. *Dan*, which the *Onom.* describes as *viculus quarto a Paneade miliario euntibus Tyrum*, was the present *Tell el Kadi*, or *el Leddan*, the central source of the Jordan, to the west of Banjas, a place with ancient ruins (see *Rob.* iii. p. 351; *Bibl. Res.* pp. 390, 393). It was there that Jeroboam set up the golden calves (1 Kings xii. 29, 30, etc.); and it is frequently mentioned as the northernmost city of the Israelites, in contrast with Beersheba, which was in the extreme south of the land (Judg. xx. 1; 1 Sam. iii. 20; 2 Sam. iii. 10: see also *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xv. pp. 207 sqq.).

Vers. 49–51. *Conclusion of the Distribution of the Land.*—Vers. 49, 50. When the land was distributed among the tribes according to its territories, the Israelites gave Joshua an inheritance in the midst of them, according to the command of Jehovah, namely the town of *Timnath-serah*, upon the mountains of Ephraim, for which he asked, and which he finished building; and there he dwelt until the time of his death (chap. xxiv. 30; Judg. ii. 9). “According to the word of the Lord” (lit. “at the mouth of Jehovah”) does not refer to a divine oracle communicated through the high priest, but to a promise which Joshua had probably received from God at the same time as Caleb, viz. in Kadesh, but which, like the promise given to Caleb, is not mentioned in the Pentateuch (see at chap. xv. 13, xiv. 9). *Timnath-serah*, called *Timnath-heres* in Judg. ii. 9, must not be confounded with *Timnah* in the tribe of Dan (ver. 43, chap. xv. 10), as is the case in the *Onom.* It has been preserved in the present ruins and foundation walls of a place called *Tibneh*, which was once a large town, about seven hours to the north of Jerusalem, and two hours to the west of Jiljilia, standing upon two mountains, with many caverns that have been used as graves (see *Eli Smith* in *Ritter*, *Erdk.* xvi. pp. 562 sqq., and *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 141).—Ver. 51. Closing formula to the account of the distribution of the land, which refers primarily to chap. xviii. 1 sqq., as the expression “in *Shiloh*” shows, but which also includes chap. xiv.–xvii.

SELECTION OF CITIES OF REFUGE, OR FREE CITIES.—CHAP. XX.

After the distribution of the land by lot among the tribes of Israel, six towns were set apart, in accordance with the Mosaic instructions in Num. xxxv., as places of refuge for unintentional manslaughterers. Before describing the appointment and setting apart of these towns, the writer repeats in vers. 1-6 the main points of the Mosaic law contained in Num. xxxv. 9-29 and Deut. xix. 1-13, with reference to the reception of the manslaughterers into these towns. **וְהָיָה לָכֶם**, "give to you," i.e. appoint for yourselves, "cities of refuge," etc. In ver. 6, the two regulations, "until he stand before the congregation for judgment," and "until the death of the high priest," are to be understood, in accordance with the clear explanation given in Num. xxxv. 24, 25, as meaning that the manslaughterer was to live in the town till the congregation had pronounced judgment upon the matter, and either given him up to the avenger of blood as a wilful murderer, or taken him back to the city of refuge as an unintentional manslaughterer, in which case he was to remain there till the death of the existing high priest. For further particulars, see at Num. xxxv.—Vers. 7-9. *List of the cities*: Levitical cities were chosen, for the reasons explained in the Commentary on the Pentateuch, iii. p. 262.—Ver. 7. In the land on this side (viz. Canaan) they sanctified the following cities. In the north, *Kedesh* (see at chap. xii. 22), in *Galil*, on the mountains of Naphtali. *Galil* (a circle) was a district in the northern part of the subsequent province of Galilee; it is called **גִּלְיָל הַנִּזְחִים**, circle of the heathen, in Isa. viii. 23, because an unusually large number of heathen or Gentiles were living there. In the centre of the land, *Shechem*, upon the mountains of Ephraim (see at chap. xvii. 7). And in the south, *Kirjath-arba*, i.e. Hebron, upon the mountains of Judah (see at chap. x. 3).—Ver. 8. The cities in the land on the other side had already been appointed by Moses (Deut. iv. 41-43). For the sake of completeness, they are mentioned here again: viz. *Bezer*, *Ramoth in Gilead*, and *Golan* (see at Deut. iv. 43). The subject is brought to a close in ver. 9. **עָרֵי הַמִּצְוָה** signifies neither *urbes congregationis* (*Kimchi*) nor *urbes asyli* (*Gesenius*), but cities of appointment,—those which received the appointment already given and repeated again in what follows.

APPOINTMENT OF TOWNS FOR THE PRIESTS AND LEVITES.—
CHAP. XXI.

Vers. 1-3. After the cities of refuge had been set apart, the towns were also selected, which the different tribes were to give up for the priests and Levites to dwell in according to the Mosaic instructions in Num. xxxv. 1-8, together with the necessary fields as pasturage for their cattle. The setting apart of the cities of refuge took place before the appointment of the Levitical towns, because the Lord had given commandment through Moses in Num. xxxv. 6, that they were to give to the Levites the six cities of refuge, and forty-two cities besides, *i.e.* forty-eight cities in all. From the introductory statement in vers. 1, 2, that the heads of the fathers (see Ex. vi. 14, 25) of the Levitical families reminded the distribution committee at Shiloh of the command of God that had been issued through Moses, that towns were to be given them to dwell in, we cannot infer, as Calvin has done, that the Levites had been forgotten, till they came and asserted their claims. All that is stated in these words is, "that when the business had reached that point, they approached the dividers of the land in the common name of the members of their tribe, to receive by lot the cities appointed for them. They simply expressed the commands of God, and said in so many words, that they had been deputed by the Levites generally to draw lots for those forty-eight cities with their suburbs, which had been appointed for that tribe" (*Masius*). The clause appended to *Shiloh*, "*in the land of Canaan*," points to the instructions in Num. xxxiv. 29 and xxxv. 10, to give the children of Israel their inheritance *in the land of Canaan*.

Vers. 4-8. *Number of the cities* which the different families of Levi received from each tribe. The tribe of Levi was divided into three branches,—the Gershonites, the Kohathites, and the Merarites (see Num. iii. and Ex. vi. 16-19). The Kohathites again were divided into the four families of Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel (Ex. vi. 18); and the family of Amram into two lines, consisting of the descendants of Moses and Aaron (Ex. vi. 20). The priesthood was committed to the line of Aaron (Num. xviii. 1-7); but the other descendants of Amram, *i.e.* the descendants of Moses, were placed on a par with the other descendants of Levi, and numbered among the simple Levites (Num. iii.; 1 Chron. v. 27-vi. 34). The towns in which the different families of Levi were to dwell were determined by lot; but in all probability the towns

which each tribe was to give up to them were selected first of all, so that the lot merely decided to which branch of the Levites each particular town was to belong.—Ver. 4. The first lot came out for the families of Kohath, and among these again for the sons of Aaron, *i.e.* the priests. They received thirteen towns from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. “This did not happen by chance; but God, according to His wonderful counsel, placed them just in that situation which He had determined to select for His own temple” (*Calvin*).—Ver. 5. The rest of the Kohathites, *i.e.* the descendants of Moses, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, received ten towns from Ephraim, Dan, and half Manasseh.—Ver. 6. The Gershonites received thirteen towns from Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and half Manasseh in Bashan.—Ver. 7. The Merarites received twelve towns from Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

The number of towns thus assigned to the Levites will not appear too large, if we consider, (1) that judging from the number of towns in so small a land, the greater part of them cannot have been very large; (2) that the Levites were not the sole possessors of these towns, but simply received the number of dwelling-houses which they actually required, with meadow land for their cattle in the suburbs of the towns, whilst the rest of the space still belonged to the different tribes; and (3) that if the 23,000 males, the number of the Levites at the second census which was taken in the steppes of Moab, were distributed among the thirty-five towns, it would give 657 males, or 1300 male and female Levites for every town. On the other hand, offence has been taken at the statement, that thirteen towns were given up to the priests; and under the idea that Aaron could hardly have had descendants enough in Joshua's time from his two sons who remained alive to fill even two towns, to say nothing of thirteen, the list has been set down as a document which was drawn up at a much later date (*Maurer*, etc.). But any one who takes this ground not only attributes to the distribution commission the enormous shortsightedness of setting apart towns for the priests merely to meet their existing wants, and without any regard to the subsequent increase which would take place in their numbers, but he also forms too large an estimate of the size of the towns, and too small an estimate of the number of the priests. Moreover, it was never intended that the towns should be filled with priests' families; and the number of priests alive at that time is not mentioned anywhere. But if we bear in mind that Aaron died in the fortieth year of the journeys

of the Israelites, at the age of 123 years (Num. xxxiii. 38), and therefore was eighty-three years old at the time of the exodus from Egypt, his descendants might have entered upon the fourth generation seven years after his death. Now his two sons had twenty-four male descendants, who were the founders of the twenty-four classes instituted by David (1 Chron. xxiv.). And if we only reckon six males to each of the next generations, there would be 144 in the third generation, who would be between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five when the distribution of the land took place, and who might therefore have had 864 male children living at that time; so that the total number of males in the families of the priests might have amounted to more than 1000, that is to say, might have consisted of at least 200 families.

Vers. 9-42. *Names of the Levitical Towns.*¹—Vers. 9-19. *The priests' towns:* (a) in Judah and Simeon (vers. 9-16); (b) in Benjamin (vers. 17-19).—Vers. 9 sqq. In the tribe of Judah the priests received *Kirjath-arba*, or *Hebron*, with the necessary pasturage round about the town (see Num. xxxv. 2), whilst the field of the town with the villages belonging to it remained in the hands of Caleb and his family as their possession (chap. xiv. 12 sqq.).—Ver. 13 contains a repetition of ver. 11, occasioned by the parenthetical remark in ver. 12. They also received *Libnah* in the lowland (see chap. xv. 42, x. 29); *Jattir* (chap. xv. 48), *Eshtemoah*

¹ There is a similar list in 1 Chron. vi. 54-81, though in some respects differently arranged, and with many variations in the names, and corruptions of different kinds in the text, which show that the author of the Chronicles has inserted an ancient document that was altogether independent of the book before us. Thus in the Chronicles there are only forty-two towns mentioned by name instead of forty-eight, although it is stated in vers. 45 sqq. that $13 + 10 + 13 + 12$, i.e. forty-eight towns in all, were given up to the Levites. The names omitted are (1) Jutta in Judah; (2) Gibeon in Benjamin; (3 and 4) Ethekeh and Gibbethon in Dan; (5 and 6) and Jokneam and Nahalal in Zebulun (compare vers. 16, 17, 23, 34, and 35, with 1 Chron. vi. 59, 60, 68, 77. In some cases also the author of the Chronicles gives different names, though some of them indeed are only different forms of the same name, e.g. Hilen for Holon, Alemeth for Almon, Ashtaroth for Beeshterah, Mashul for Misheal, Hammon for Hammoth-dor, Kirjathaim for Kartan (compare 1 Chron. vi. 58, 60, 71, 74, 76, with Josh. xxi. 15, 18, 27, 30, 32); or in some cases possibly different names of the same town, e.g. Jokneam for Kibzaim, and Ramoth for Jarmuth, and Anem for En-gannim (1 Chron. vi. 68, 83, and Josh. xxi. 22, 29); whilst some evidently give the true reading, viz. Ashan for Ain, and Bileam for Gath-rimmon (1 Chron. vi. 59, 70; Josh. xxi. 16, 25). The majority, however, are faulty readings, viz. Aner for Tanach, Kedesh for Kishon, Hukok for Helkath, Rimmon and Tabor (compare 1 Chron. vi. 70, 72, 75, 77, with Josh. xxi. 25, 28, 31, 34, 35).

(chap. xv. 50), *Holon* (chap. xv. 51), and *Debir* (chap. xv. 15, 49, x. 38) on the mountains of Judah; *Ain*, for which we should read *Ashan* (1 Chron. vi. 44; cf. chap. xv. 42), in the tribe of Simeon (chap. xix. 7); *Juttah* on the mountains (chap. xv. 55); and *Beth-shenesh* in the lowland (chap. xv. 10).—Vers. 17 sqq. In the tribe of Benjamin they received *Gibeon* (see chap. ix. 3), *Geba* (chap. xviii. 24), also *Anathoth* and *Almon*, which are missing in the list of the towns of Benjamin (see at chap. xviii. 24).—Vers. 20-42. *Towns of the Levites*.—Vers. 20-26. The other *Kohathites* received four towns from the tribe of Ephraim (vers. 21, 22), four from Dan (vers. 23, 24), and two from the half tribe of Manasseh on this side of the Jordan (ver. 25). From Ephraim they received *Shechem* (see chap. xvii. 7), *Gezer* (chap. x. 33), *Kibzaim*—for which we find *Jockmeam* in 1 Chron. vi. 68, possibly a different name for the same place, which has not yet been discovered—and *Beth-horon*, whether Upper or Lower is not stated (see chap. x. 10). From Dan they received *Elthekeh* and *Gibbethon* (chap. xix. 44), *Ajalon* and *Gath-rimmon* (chap. xix. 42, 45). From half Manasseh they received *Taanach* (chap. xvii. 11, xii. 21) and *Gath-rimmon*—this is evidently a copyist's error, occasioned by the wandering of the eye to the previous verse, for *Bileam* (1 Chron. vi. 70), i.e. *Jibleam* (chap. xvii. 11).—Ver. 26. Thus they received ten towns in all.—Vers. 27-33. The *Gershonites* received two towns from eastern Manasseh: *Golan* (chap. xx. 8; Deut. iv. 43), and *Beeshterah*. *Beeshterah* (contracted from *Beth-eshterah*, the house of Astarte), called *Ashtaroth* in 1 Chron. vi. 56, may possibly have been the capital of king Og (*Ashtaroth-karnaim*, Gen. xiv. 5), if not one of the two villages named *Astaroth*, which are mentioned by *Eusebius* in the *Onom.* (s. v. *Astharoth-karnaim*), and are described by Jerome as *duo castella in Batanæa, novem inter se millibus separata inter Adaram et Abilam civitates*, though Adara and Abila are too indefinite to determine the situation with any exactness. At any rate, the present *Busra* on the east of the Hauran cannot be thought of for a moment; for this was called *Βόσσορα* or *Βοσορρά*, i.e. בִּצְרָה, in ancient times, as it is at the present day (see 1 Macc. v. 26, and *Joseph. Ant.* xii. 8, 3), and was corrupted into *Bostra* by the Greeks and Romans. Nor can it be the present *Kul'at Bustra* on the north of Banyas upon a shoulder of the Hermon, where there are the ruins of a magnificent building, probably a temple of ancient date (*Burckhardt, Syr.* pp. 93, 94; *Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 414-15); as *Knobel* supposes, since the territory of the Israelites did not reach so far north,

the land conquered by Joshua merely extending to Baal-gad, *i.e.* Banyas, at the foot of the Hermon (see chap. xi. 17), and the land to the east of the Jordan, or Bashan, only to the Hermon itself, or more correctly, merely to the districts of Geshuri and Maacah at the south-eastern border of the Hermon (see at Deut. iii. 8, 14).—Vers. 28, 29. From Issachar they received four towns: *Kishon* (chap. xix. 20), *Dabrath* (chap. xix. 12), *Jarmuth* = *Remeth* (see chap. xix. 21), and *En-gannim* (chap. xix. 21, or *Anem*, 1 Chron. vi. 73).—Vers. 30, 31. From Asher they received four towns: *Mishal* or *Masal* (chap. xix. 26; cf. 1 Chron. vi. 74), *Abdon* (chap. xix. 28), *Helkath* (chap. xix. 25, called *Hukok* in 1 Chron. vi. 75, probably a copyist's error), and *Rehob* (chap. xix. 28).—Ver. 32. From Naphtali they received three towns: *Kedesh* (chap. xix. 37 and xii. 22), *Hammoth-dor* (called *Hammath* in chap. xix. 35, and *Hammon* in 1 Chron. vi. 76), and *Kartan* (contracted from *Kartain* for *Kirjathaim*, 1 Chron. vi. 76; like *Dothan* in 2 Kings vi. 13, from *Dothain* in Gen. xxvii. 17). *Kartan* is not mentioned among the towns of Naphtali in chap. xix. 33 sqq.; according to *Knobel* it may possibly be *Katanah*, a place with ruins to the north-east of Safed (*Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 147).—Ver. 33. They received thirteen towns in all.—Vers. 34–40. The *Merarites* received twelve towns. From the tribe of Zebulun they received four: *Jokneam* (chap. xix. 11: see at chap. xii. 22), *Kartah* and *Dimnah*,¹ which are not mentioned among the towns of Zebulun in chap. xix. 11 sqq., and are unknown, and *Nahalal* (chap. xix. 15).—Vers. 36, 37. From Reuben they received four: *Bezer* (chap. xx. 8: see Deut. iv. 43), *Jahza*, *Kedemoth*, and *Mephaath* (chap. xiii. 18).²—Vers. 38, 39. From Gad they received four towns: *Ramoth* in Gilead, and *Mahanaim* (see at chap. xiii. 26), *Heshbon* (chap. xiii. 17) and *Jaezer* (chap. xiii. 25: see at Num. xxi. 32).—Ver. 40. They received

¹ Many commentators identify *Dimnah* with *Rimmono* in 1 Chron. vi. 77, but without sufficient reason; for the text of the Chronicles is no doubt corrupt in this passage, as it has only two names, *Rimmono* and *Tabor*, instead of four.

² *R. Jacob ben Chajim* has omitted vers. 36 and 37 from his Rabbinical Bible of the year 1525 as spurious, upon the authority of *Kimchi* and the larger *Masora*; but upon insufficient grounds, as these verses are to be found in many good mss. and old editions of an earlier date than 1525, as well as in all the ancient versions, and could not possibly have been wanting from the very first, since the *Merarites* received twelve towns, which included the four that belonged to Reuben. In those mss. in which they are wanting, the omission was, no doubt, a copyist's error, occasioned by the *ὁμοιοτελευτών* (see *de Rossi variorum lectt. ad h. l.*, and *J. H. Michaelis' Note* to his Hebrew Bible).

twelve towns in all.—In vers. 41 and 42 the list of the Levitical towns is closed with a statement of their total number, and also with the repetition of the remark that “these cities were every one with their suburbs round about them.” עִיר עִיר וּסֻּבּוֹת, city city, *i.e.* every city, with its pasture round about it.

Vers. 43-45 form the conclusion to the account of the division of the land in chap. xiii.-xxi., which not only points back to chap. xi. 23, but also to chap. i. 2-6, and connects the two halves of our book together. By the division of Canaan among the tribes of Israel, the promise which Joshua had received from God after the death of Moses was fulfilled (chap. i. 2 sqq.). The Lord had given Israel the whole land which He had sworn to the fathers (Gen. xii. 7, xv. 18, compared with Josh. i. 3, 4); and they had now taken possession of it to dwell therein.—Ver. 44. He had also procured them rest round about, as He had sworn to their fathers, inasmuch as not a man of all their enemies stood against them. The expression “gave them rest,” etc., points back to Deut. xii. 9, 10, and refers to all the divine promises of the Pentateuch which assured the Israelites of the peaceable possession of Canaan, such as Ex. xxxiii. 14, Deut. iii. 20, etc. No enemy had been able to withstand them, as the Lord had promised Joshua (chap. i. 5). “*The Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand.*” It is true the Canaanites were not all exterminated; but those who were left had become so powerless, that they could neither accomplish nor attempt anything against Israel, so long as the Israelites adhered faithfully to their God, or so long as Joshua and the elders who were his contemporaries were alive (Judg. ii. 6 sqq.), because the Lord had overwhelmed them with fear and terror before the Israelites.¹—Ver. 45. Of all the good words which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel not one had fallen, *i.e.* remained unfulfilled (Num. vi. 12); all had come to pass (*vid.* chap. xxiii. 14). כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הַטֹּבִים relates to the gracious promises of God with regard to the peaceful possession of Canaan, which formed the basis of all the salvation promised to Israel, and the pledge of the fulfilment of all the further

¹ “If any one should raise a question as to their actual peace, the solution is easy enough. The tribes of Canaan were so alarmed and broken down with their fear, that in their opinion nothing could serve their purpose better than to purchase peace from the children of Israel by the most obsequious servility. Clearly, therefore, the land was subdued and their home at peace, since no one disturbed them, or attempted anything against them; there were no threats, no snares, no violence, and no conspiracy.”—*Calvin*

promises of God. Notwithstanding the fact that many a tract of country still remained in the hands of the Canaanites, the promise that the land of Canaan should be given to the house of Israel for a possession had been fulfilled; for God had not promised the immediate and total destruction of the Canaanites, but only their gradual extermination (Ex. xxiii. 29, 30; Deut. vii. 22). And even though the Israelites never came into undisputed possession of the whole of the promised land, to the full extent of the boundaries laid down in Num. xxxiv. 1-12, never conquering Tyre and Sidon for example, the promises of God were no more broken on that account than they were through the circumstance, that after the death of Joshua and the elders his contemporaries, Israel was sometimes hard pressed by the Canaanites; since the complete fulfilment of this promise was inseparably connected with the fidelity of Israel to the Lord.¹

RETURN OF THE TWO TRIBES AND A HALF TO THEIR OWN
INHERITANCE.—CHAP. XXII.

Vers. 1-8. After the conquest and division of the land, Joshua sent the auxiliaries of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh back to their homes, with a laudatory acknowledgment of the help they had given to their brethren, and a paternal admonition to adhere faithfully to the Lord and His law, and with a parting blessing (vers. 1-6). By the expression "*then Joshua called*," etc., the occurrence described in this chapter is placed in a general manner after the conquest and subjugation of Canaan, though not of necessity at the close of the distribution of the land. As the summons to these tribes to go with their brethren into Canaan, to assist them in the war, formed the commencement of Joshua's plans

¹ With reference to this apparent discrepancy between the promises of God and the actual results, *Calvin* observes, that "in order to remove every appearance of discrepancy, it is right to distinguish well between the clear, unwavering, and certain fidelity of God in the fulfilment of His promises, and the weakness and indolence of the people, which caused the blessings of God to slip from their hands. Whatever war the people undertook, in whatever direction they carried their standards, there was victory ready to their hand; nor was there anything to retard or prevent the extermination of all their enemies except their own slothfulness. Consequently, although they did not destroy them all, so as to empty the land for their own possession, the truth of God stood out as distinctly as if they had; for there would have been no difficulty in their accomplishment of all that remained to be done, if they had only been disposed to grasp the victories that were ready to their hand.'

for the conquest of Canaan (chap. i. 12 sqq.), their dismissal to their home very properly forms the conclusion to the history of the conquest of this land by the Israelites. We might therefore assume, without in any way contradicting the words of the text, that these auxiliaries had been dismissed immediately after the war was ended. Even in that case, the account of their dismissal would stand in its proper place, "since it was only right that the history itself, which relates to the conquest and possession of the land, should be fully completed before any other narratives, or any casual occurrences which took place, were introduced to break the thread" (*Lightfoot*, App. i. p. 42). On the other hand, however, the circumstance that the two tribes and a half were dismissed from Shiloh, where the tribes assembled for the first time during the casting of the lots, favours the conclusion that the dismissal did not take place till after the lots had been cast; that is to say, contemporaneously with the advance of the other tribes into their possessions.—Vers. 2, 3. Joshua acknowledged that they had done all that they were under any obligation to do towards Moses and himself (Num. xxxii. 20 sqq.; Josh. i. 16, 17). "*Kept the charge of the commandment*," i.e. observed what had to be observed in relation to the commandment of the Lord (see at Lev. viii. 35 and Gen. xxvi. 5).—Ver. 4 points back to chap. i. 15. "*Unto your tents*," for to your homes,—an antiquated form of expression, as in Deut. xvi. 7, Judg. vii. 8, etc.—Ver. 5. Remembering, however, the changeableness of the human heart, Joshua appends to the acknowledgment of their fidelity in the performance of their duty the pressing admonition, to continue still to observe the law of Moses faithfully, to walk in the ways of the Lord and serve Him with the whole heart, which was simply a repetition of what Moses had impressed in a fatherly way upon the hearts of the people (see Deut. iv. 4, 29, vi. 5, x. 12, xi. 13, etc.).—Ver. 6. Thus Joshua dismissed them with blessings.—In ver. 7, the writer, for the sake of clearness, refers again to the fact that only half of Manasseh had received its inheritance from Moses in Bashan, whereas the other had received its inheritance through Joshua on the west of the Jordan (cf. chap. xiv. 3, and xviii. 7). To us such repetitions appear superfluous; but they are closely connected with the copious breadth of the early historical style of the Hebrews, which abounded in repetitions. The verb נתן (gave) wants its object, אֶת־הָאָרֶץ or אֶת־הַבְּרִית, which may easily be supplied from the context. This interpolation involved a further repetition of the fact, that Joshua also dismissed

them (the Manassites of the other side) with a blessing, in order that the words might be appended with which Joshua dismissed the two tribes and a half to their homes, namely, the admonition to share the rich booty which they had accumulated with their brethren at home, in accordance with the instructions which Moses had given them with reference to the war with the Midianites (Num. xxxi. 25 sqq.).

Vers. 9-12. On the way home, when the two tribes and a half had reached the border of Canaan, they built a large conspicuous altar in the district of the Jordan, in the land of Canaan, *i.e.* on this side of the Jordan: "*a great altar to see to,*" *i.e.* one which caught the eye on account of its size, since it was to serve for a memorial (vers. 24 sqq.). The definition appended to Shiloh, "*in the land of Canaan*" (ver. 9), serves to bring out the antithesis "*into the land of Gilead,*" by which we are to understand the whole of the country to the east of the Jordan, as in Num. xxxii. 29, Deut. xxxiv. 1, Judg. v. 17, etc. נֶאֱמָרוּ, both in the form and meaning the same as in Num. xxxii. 30, *made possessors*, *i.e.* settled down. בְּלִילֹת הַיַּרְדֵּן, *the circles of the Jordan*, is synonymous with בְּכַר הַיַּרְדֵּן in Gen. xiii. 10, and signifies that portion of the Ghor which was upon the western side of the Jordan.—Vers. 11, 12. The Israelites (on this side) heard that the tribes in question had built the altar "*opposite to the land of Canaan*" (*lit.* in the face or in front of the land of Canaan), אֶל־עֵבֶר, "*at the opposite region of the children of Israel*" (two descriptions which may be explained on the supposition that the name of Canaan is used in a restricted sense, the valley of the Jordan being expressly excepted, and Canaan considered as only extending to the valley of the Jordan). When they heard this, the whole congregation (in its heads and representatives) assembled at Shiloh, to go up, *i.e.* with the intention of going, to make war against them. The congregation supposed that the altar had been built as a place for sacrifice, and therefore regarded it as a wicked violation of the commandment of God with regard to the unity of the sacrificial altar (Lev. xvii. 8, 9; Deut. xii. 4 sqq.), which they ought to punish according to the law in Deut. xiii. 13 sqq. This zeal was perfectly justifiable, and even praiseworthy, as the altar, even if not erected as a place for sacrifice, might easily be abused to that purpose, and thus become an occasion of sin to the whole nation. In any case, the two tribes and a half ought not to have erected such a building without the consent of Joshua or of the high priest.¹

¹ "We know how sternly the law prohibited the use of two altars: because it was the will of God that His worship should be restricted to one place. When,

Vers. 13-20. The congregation therefore sent Phinehas, the son of the high priest and his presumptive successor in this office, with ten princes, one from each tribe (not the tribe-princes, but a head of the fathers' houses of the families of Israel), to Gilead, to the two tribes and a half, to call them to account for building the altar.—Ver. 16. Assuming at the outset that the altar was intended for a second place of sacrifice in opposition to the command of God, the delegates, with Phinehas no doubt as their speaker, began by reproaching them for falling away from the Lord. “*What faithlessness is this* (מַעַל: see at Lev. v. 15) *that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from Jehovah, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel this day against Jehovah?*” מָרַד (to rebel) is stronger than מַעַל.—Vers. 17 sqq. To show the greatness of the sin through apostasy from the Lord, the speaker reminds them of two previous acts of sin on the part of the nation, which had brought severe judgments upon the congregation. “*Is there too little for us in the iniquity of Peor* (i.e. with Peor, or through the worship of Peor, Num. xxv. 3), *from which we have not cleansed ourselves till this day, and there came the plague upon the congregation of Jehovah?*” אָחַזְתֶּם is an accusative: see Ges. § 117, 2; Ewald, § 277, d. That plague, of which 24,000 Israelites died, was stayed through the zeal of Phinehas for the honour of the Lord (Num. xxv. 4-9, 11). The guilt connected with the worship of Peor had thereby been avenged upon the congregation, and the congregation itself had been saved from any further punishment in consequence of the sin. When Phinehas, therefore, affirmed that the congregation had not yet been cleansed from the crime, he did not mean that they were still bearing or suffering from the punishment of that crime, but that they were not yet cleansed from that sin, inasmuch as many of them were still attached to idolatry in their hearts, even if they had hitherto desisted from it outwardly from fear of the infliction of fresh judgments.—Ver. 18. “*And*

therefore, from the very appearance it could not fail to occur to the mind of any one that they were establishing a second altar, who would not have condemned them as guilty of sacrilege, for introducing rites and ceremonies at variance with the law of God? And since it might so naturally be regarded as a wicked deed, they ought certainly to have consulted their brethren in so grave and important a matter; and it was especially wrong to pass by the high priest, when the will of God might have been learned from his lips. They were deserving of blame, therefore, because they acted as if they had been alone in the world, and did not consider what offence might easily arise from the novelty of their proceedings.”—Calvin.

to-day ye turn away from the Lord again," and are about to bring His wrath upon the whole congregation again through a fresh rebellion.—Ver. 19. "*And truly,*" the speaker continued, "*if the land of your possession should be unclean,*" *sc.* so that you think it necessary to have an altar in the neighbourhood to expiate your sins and wipe away your uncleannesses, "*pass over into the land of Jehovah's possession, where His dwelling-place stands, and settle in the midst of us* ('settle,' as in Gen. xxxiv. 10); *but do not rebel against Jehovah nor against us, by building an altar beside the (one) altar of Jehovah our God.*" מִן is construed first of all with אֵל, and then with the accusative; the only other place in which the latter occurs is Job xxiv. 13.—Ver. 20. He finally reminded them of the sin of Achan, how that had brought the wrath of God upon the whole congregation (chap. vii.); and, moreover, Achan was not the only man who had perished on account of the sin, but thirty-six men had fallen on account of it at the first attack upon Ai (chap. vii. 5). The allusion to this fact is to be understood as an argument *a minori ad majus*, as *Masius* has shown. "If Achan did not perish alone when he committed sacrilege, but God was angry with the whole congregation, what think ye will be the consequence if ye, so great a number, commit so grievous a sin against God?"

Vers. 21–29. In utter amazement at the suspicion expressed by the delegates of the congregation, the two tribes and a half affirm with a solemn oath, that it never entered into their minds to build an altar as a place of sacrifice, to fall away from Jehovah. The combination of the three names of God—EL, the strong one; ELOHIM, the Supreme Being to be feared; and JEHOVAH, the truly existing One, the covenant God (ver. 22)—serves to strengthen the invocation of God, as in Ps. l. 1; and this is strengthened still further by the repetition of these three names. God knows, and let Israel also know, *sc.* what they intended, and what they have done. The וְ which follows is the usual particle used in an oath. "*Verily (it was) not in rebellion, nor in apostasy from Jehovah,*" *sc.* that this was done, or that we built the altar. "*Mayst Thou not help us to-day,*" *sc.* if we did it in rebellion against God. An appeal addressed immediately to God in the heat of the statement, and introduced in the midst of the asseveration, which was meant to remove all doubt as to the truth of their declaration. The words which follow in ver. 23, "*that we have built,*" etc., continue the oath: *If we have done this, to build us an altar, to turn away from*

the Lord, or to offer thereon burnt-offering, meat-offering, or peace-offering, may Jehovah himself require it (שׁוּר, as in Deut. xviii. 19; cf. 1 Sam. xx. 16). Another earnest parenthetical adjuration, as the substance of the oath, is continued in ver. 24. "*But truly* (לֹא אֵין, with an affirmative signification) *from anxiety, for a reason* (lit. on account of a thing) *have we done this, thinking* (חֲמַל, since we thought) *in time to come your sons might say to our sons, What have ye to do with Jehovah, the God of Israel?*" i.e. He does not concern you; He is our God. "*Jehovah has made the Jordan a boundary between us and your sons; ye have no part in Jehovah. Thus your sons might make our sons cease to fear Jehovah,*" i.e. might make them desist from the worship of Jehovah (for the infinitive form אֵין instead of the abbreviated form לֹא used in 1 Sam. xviii. 29, there are analogies in שׁוּר in Ezek. xxiv. 3, and חֲמַל, Eccl. v. 11, whereas אֵין is the only form used in the Pentateuch). There was some reason for this anxiety. For, inasmuch as in all the promises and laws Canaan alone (the land on this side of the Jordan, Num. xxxiv. 1-12) is always mentioned as the land which Jehovah would give to His people for their inheritance, it was quite a possible thing that at some future time the false conclusion might be drawn from this, that only the tribes who dwelt in Canaan proper were the true people of Jehovah.—Vers. 26 sqq. "*So we thought, we will make ourselves to build an altar* (an expression derived from the language of ordinary life, for 'we will build ourselves an altar'), *not for burnt-offerings and slain-offerings; but it shall be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we may perform the service of Jehovah before His face* (i.e. before the tabernacle in which Jehovah was enthroned), *with our burnt-offerings, slain-offerings, and peace-offerings,*"—in order, as they repeat in ver. 27b from vers. 24, 25, that they might not be denied a part in Jehovah in time to come. For if it should so happen in time to come, that this should be said to them and to their descendants, they would say (or reply), "*Behold the copy of the altar of Jehovah, which our fathers made, not for burnt-offerings,*" etc. (ver. 28b, as in vers. 26b, 27a). For this reason they had built the altar according to the pattern of the altar before the tabernacle, and that not in their own land, but on the western side of the Jordan, where the dwelling-place of Jehovah was standing, as a witness that they worshipped one and the same God with the tribes on this side.—Ver. 29. The speakers conclude with an expression of horror at the thought of rebelling against Jehovah. חֲלִילָהּ לָנוּ מִכֶּפֶּן, "*far be it*

from us away from Him (כִּפְּנוֹ = מִיְהוָה, 1 Sam. xxiv. 7, xxvi. 11, 1 Kings xxi. 3), to rebel against Jehovah," etc.

Vers. 30-34. This explanation pleased the delegates of the congregation, so that Phinehas bore this testimony to the tribes on the east of the Jordan: "*Now (to-day) we perceive that Jehovah is in the midst of us; because (וְשֵׁנָה, quod, as in Gen. xxxi. 49, etc.) ye have not committed this unfaithfulness towards Jehovah, since (וְעַתָּה, then, if ye had only this intention) ye have saved the children of Israel out of the hand of Jehovah,*" i.e. preserved them from His judgments.—Vers. 32, 33. They then returned to Canaan and informed the congregation. And the thing pleased them, so that they praised the Lord, *sc.* for having kept their brethren on the other side from rebellion, and they thought no more of going to war against them, or laying waste the land of the tribes on the east of the Jordan.—Ver. 34. The Reubenites and Gadites (half Manasseh is omitted in vers. 33, 34, for the sake of brevity) called the altar "*witness is it between us that Jehovah is God*" (וְעֵד יְהוָה introduces the words). This is at once a name and an explanation, namely in this sense: they gave the altar the name of "*witness between us,*" because it was to be a witness that they also acknowledged and worshipped Jehovah as the true God.

JOSHUA'S FAREWELL AND DEATH.—CHAP. XXIII. XXIV.

After the division of the land among the tribes, Joshua had withdrawn to *Timnath-erah*, on the mountains of Ephraim (chap. xix. 50), to spend the last days of his life there in the quiet enjoyment of his own inheritance. But when the time of his departure from the earth was drawing near, remembering the call which he had received from the Lord (chap. i. 6-8), he felt constrained to gather the people together once more in the persons of their representatives, to warn them most earnestly of the dangers of apostasy from the Lord, and point out the evils that would follow (chap. xxiii.); and then after that, in a solemn assembly of the nation at Shechem, to review the abundant mercies which the Lord had conferred upon Israel from the calling of Abraham to that day, that he might call upon them to remain steadfast and faithful in the worship of their God, and then solemnly renew the covenant with the Lord.¹

¹ "The pious solicitude of Joshua furnishes an example worthy of imitation by all who have the charge of others. For just as a father would not be

Chap. xxiii. EXHORTATION TO THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO THEIR CALLING.—Vers. 1, 2. The introduction to the discourse which follows is attached in its first part to chap. xxii. 3, 4, and thus also to chap. xxi. 43, 44, whilst in the second part it points back to chap. xiii. 1. The Lord had given the people rest from all their enemies round about, after the land had been subdued and divided by lot (chap. xxi. 43, 44). Joshua was already an old man at the termination of the war (chap. xiii. 1); but since then he had advanced still further in age, so that he may have noticed the signs of the near approach of death. He therefore called together the representatives of the people, either to Timnath-serah where he dwelt (chap. xix. 50), or to Shiloh to the tabernacle, the central sanctuary of the whole nation, as the most suitable place for his purpose. "*All Israel*" is still further defined by the apposition, "*its elders, and its heads, and its judges, and its officers.*" This is not to be understood, however, as referring to four different classes of rulers; but the term *elders* is the general term used to denote all the representatives of the people, who were divided into heads, judges, and officers. And the *heads*, again, were those who stood at the head of the tribes, families, and fathers' houses, and out of whose number the most suitable persons were chosen as judges and officers (Deut. i. 15; see my Bibl. Arch. ii. § 143). Joshua's address to the elders of all Israel consists of two parts, which run parallel to one another so far as the contents are concerned, vers. 2b-13 and vers. 14-16. In both parts Joshua commences with a reference to his age and his approaching death, in consequence of which he felt constrained to remind the people once more of all the great things that the Lord had done for them, and to warn them against falling away from their gracious covenant God. Just as Joshua, in this the last act of his life, was merely treading in the footsteps of Moses, who had concluded his life with the fullest exhortations to the people to be faithful to the Lord (Deut. i. 30), so his address consists entirely of reminiscences from the Pentateuch, more especially from Deuteronomy, as he had

regarded as sufficiently careful if he merely thought of the interests of his children up to the time of his own death, and did not extend his thoughtfulness on their behalf still further, and as far as was in his power endeavour to provide for their welfare when he himself should be dead; so good rulers ought to look forward that they may not only leave behind them a well-organized state, but may also strengthen and secure its existence for a long time to come."
—Calvin (with special reference to 2 Pet. i. 13-15).

nothing fresh to announce to the people, but could only impress the old truth upon their minds once more.

Vers. 2b-13. Joshua commenced his address by reminding them of the greatest manifestations of grace which they had received from the Lord, namely, by referring to what the Lord had done to all these nations (the Canaanites) before them, when He fought for Israel, as Moses had promised them (Deut. i. 30 and iii. 22).—Ver. 3. “*Before you*,” *sc.* smiting and driving them away.—Ver. 4. He (Joshua) had now divided by lot among the tribes of Israel as their inheritance these still remaining (Canaanitish) nations, as the Lord had commanded (chap. xiii. 6, 7), “*from Jordan and further all the nations, which I have exterminated (i.e. which Joshua had destroyed when Canaan was taken), and the great sea (for ‘to the great sea’) in the west.*” The breadth of the land of Canaan is here given in a peculiar manner, the *terminus a quo* being mentioned in the first clause, and the *terminus ad quem* (though without the preposition עַל) in the second; and through the parallelism which exists between the clauses, each clause is left to be completed from the other. So that the whole sentence would read thus: “*All these nations which remain . . . from Jordan to the great sea, also all the nations which I have cut off from Jordan, and to the great sea westward.*”—Ver. 5. For the Lord would drive all these still remaining nations before the Israelites, and cut them off, and give the Israelites their land for a possession, as He had promised (chap. xiii. 6; cf. Ex. xxiii. 23 sqq.). הָרָץ, as in Deut. vi. 19, ix. 4; and the form הַרְצֵם, with *Chateph-kametz*, on account of the weakness of the ה, as in Num. xxxv. 20. הַרְצֵם, as in chap. i. 15.—Vers. 6 sqq. Only let them be strong, *i.e.* be brave, to keep the law of Moses without fail (cf. chap. i. 7), to enter into no fellowship with these remaining nations (בָּרִצְוֹ, to enter into close intimacy with a person; see ver. 12), and not to pay reverence to their gods in any way, but to adhere steadfastly to the Lord their God as they had hitherto done. To make mention of the names of the idols (Ex. xxiii. 13), to swear by them, to serve them (by sacrifices), and to bow down to them (to invoke them in prayer), are the four outward forms of divine worship (see Deut. vi. 13, x. 20). The concluding words, “*as ye have done unto this day*,” which express a reason for persevering in the attachment they had hitherto shown to Jehovah, “do not affirm that the Israelites had hitherto done all these things fully and perfectly; for who does not know how few mortals there are who devote themselves to God

with all the piety and love which He justly demands? But because the nation as a whole had kept the laws delivered to them by Moses, during the time that the government had been in the hands of Joshua, the sins of individual men were left out of sight on this occasion" (*Masius*).—Vers. 9, 10. For this reason the Lord had driven out great and strong nations before the Israelites, so that no one was able to stand before them. The first hemistich points to the fulfilment of Deut. iv. 38, vii. 1, ix. 1, xi. 23; the second to that of Deut. vii. 24, xi. 25. וְהָיָה is placed at the beginning absolutely.—In ver. 10a, the blessing of fidelity to the law which Israel had hitherto experienced, is described, as in Deut. xxxii. 30, upon the basis of the promise in Lev. xxvi. 7, 8, and Deut. xxviii. 7, and in ver. 10b the thought of ver. 3b is repeated. To this there is attached, in vers. 11-13, the admonition to take heed for the sake of their souls (cf. Deut. iv. 15), to love the Lord their God (on the love of God as the sum of the fulfilment of the law, see Deut. vi. 5, x. 12, xi. 13). For if they turned, *i.e.* gave up the faithfulness they had hitherto displayed towards Jehovah, and attached themselves to the remnant of these nations, made marriages with them, and entered into fellowship with them, which the Lord had expressly forbidden (Ex. xxxiv. 12-16; Deut. vii. 3), let them know that the Lord their God would not cut off these nations before them any more, but that they would be a snare and destruction to them. This threat is founded upon such passages of the law as Ex. xxxiii. 33, Deut. vii. 16, and more especially Num. xxxiii. 55. The figure of a trap, which is employed here (see Ex. x. 7), is still further strengthened by מִכְשָׁל, a snare (cf. Isa. viii. 14, 15). *Shotet*, a whip or scourge, an emphatic form of the word derived from the root of שָׁו, only occurs here. "*Scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes*" (see Num. xxxiii. 55). Joshua crowds his figures together to depict the misery and oppression which would be sure to result from fellowship with the Canaanites, because, from his knowledge of the fickleness of the people, and the wickedness of the human heart in its natural state, he could foresee that the apostasy of the nation from the Lord, which Moses had foretold, would take place but too quickly; as it actually did, according to Judg. ii. 3 sqq., in the very next generation. The words "*until ye perish*," etc., resume the threat held out by Moses in Deut. xi. 17 (cf. chap. xxviii. 21 sqq.).

Vers. 14-16. In the second part of his address, Joshua sums up briefly and concisely the leading thoughts of the first part,

giving greater prominence, however, to the curse which would follow apostasy from the Lord.—Ver. 14. Now that Joshua was going the way of all the earth (all the inhabitants of the earth), *i.e.* going to die (1 Kings ii. 2), the Israelites knew with all the heart and all the soul, *i.e.* were fully convinced, that of all the good words (gracious promises) of God not one had failed, but all had come to pass (*vid.* chap. xxi. 45). But it was just as certain that the Lord would bring upon them every evil word that He spake through Moses (Lev. xxvi. 14–33; Deut. xxviii. 15–68, and xxix. 14–28), if they transgressed His covenant. “*The evil word*” is the curse of rejection (Deut. xxx. 1, 15). “*Until He have destroyed:*” see Deut. vii. 24, and xxviii. 48. The other words as in ver. 13*b*. If they went after other gods and served them, the wrath of the Lord would burn against them, and they would be quickly destroyed from the good land which He had given them (*vid.* Deut. xi. 17).

Chap. xxiv. 1–28. RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT AT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN SHECHEM.—Ver. 1. Joshua brought his public ministry to a close, as Moses had done before him, with a solemn renewal of the covenant with the Lord. For this solemn act he did not choose Shiloh, the site of the national sanctuary, as some MSS. of the LXX. read, but Shechem, a place which was sanctified as no other was for such a purpose as this by the most sacred reminiscences from the times of the patriarchs. He therefore summoned all the tribes of Israel, in their representatives (their elders, etc., as in chap. xxiii. 2), to Shechem, not merely because it was at Shechem, *i.e.* on Gerizim and Ebal, that the solemn establishment of the law in the land of Canaan, to which the renewal of the covenant, as a repetition of the essential kernel of that solemn ceremony, was now to be appended, had first taken place, but still more because it was here that Abraham received the first promise from God after his migration into Canaan, and built an altar at the time (Gen. xii. 6, 7); and most of all, as *Hengstenberg* has pointed out (Diss. ii. p. 12), because Jacob settled here on his return from Mesopotamia, and it was here that he purified his house from the strange gods, burying all their idols under the oak (Gen. xxxiii. 19, xxxv. 2, 4). As Jacob selected Shechem for the sanctification of his house, because this place was already consecrated by Abraham as a sanctuary of God, so Joshua chose the same place for the renewal of the covenant, because this act involved a practical

renunciation on the part of Israel of all idolatry. Joshua expressly states this in ver. 23, and reference is also made to it in the account in ver. 26. "The exhortation to be faithful to the Lord, and to purify themselves from all idolatry, could not fail to make a deep impression, in the place where the honoured patriarch had done the very same things to which his descendants were exhorted here. The example preached more loudly in this spot than in any other" (*Hengstenberg*). "*And they placed themselves before God.*" From the expression "before God," it by no means follows that the ark had been brought to Shechem, or, as *Knobel* supposes, that an altar was erected there, any more than from the statement in ver. 26 that it was "*by the sanctuary of the Lord.*" For, in the first place, "before God" (*Elohim*) is not to be identified with "before Jehovah," which is used in chap. xviii. 6 and xix. 51 to denote the presence of the Lord above the ark of the covenant; and secondly, even "before Jehovah" does not always presuppose the presence of the ark of the covenant, as *Hengstenberg* has clearly shown. "Before God" simply denotes in a general sense the religious character of an act, or shows that the act was undertaken with a distinct reference to the omnipresent God; and in the case before us it may be attributed to the fact that Joshua delivered his exhortation to the people in the name of Jehovah, and commenced his address with the words, "Thus saith Jehovah."¹

Vers. 2-15. Joshua's address contains an expansion of two thoughts. He first of all recalls to the recollection of the whole nation, whom he is addressing in the persons of its representatives, all the proofs of His mercy which the Lord had given, from the calling of Abraham to that day (vers. 2-13); and then because of these divine acts he calls upon the people to renounce all idolatry, and to serve God the Lord alone (vers. 14, 15). Jehovah is described as the "God of Israel" both at the commencement (ver. 2) and also at the close of the whole transaction, in perfect accordance with the substance and object of the address, which is occupied throughout with the goodness conferred by God upon the race of

¹ "It is stated that they all stood before God, in order that the sanctity and religious character of the assembly may be the more distinctly shown. And there can be no doubt that the name of God was solemnly invoked by Joshua, and that he addressed the people as in the sight of God, so that each one might feel for himself that God was presiding over all that was transacted there, and that they were not engaged in any merely private affair, but were entering into a sacred and inviolable compact with God himself."—*Calvin*.

Israel. The first practical proof of the grace of God towards Israel, was the calling of Abraham from his idolatrous associations, and his introduction to the land of Canaan, where the Lord so multiplied his seed, that Esau received the mountains of Seir for his family, whilst Jacob went into Egypt with his sons.¹ The ancestors of Israel dwelt "*from eternity*," i.e. from time immemorial, on the other side of the stream (the Euphrates), viz. in Ur of the Chaldees, and then at Haran in Mesopotamia (Gen. xi. 28, 31), namely Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor. Of Terah's three sons (Gen. xi. 27), Nahor is mentioned as well as Abraham, because Rebekah, and her nieces Leah and Rachel, the tribe-mothers of Israel, were descended from him (Gen. xxii. 23, xxix. 10, 16 sqq.). And they (your fathers, Terah and his family) served other gods than Jehovah, who revealed himself to Abraham, and brought him from his father's house to Canaan. Nothing definite can be gathered from the expression "other gods," with reference to the gods worshipped by Terah and his family; nor is there anything further to be found respecting them throughout the whole of the Old Testament. We simply learn from Gen. xxxi. 19, 34, that Laban had *teraphim*, i.e. *penates*, or household and oracular gods.² The question also, whether Abraham was an idolater before his call, which has been answered in different ways, cannot be determined with certainty. We may conjecture, however, that he was not deeply sunk in idolatry, though he had not remained entirely free from it in his father's house; and therefore that his call is not to be regarded as a reward for his righteousness before God, but as an act of free unmerited grace.—Vers. 3, 4. After his

¹ "He commences with their gratuitous training, by which God had precluded them from the possibility of boasting of any pre-eminence or merit. For God had bound them to himself by a closer bond, because when they were on an equality with others, He drew them to himself to be His own peculiar people, for no other reason than His own good pleasure. Moreover, in order that it may be clearly seen that they have nothing whereof to glory, he leads them back to their earliest origin, and relates how their fathers had dwelt in Chaldæa, worshipping idols in common with the rest, and with nothing to distinguish them from the crowd."—*Calvin*.

² According to one tradition, Abraham was brought up in Sabæism in his father's house (see *Hottinger*, *Histor. Orient.* p. 246, and *Philo*, in several passages of his works); and according to another, in the *Targum Jonathan* on Gen. xi. 23, and in the later Rabbins, Abraham had to suffer persecution on account of his dislike to idolatry, and was obliged to leave his native land in consequence. But these traditions are both of them nothing more than conjectures by the later Rabbins.

call, God conducted Abraham through all the land of Canaan (see Gen. xii.), protecting and shielding him, and multiplied his seed, giving him Isaac, and giving to Isaac Jacob and Esau, the ancestors of two nations. To the latter He gave the mountains of Seir for a possession (Gen. xxxvi. 6 sqq.), that Jacob might receive Canaan for his descendants as a sole possession. But instead of mentioning this, Joshua took for granted that his hearers were well acquainted with the history of the patriarchs, and satisfied himself with mentioning the migration of Jacob and his sons to Egypt, that he might pass at once to the second great practical proof of the mercy of God in the guidance of Israel, the miraculous deliverance of Israel out of the bondage and oppression of Egypt.—Vers. 5-7. Of this also he merely mentions the leading points, viz. first of all, the sending of Moses and Aaron (Ex. iii. 10 sqq., iv. 14 sqq.), and then the plagues inflicted upon Egypt. “*I smote Egypt*,” i.e. both land and people. מִצְרַיִם is used in Ex. vii. 27 and xii. 23, 27, in connection with the plague of frogs and the slaying of the first-born in Egypt. The words which follow, “*according to that which I did among them, and afterward I brought you out*,” point back to Ex. iii. 20, and show that the Lord had fulfilled the promise given to Moses at his call. He then refers (vers. 6, 7) to the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites, as they came out of Egypt, from Pharaoh who pursued them with his army, giving especial prominence to the crying of the Israelites to the Lord in their distress (Ex. xiv. 10), and the relief of that distress by the angel of the Lord (Ex. xiv. 19, 20). And lastly, he notices their dwelling in the wilderness “*many days*,” i.e. forty years (Num. xiv. 33).—Vers. 8-10. The third great act of God for Israel was his giving up the Amorites into the hands of the Israelites, so that they were able to conquer their land (Num. xxi. 21-35), and the frustration of the attack made by Balak king of the Moabites, through the instrumentality of Balaam, when the Lord did not allow him to curse Israel, but compelled him to bless (Num. xxii.-xxiv.). Balak “*warred against Israel*,” not with the sword, but with the weapons of the curse, or *animo et voluntate* (Vatabl.). “*I would not hearken unto Balaam*,” i.e. would not comply with his wish, but compelled him to submit to my will, and to bless you; “*and delivered you out of his* (Balak’s) *hand*,” when he sought to destroy Israel through the medium of Balaam (Num. xxii. 6, 11).—Vers. 11-13. The last and greatest benefit which the Lord conferred upon the Israelites, was His leading them by miracles of His omnipotence across the Jordan

into Canaan, delivering the "*lords* (or possessors) of *Jericho*," not "the rulers, *i.e.* the king and his heroes," as *Knobel* maintains (see 2 Sam. xxi. 12; 1 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12; and the commentary on Judg. ix. 6), "*and all the tribes of Canaan into their hand*," and sending *hornets before them*, so that they were able to drive out the Canaanites, particularly the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og, though "*not with their sword and their bow*" (*vid.* Ps. xlv. 4); *i.e.* it was not with the weapons at their command that they were able to take the lands of these two kings. On the sending of hornets, as a figure used to represent peculiarly effective terrors, see at Ex. xxiii. 28, Deut. vii. 20. In this way the Lord gave the land to the Israelites, with its towns and its rich productions (vineyards and olive trees), without any trouble on their part of wearisome cultivation or planting, as Moses himself had promised them (Deut. vi. 10, 11).—Vers. 14, 15. These overwhelming manifestations of grace on the part of the Lord laid Israel under obligations to serve the Lord with gratitude and sincerity. "*Now therefore fear the Lord* (אֵלֹהִים for אֱלֹהִים, pointed like a verb אֵל, as in 1 Sam. xii. 24, Ps. xxxiv. 10), *and serve Him in sincerity and in truth*," *i.e.* without hypocrisy, or the show of piety, in simplicity and truth of heart (*vid.* Judg. ix. 16, 19). "*Put away the gods* (*Elohim* = the strange gods in ver. 23) *which your fathers served on the other side of the Euphrates and in Egypt*." This appeal does not presuppose any gross idolatry on the part of the existing generation, which would have been at variance with the rest of the book, in which Israel is represented as only serving Jehovah during the lifetime of Joshua. If the people had been in possession of idols, they would have given them up to Joshua to be destroyed, as they promised to comply with his demand (vers. 16 sqq.). But even if the Israelites were not addicted to gross idolatry in the worship of idols, they were not altogether free from idolatry either in Egypt or in the desert. As their fathers were possessed of *teraphim* in Mesopotamia (see at ver. 2), so the Israelites had not kept themselves entirely free from heathen and idolatrous ways, more especially the demon-worship of Egypt (comp. Lev. xvii. 7 with Ezek. xx. 7 sqq., xxiii. 3, 8, and Amos v. 26); and even in the time of Joshua their worship of Jehovah may have been corrupted by idolatrous elements. This admixture of the pure and genuine worship of Jehovah with idolatrous or heathen elements, which is condemned in Lev. xvii. 7 as the worship of *Seirim*, and by Ezekiel (*l. c.*) as the idolatrous worship of the people in Egypt, had its roots in the corruption of the

natural heart, through which it is at all times led to make to itself idols of mammon, worldly lusts, and other impure thoughts and desires, to which it cleaves, without being able to tear itself entirely away from them. This more refined idolatry might degenerate in the case of many persons into the grosser worship of idols, so that Joshua had ample ground for admonishing the people to put away the strange gods, and serve the Lord.—Ver. 15. But as the true worship of the living God must have its roots in the heart, and spring from the heart, and therefore cannot be forced by prohibitions and commands, Joshua concluded by calling upon the representatives of the nation, in case they were not inclined (“if it seem evil unto you”) to serve Jehovah, to choose now this day the gods whom they would serve, whether the gods of their fathers in Mesopotamia, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land they were now dwelling, though he and his house would serve the Lord. There is no necessity to adduce any special proofs that this appeal was not intended to release them from the obligation to serve Jehovah, but rather contained the strongest admonition to remain faithful to the Lord.

Vers. 16-25. The people responded to this appeal by declaring, with an expression of horror at idolatry, their hearty resolution to serve the Lord, who was their God, and had shown them such great mercies. The words, “*that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,*” call to mind the words appended to the first commandment (Ex. xx. 2; Deut. v. 6), which they hereby promise to observe. With the clause which follows, “*who did those great signs in our sight,*” etc., they declare their assent to all that Joshua had called to their mind in vers. 3-13. “*We also*” (ver. 18), as well as thou and thy house (ver. 15).—Vers. 19-21. But in order to place most vividly before the minds of the people to what it was that they bound themselves by this declaration, that they might not inconsiderately vow what they would not afterwards observe, Joshua adds, “*Ye cannot serve Jehovah,*” sc. in the state of mind in which ye are at present, or “by your own resolution only, and without the assistance of divine grace, without solid and serious conversion from all idols, and without true repentance and faith” (*J. H. Michaelis*). For Jehovah is “*a holy God,*” etc. *Elohim*, used to denote the Supreme Being (see at Gen. ii. 4), is construed with the predicate in the plural. On the holiness of God, see the exposition of Ex. xix. 6. On the expression “*a jealous God,*” see Ex. xx. 5; and on יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, Ex. xxiii. 21. The

only other place in which the form קָנָה is used for קָנָה is Nah. i. 2. "If ye forsake the Lord and serve strange gods, He will turn (i.e. assume a different attitude towards you) and do you hurt, after He has done you good," i.e. He will not spare you, in spite of the blessings which He has conferred upon you. הָרַע is used to denote the judgments threatened in the law against transgressors.—Ver. 21. The people adhered to their resolution. לֹא, *minime*, as in chap. v. 14, i.e. we will not serve other gods, but Jehovah.—Vers. 22, 23. Upon this repeated declaration Joshua says to them, "*ye are witnesses against yourselves*," i.e. ye will condemn yourselves by this your own testimony if ye should now forsake the Lord, "for ye yourselves have chosen you Jehovah to serve Him;" whereupon they answer עָרִים, "*witnesses are we against ourselves*," signifying thereby, "we profess and ratify once more all that we have said" (*Rosenmüller*). Joshua then repeated his demand that they should put away the strange gods from within them, and incline their hearts (entirely) to Jehovah the God of Israel. אֱלֹהֵי הַלֵּב אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּכֶם might mean the foreign gods which are in the midst of you, i.e. among you, and imply the existence of idols, and the grosser forms of idolatrous worship in the nation; but בְּקִרְבְּ also signifies "within," or "in the heart," in which case the words refer to idols of the heart. That the latter is the sense in which the words are to be understood is evident from the fact, that although the people expressed their willingness to renounce all idolatry, they did not bring any idols to Joshua to be destroyed, as was done in other similar cases, viz. Gen. xxxv. 4, and 1 Sam. vii. 4. Even if the people had carried idols about with them in the desert, as the prophet Amos stated to his contemporaries (Amos v. 26; cf. Acts vii. 43), the grosser forms of idolatry had disappeared from Israel with the dying out of the generation that was condemned at Kadesh. The new generation, which had been received afresh into covenant with the Lord by the circumcision at Gilgal, and had set up this covenant at Ebal, and was now assembled around Joshua, the dying servant of God, to renew the covenant once more, had no idols of wood, stone, or metal, but only the "figments of false gods," as *Culvin* calls them, the idols of the heart, which it was to put away, that it might give its heart entirely to the Lord, who is not content with divided affections, but requires the whole heart (Deut. vi. 5, 6).—Vers. 24, 25. On the repeated and decided declaration of the people, "*the Lord our God will we serve, and to His voice will we hearken*," Joshua completed the covenant with them that day. This

conclusion of a covenant was really a solemn renewal of the covenant made at Sinai, like that which took place under Moses in the steppes of Moab (Deut. xxviii. 69). "*And set them a statute and right at Shechem,*" *sc.* through the renewal of the covenant. These words recall Ex. xv. 25, where the guidance of Israel to bitter water, and the sweetening of that water by the means which the Lord pointed out to Moses, are described as setting a *statute and right* for Israel, and then explained by the promise, that if they would hearken to the voice of Jehovah, He would keep them from all the diseases of Egypt. And in accordance with this, by the renewal of the covenant at Shechem, there were set for Israel a *ph*, *i.e.* a *statute*, which bound the people to a renewed and conscientious maintenance of the covenant, and a *חֻשְׁפֵּם*, or *right*, by virtue of which they might expect on this condition the fulfilment of all the covenant mercies of the Lord.

Vers. 26-28. All these things (הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה) are not merely the words spoken on both sides, but the whole ceremony of renewing the covenant) Joshua wrote in the law-book of God, *i.e.* he wrote them in a document which he placed in the law-book of Moses, and then set up a large stone, as a permanent memorial of what had taken place, on the spot where the meeting had been held, "*under the oak that was in the sanctuary of Jehovah.*" As בְּמִקְדָּשׁ neither means "at the sanctuary," nor near the sanctuary, nor "in the place where the sanctuary was set up;" the "sanctuary of Jehovah" cannot signify "the ark of the covenant, which had been brought from the tabernacle to Shechem, for the ceremony of renewing the covenant." Still less can we understand it as signifying the tabernacle itself, since this was not removed from place to place for particular sacred ceremonies; nor can it mean an altar, in which an oak could not possibly be said to stand; nor some other illegal sanctuary of Jehovah, since there were none in Israel at that time. The sanctuary of Jehovah under the oak at Shechem was nothing else than the holy place under the oak, where Abraham had formerly built an altar and worshipped the Lord, and where Jacob had purified his house from the strange gods, which he buried under this oak, or rather terebinth tree (Gen. xii. 6, 7, xxxv. 2, 4). This is the explanation adopted by *Masius, J. D. Michaelis*, and *Hengstenberg* (Diss. ii. p. 12). In ver. 27 Joshua explains to the people the meaning of the stone which he had set up. The stone would be a witness against the people if they should deny their God. As a memorial of what had taken place, the stone had heard all the words

which the Lord had addressed to Israel, and could bear witness against the people, that they might not deny their God. "*Deny your God,*" viz. in feeling, word, or deed.—Ver. 28. Joshua then dismissed the people, each one to his inheritance. He had done all that was in his power to establish the people in fidelity to the Lord.

Vers. 29–33. DEATH AND BURIAL OF JOSHUA AND ELEAZAR.—With the renewal of the covenant Joshua had ended his vocation. He did not formally lay down his office, because there was no immediate successor who had been appointed by God. The ordinary rulers of the congregation were enough, when once they were settled in Canaan, viz. the elders as heads and judges of the nation, together with the high priest, who represented the nation in its relation to God, and could obtain for it the revelation of the will of God through the right of the Urim and Thummim. In order therefore to bring the history of Joshua and his times to a close, nothing further remained than to give an account of his death, with a short reference to the fruit of his labours, and to add certain other notices for which no suitable place had hitherto presented itself.—Vers. 29, 30. Soon after these events (vers. 1–28) Joshua died, at the age of 110, like his ancestor Joseph (Gen. l. 26), and was buried in his hereditary possessions at Timnath-serah, upon the mountains of Ephraim, to the north of Mount Gaash. *Timnath-serah* is still in existence (see at chap. xix. 50). *Mount Gaash*, however, has not been discovered.—Ver. 31. Joshua's labours had not remained without effect. During his own lifetime, and that of the elders who outlived him, and who had seen all that the Lord did for Israel, all Israel served the Lord. "The elders" are the rulers and leaders of the nation. The account of the burial of Joseph's bones, which the Israelites had brought with them from Egypt to Canaan (Ex. xiii. 19), is placed after the account of Joshua's death, because it could not have been introduced before without interrupting the connected account of the labours of Joshua; and it would not do to pass it over without notice altogether, not only because the fact of their bringing the bones with them had been mentioned in the book of Exodus, but also because the Israelites thereby fulfilled the promise given by their fathers to Joseph when he died. The burial of Joseph in the piece of field which Jacob had purchased at Shechem (*vid.* Gen. xxxiii. 19) had no doubt taken place immediately after the division of the land, when Joseph's descendants received Shechem

and the field there for an inheritance. This piece of field, however, they chose for a burial-place for Joseph's bones, not only because Jacob had purchased it, but in all probability chiefly because Jacob had sanctified it for his descendants by building an altar there (Gen. xxxiii. 20). The death and burial of Eleazar, who stood by Joshua's side in the guidance of the nation, are mentioned last of all (ver. 33). When Eleazar died, whether shortly before or shortly after Joshua, cannot be determined. He was buried at Gibeah of Phinehas, the place which was given to him upon the mountains of Ephraim, i.e. as his inheritance. *Gibeath Phinehas*, i.e. hill of Phinehas, is apparently a proper name, like Gibeah of Saul (1 Sam. xv. 34, etc.). The situation, however, is uncertain. According to *Eusebius* (*Onom. s. v. Γαβαὰς*), it was upon the mountains of Ephraim, in the tribe of Benjamin, and was at that time a place named *Gabatha*, the name also given to it by *Josephus* (Ant. v. 1, 29), about twelve Roman miles from Eleutheropolis. This statement is certainly founded upon an error, at least so far as the number twelve is concerned. It is a much more probable supposition, that it is the Levitical town *Geba* of Benjamin, on the north-east of Ramah (chap. xviii. 24), and the name *Gibeah* of Phinehas might be explained on the ground that this place had become the hereditary property of Phinehas, which would be perfectly reconcilable with its selection as one of the priests' cities. As the priests, for example, were not the sole possessors of the towns ceded to them in the possessions of the different tribes, the Israelites might have presented Phinehas with that portion of the city which was not occupied by the priests, and also with the field, as a reward for the services he had rendered to the congregation (Num. xxv. 7 sqq.), just as Caleb and Joshua had been specially considered; in which case Phinehas might dwell in his own hereditary possessions in a priests' city. The situation, "upon the mountains of Ephraim," is not at variance with this view, as these mountains extended, according to Judg. iv. 5, etc., far into the territory of Benjamin (see at chap. xi. 21). The majority of commentators, down to *Knobel*, have thought the place intended to be a *Gibeah* in the tribe of Ephraim, namely the present *Jeeb* or *Jibia*, by the Wady Jib, on the north of Guphna, towards Neapolis (Sichem: see *Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 80), though there is nothing whatever to favour this except the name.


With the death of Eleazar the high priest, the contemporary of Joshua, the times of Joshua came to a close, so that the account of

Eleazar's death formed a very fitting termination to the book. In some mss. and editions of the Septuagint, there is an additional clause relating to the high priest Phinehas and the apostasy of the Israelites after Joshua's death; but this is merely taken from Judg. ii. 6, 11 sqq. and iii. 7, 12 sqq., and arbitrarily appended to the book of Joshua.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

INTRODUCTION.

CONTENTS AND CHARACTER, ORIGIN AND SOURCES, OF THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

HE book of Judges, headed *Shophetim* in the Hebrew Bibles, and *Kpirai* in the Alexandrian version, and called *liber Judicum* in the Vulgate, contains the history of the Israelitish theocracy for a period of about 350 years, from the death of Joshua to the death of Samson, or to the time of the prophet Samuel. It may be divided according to its contents into three parts: (1) an introduction (chap. i.-iii. 6); (2) the history of the several judges (chap. iii. 7-xvi. 31); and (3) a twofold appendix (chap. xvii.-xxi.). In the *Introduction* the prophetic author of the book first of all takes a general survey of those facts which exhibited most clearly the behaviour of the Israelites to the Canaanites who were left in the land after the death of Joshua, and closes his survey with the reproof of their behaviour by the angel of the Lord (chap. i. 1-ii. 5). He then describes in a general manner the attitude of Israel to the Lord its God and that of the Lord to His people during the time of the judges, and represents this period as a constant alternation of humiliation through hostile oppression, when the nation fell away from its God, and deliverance out of the power of its enemies by judges whom God raised up and endowed with the power of His Spirit, whenever the people returned to the Lord (chap. ii. 6-iii. 6). This is followed in the *body of the work* (chap. iii. 7-xvi. 31) by the history of the several oppressions of Israel on the part of foreign nations, with the deliverance effected by the judges who were raised up by God, and whose deeds are for the most part elaborately described in chronological order, and introduced by the standing formula, "And the children of Israel

did evil in the sight of the Lord," etc.; or, "And the children of Israel again did evil (added to do evil)," etc. They are arranged in six historical groups: (1) the oppression by the Mesopotamian king, Chushan-rishathaim, with the deliverance from this oppression through *Othniel* the judge (chap. iii. 7-11); (2) the oppression by the Moabitish king Eglon, with the deliverance effected through *Ehud* the judge (chap. iii. 12-30), and the victory achieved by *Shamgar* over the Philistines (chap. iii. 31); (3) the subjugation of Israel by the Canaanitish king Jabin, and the deliverance effected through the prophetess *Deborah* and *Barak* the judge (chap. iv.), with *Deborah's* song of victory (chap. v.); (4) the oppression by the Midianites, and the deliverance from these enemies through the judge *Gideon*, who was called to be the deliverer of Israel through an appearance of the angel of the Lord (chap. vi.-viii.), with the history of the three years' reign of his son Abimelech (chap. ix.), and brief notices of the two judges *Tola* and *Jair* (chap. x. 1-5); (5) the giving up of the Israelites into the power of the Ammonites and Philistines, and their deliverance from the Ammonitish oppression by *Jephthah* (chap. x. 6-xii. 7), with brief notices of the three judges *Ibzan*, *Elon*, and *Abdon* (chap. xii. 8-15); (6) the oppression by the Philistines, with the account of the life and deeds of *Samson* the judge, who began to deliver Israel out of the power of these foes (chap. xiii.-xvi.). To this there are added two *appendices* in chap. xvii.-xxi.: viz. (1) the account of the worship of images by the Ephraimite Micah, and the transportation of that worship by the Danites to Laish-Dan (chap. xvii. xviii.); and (2) the infamous conduct of the inhabitants of Gibeah, and the war of revenge which was waged by the congregation of Israel against the tribe of Benjamin as a punishment for the crime (chap. xix.-xxi.). Both these events occurred in the earliest part of the period of the judges, as we may gather, in the case of the first, from a comparison of chap. xviii. 1 with chap. i. 34, and in that of the second from a comparison of chap. xx. 28 with Josh. xxii. 13 and xxiv. 33; and they are merely placed at the end of the book in the form of *appendices*, because they could not well be introduced into the six complete historical *tableaux*; although, so far as the facts themselves are concerned, they are intimately connected with the contents and aim of the book of Judges, inasmuch as they depict the religious and moral circumstances of the times in the most striking manner in two pictures drawn from life. The relation in which the three parts stand to one another, therefore, is this: the introduction

depicts the basis on which the deeds of the judges were founded, and the appendices furnish confirmatory evidence of the spirit of the age as manifested in those deeds. The whole book, however, is pervaded and ruled by the idea distinctly expressed in the introduction (chap. ii. 1-3, 11-22), that the Lord left those Canaanites who had not been exterminated by Joshua still in the land, to prove to Israel through them whether it would obey His commandments, and that He chastised and punished His people through them for their disobedience and idolatry; but that as soon as they recognised His chastening hand in the punishment, and returned to Him with penitence and implored His help, He had compassion upon them again in His gracious love, and helped them to victory over their foes, so that, notwithstanding the repeated acts of faithlessness on the part of His people, the Lord remained ever faithful in His deeds, and stedfastly maintained His covenant.

We must not look to the book of Judges, therefore, for a complete history of the period of the judges, or one which throws light upon the development of the Israelites on every side. The character of the book, as shown in its contents and the arrangement of the materials, corresponds entirely to the character of the times over which it extends. The time of the judges did not form a new stage in the development of the nation of God. It was not till the time of Samuel and David, when this period was ended, that a new stage began. It was rather a transition period, the time of free, unfettered development, in which the nation was to take root in the land presented to it by God as its inheritance, to familiarize itself with the theocratic constitution given to it by the Mosaic law, and by means of the peculiar powers and gifts conferred upon it by God to acquire for itself that independence and firm footing in Canaan, within the limits of the laws, ordinances, and rights of the covenant, which Jehovah had promised, and the way to which He had prepared through the revelations He had made to them. This task could be accomplished without any ruler directly appointed by the Lord. The first thing which the tribes had to do was to root out such Canaanites as remained in the land, that they might not only establish themselves in the unrestricted and undisputed possession and enjoyment of the land and its productions, but also avert the danger which threatened them on the part of these tribes of being led away to idolatry and immorality. The Lord had promised them His help in this conflict, if they would only walk in His commandments. The maintenance of civil order and the administration of justice

were in the hands of the heads of tribes, families, and households; and for the relation in which the congregation stood to the Lord its God, it possessed the necessary organs and media in the hereditary priesthood of the tribe of Levi, whose head could inquire the will of God in all cases of difficulty through the right of the Urim, and make it known to the nation. Now as long as the generation, which had seen the wonderful works of the Lord in the time of Joshua, was still living, so long did the nation continue faithful to the covenant of its God, and the tribes maintain a successful conflict with the still remaining Canaanites (chap. i. 1-20, 22-25). But the very next generation, to which those mighty acts of the Lord were unknown, began to forget its God, to grow weary and lax in its conflicts with the Canaanites, to make peace with them, and to mix up the worship of Jehovah, the jealous and holy God, with the worship of Baal and Astarte, the Canaanitish deities of nature, and even to substitute the latter in its place. With the loss of love and fidelity to the Lord, the bond of unity which formed the tribes into *one* congregation of Jehovah was also broken. The different tribes began to follow their own separate interests (*vid.* chap. v. 15-17, 23, viii. 5-8), and eventually even to oppose and make war upon one another; whilst Ephraim was bent upon securing to itself the headship of all the tribes, though without making any vigorous efforts to carry on the war with the oppressors of Israel (*vid.* chap. viii. 1 sqq., xii. 1-6). Consequently Israel suffered more and more from the oppression of heathen nations, to which God gave it up as a chastisement for its idolatry; and it would have become altogether a prey to its foes, had not the faithful covenant God taken compassion upon it in its distress as often as it cried to Him, and sent deliverers (מַשְׁתַּדֵּי, chap. iii. 9, 15; cf. Neh. ix. 27) in those judges, after whom both the age in question and the book before us are called. There are twelve of these judges mentioned, or rather thirteen, as Deborah the prophetess also judged Israel (chap. iv. 4); but there are only eight (Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson), who are described as performing acts by which Israel obtained deliverance from its oppressors. Of the other five (Tolah, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon) we are merely told that they judged Israel so many years. The reason for this we are not to seek in the fact that the report of the heroic deeds of these judges had not been handed down to the time when our book was written. It is to be found simply in the fact that these judges waged no wars and smote no foes.

The judges (*shophetim*) were men who procured justice or right for the people of Israel, not only by delivering them out of the power of their foes, but also by administering the laws and rights of the Lord (chap. ii. 16-19). *Judging* in this sense was different from the administration of civil jurisprudence, and included the idea of government such as would be expected from a king. Thus in 1 Sam. viii. 5, 6, the people are said to have asked Samuel to give them a king "to judge us," to procure us right, *i.e.* to govern us; and in 2 Kings xv. 5 Jotham is said to have *judged*, *i.e.* governed the nation during the illness of his father. The name given to these men (*shophetim*, judges) was evidently founded upon Deut. xvii. 9 and xix. 17, where it is assumed that in after-times there would be a *shophet*, who would stand by the side of the high priest as the supreme judge or leader of the state in Israel. The judges themselves corresponded to the *δικασταί* of the Tyrians (*Josephus*, c. Ap. i. 21) and the *Suffetes* of the Carthaginians (*qui summus Pœnis est magistratus*, *Liv. Hist.* xxvii. 37, and xxx. 7), with this difference, however, that as a rule the judges of Israel were called directly by the Lord, and endowed with miraculous power for the conquest of the enemies of Israel; and if, after delivering the people from their oppressors, they continued to the time of their death to preside over the public affairs of the whole nation, or merely of several of its tribes, yet they did not follow one another in a continuous line and unbroken succession, because the ordinary administration of justice and government of the commonwealth still remained in the hands of the heads of the tribes and the elders of the people, whilst occasionally there were also prophets and high priests, such as Deborah, Eli, and Samuel (chap. iv. 4; 1 Sam. iv. 18, vii. 15), in whom the government was vested. Thus "Othniel delivered the children of Israel," and "judged Israel," by going out to war, smiting Chushan-rishathaim, the Aramæan king, and giving the land rest for forty years (chap. iii. 9-11); and the same with Ehud and several others. On the other hand, Shamgar (chap. iii. 31) and Samson (chap. xiii.-xvi.) are apparently called judges of Israel, simply as opponents and conquerors of the Philistines, without their having taken any part in the administration of justice. Others, again, neither engaged in war nor gained victories. No warlike deeds are recorded of Tola; and yet it is stated in chap. x. 1, that "he rose up after Abimelech to deliver Israel (לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל), and judged Israel twenty-three years;" whilst of his successor Jair nothing more is said, than that "he judged Israel twenty-two

years." Both of these had delivered and judged Israel, not by victories gained over enemies, but by placing themselves at the head of the tribes over whom Gideon had been judge, at the termination of the ephemeral reign of Abimelech, and by preventing the recurrence of hostile oppression, through the influence they exerted, as well as by what they did for the establishment of the nation in its fidelity to the Lord. This also applies to Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, who followed Jephthah in direct succession (chap. xii. 8-15). Of these five judges also, it is not stated that Jehovah raised them up or called them. In all probability they merely undertook the government at the wish of the tribes whose judges they were; whilst at the same time it is to be observed, that such cases as these did not occur until the desire for a king had begun to manifest itself throughout the nation (chap. viii. 22, 23).

But if all the judges did not fight against outward enemies of Israel, it might appear strange that the book of Judges should close with the death of Samson, without mentioning Eli and Samuel, as both of them judged Israel, the one forty years, the other for the whole of his life (1 Sam. iv. 18, vii. 15). But Eli was really high priest, and what he did as judge was merely the natural result of his office of high priest; and Samuel was called to be the prophet of the Lord, and as such he delivered Israel from the oppression of the Philistines, not with the sword and by the might of his arm, like the judges before him, but by the power of the word, with which he converted Israel to the Lord, and by the might of his prayer, with which he sought and obtained the victory from the Lord (1 Sam. vii. 3-10); so that his judicial activity not only sprang out of his prophetic office, but was continually sustained thereby. The line of actual judges terminated with Samson; and with his death the office of judge was carried to the grave. Samson was followed immediately by Samuel, whose prophetic labours formed the link between the period of the judges and the introduction of royalty into Israel. The forty years of oppression on the part of the Philistines, from which Samson began to deliver Israel (chap. xiii. 1, 5), were brought to a close by the victory which the Israelites gained through Samuel's prayer (1 Sam. vii.), as will be readily seen when we have determined the chronology of the period of the judges, in the introductory remarks to the exposition of the body of the book. This victory was not gained by the Israelites till twenty years after Eli's death (comp. 1 Sam. vii. 2 with vi. 1 and iv. 18). Consequently of the forty years during which Eli judged Israel as

high priest, only the last twenty fell within the time of the Philistine oppression, the first twenty before it. But both Samuel and Samson were born during the pontificate of Eli; for when Samson's birth was foretold, the Philistines were already ruling over Israel (Judg. xiii. 5). The deeds of Samson fell for the most part within the last twenty years of the Philistine supremacy, *i.e.* not only in the interval between the capture of the ark and death of Eli and the victory which the Israelites achieved through Samuel over these foes, which victory, however, Samson did not live to see, but also in the time when Samuel had been accredited as a prophet of Jehovah, and Jehovah had manifested himself repeatedly to him by word at Shiloh (1 Sam. iii. 20, 21). Consequently Samuel completed the deliverance of Israel out of the power of the Philistines, which Samson had commenced.

The book of Judges, therefore, embraces the whole of the judicial epoch, and gives a faithful picture of the political development of the Israelitish theocracy during that time. The author writes throughout from a prophet's point of view. He applies the standard of the law to the spirit of the age by which the nation was influenced as a whole, and pronounces a stern and severe sentence upon all deviations from the path of rectitude set before it in the law. The unfaithfulness of Israel, which went a whoring again and again after Baal, and was punished for its apostasy from the Lord with oppression from foreign nations, and the faithfulness of the Lord, who sent help to the people whenever it returned to Him in its oppression, by raising up judges who conquered its enemies, are the two historical factors of those times, and the hinges upon which the history turns. In the case of all the judges, it is stated that they judged "Israel," or the "children of Israel," although it is very obvious, from the accounts of the different deliverances effected, that most of the judges only delivered and judged those tribes who happened to be oppressed and subjugated by their enemies at a particular time. The other tribes, who were spared by this or the other hostile invasion, did not come into consideration in reference to the special design of the historical account, namely, to describe the acts of the Lord in the government of His people, any more than the development of the religious and social life of individual members of the congregation in harmony with the law; inasmuch as the congregation, whether in whole or in part, was merely fulfilling its divinely appointed vocation, so long as it observed the law, and about this there was nothing special to be

related (see the description given of the book of Judges in *Hengstenberg*, Diss. on the Pentateuch, vol. ii. pp. 16 sqq.).

Lastly, if we take a survey of the gradual development of Israel during the times of the judges, we may distinguish three stages in the attitude of the Lord to His constantly rebelling people, and also in the form assumed by the external and internal circumstances of the nation: viz. (1) the period from the commencement of the apostasy of the nation till its deliverance from the rule of the Canaanitish king Jabin, or the time of the judges Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar, Deborah and Barak (chap. iii.-v.); (2) the time of the Midianitish oppression, with the deliverance effected by Gideon, and the government which followed, viz. of Abimelech and the judges Tola and Jair (chap. vi.-x. 5); (3) the time of the Ammonitish and Philistine supremacy over Israel, with the judges Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon on the one hand, and that of Samson on the other (chap. x. 6-xvi. 31). Three times, for example, the Lord threatens His people with oppression and subjugation by foreign nations, as a punishment for their disobedience and apostasy from Him: viz. (1) at Bochim (chap. ii. 1-4) through the angel of the Lord; (2) on the invasion of the Midianites (chap. vi. 7-10), through the medium of a prophet; and (3) at the commencement of the Ammonitish and Philistine oppression (chap. x. 10-14). The first time He threatens, "the Canaanites shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you" (chap. ii. 3); the second time, "I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you; I said unto you, I am Jehovah, your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites: but ye have not hearkened to my voice" (chap. vi. 9, 10); the third time, "Ye have forsaken me and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more; go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation" (chap. x. 13, 14). These threats were fulfilled upon the disobedient nation, not only in the fact that they fell deeper and deeper under the oppression of their foes, but by their also becoming disjointed and separated more and more internally. In the first stage, the oppressions from without lasted a tolerably long time: that of Chushan-rishathaim eight years; that of Eglon the Moabite, eighteen; and that of the Canaanitish king Jabin, as much as twenty years (chap. iii. 8, 14, iv. 3). But, on the other hand, after the first, the Israelites had forty years of peace; after the second, eighty; and after the third, again forty years (chap. iii. 11, 30, v.

31). Under Othniel and Ehud all Israel appears to have risen against its oppressors; but under Barak, Reuben and Gilead, Dan and Asher took no part in the conflict of the other tribes (chap. v. 15-17). In the second stage, the Midianitish oppression lasted, it is true, only seven years (chap. vi. 1), and was followed by forty years of rest under Gideon (chap. viii. 28); whilst the three years' government of Abimelech was followed by forty-five years of peace under Tola and Jair (chap. x. 2, 3); but even under Gideon the jealousy of Ephraim was raised to such a pitch against the tribes who had joined in smiting the foe, that it almost led to a civil war (chap. viii. 1-3), and the inhabitants of Succoth and Penuel refused all assistance to the victorious army, and that in so insolent a manner that they were severely punished by Gideon in consequence (chap. viii. 4-9, 14-17); whilst in the election of Abimelech as king of Shechem, the internal decay of the congregation of Israel was brought still more clearly to light (chap. ix.). Lastly, in the third stage, no doubt, Israel was delivered by Jephthah from the eighteen years' bondage on the part of the Ammonites (chap. xi. 8 sqq.), and the tribes to the east of the Jordan, as well as the northern tribes of the land on this side, enjoyed rest under the judges Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon for thirty-one years (chap. xii. 7, 9, 11, 14); but the Philistine oppression lasted till after Samson's death (chap. xiii. 5, xv. 20), and the internal decay increased so much under this hostile pressure, that whilst the Ephraimites, on the one hand, commenced a war against Jephthah, and sustained a terrible defeat at the hands of the tribes on the east of the Jordan (chap. xii. 1-6), on the other hand, the tribes who were enslaved by the Philistines had so little appreciation of the deliverance which God had sent them through Samson, that the men of Judah endeavoured to give up their deliverer to the Philistines (chap. xv. 9-14). Nevertheless the Lord not only helped the nation again, both in its distress and out of its distress, but came nearer and nearer to it with His aid, that it might learn that its help was to be found in God alone. The first deliverers and judges He stirred up by His Spirit, which came upon Othniel and Ehud, and filled them with courage and strength for the conquest of their foes. Barak was summoned to the war by the prophetess Deborah, and inspired by her with the courage to undertake it. Gideon was called to be the deliverer of Israel out of the severe oppression of the Midianites by the appearance of the angel of the Lord, and the victory over the innumerable army of the foe was given by the

Lord, not to the whole of the army which Gideon summoned to the battle, but only to a small company of 300 men, that Israel might not "vaunt themselves against the Lord," and magnify their own power. Lastly, Jephthah and Samson were raised up as deliverers out of the power of the Ammonites and Philistines; and whilst Jephthah was called by the elders of Gilead to be the leader in the war with the Midianites, and sought through a vow to ensure the assistance of God in gaining a victory over them, Samson was set apart from his mother's womb, through the appearance of the angel of the Lord, as the Nazarite who was to begin to deliver Israel out of the power of the Philistines. At the same time there was given to the nation in the person of Samuel, the son for whom the pious Hannah prayed to the Lord, a Nazarite and prophet, who was not only to complete the deliverance from the power of the Philistines which Samson had begun, but to ensure the full conversion of Israel to the Lord its God.

With regard to the *origin* of the book of Judges, it is evident from the repeated remark, "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (chap. xvii. 6, xxi. 25; cf. chap. xviii. 1, xix. 1), that it was composed at a time when Israel was already rejoicing in the benefits connected with the kingdom. It is true this remark is only to be found in the appendices, and would have no force so far as the date of composition is concerned, if the view held by different critics were well-founded, viz. that these appendices were added by a later hand. But the arguments adduced against the unity of authorship in all three parts, the introduction, the body of the work, and the appendices, will not bear examination. Without the introduction (chap. i. 1-iii. 6) the historical narrative contained in the book would want a foundation, which is absolutely necessary to make it intelligible; and the two appendices supply two supplements of the greatest importance in relation to the development of the tribes of Israel in the time of the judges, and most intimately connected with the design and plan of the rest of the book. It is true that in chap. i., as well as in the two appendices, the prophetic view of the history which prevails in the rest of the book, from chap. ii. 11 to chap. xvi. 31, is not distinctly apparent; but this difference may be fully explained from the contents of the two portions, which neither furnish the occasion nor supply the materials for any such view,—like the account of the royal supremacy of Abimelech in chap. ix., in which the so-called "theocratical pragmatism" is also wanting. But, on

the other hand, all these portions are just as rich in allusions to the Mosaic law and the legal worship as the other parts of the book, so that both in their contents and their form they would be unintelligible apart from the supremacy of the law in Israel. The discrepancies which some fancy they have discovered between chap. i. 8 and chap. i. 21, and also between chap. i. 19 and chap. iii. 3, vanish completely on a correct interpretation of the passages themselves. And no such differences can be pointed out in language or style as would overthrow the unity of authorship, or even render it questionable. Even *Stähelin* observes (*spez. Einl.* p. 77): "I cannot find in chap. xvii.-xxi. the (special) author of chap. i.-ii. 5; and the arguments adduced by *Bertheau* in favour of this, from modes of expression to be found in the two sections, appear to me to be anything but conclusive, simply because the very same modes of expression occur elsewhere: וְאֵל לְשֹׁבָה in Ex. ii. 21; חֲתָן in Num. x. 29; נָתַן בְּיָד, Josh. x. 30, xi. 8, Judg. vi. 1, xi. 21; נָתַן לְאִשָּׁה, Gen. xxix. 28, xxx. 4, 9, xxxiv. 8, etc.; הָפַה לְפִי חֶרֶב, Num. xxi. 24, Deut. xiii. 16, Josh. viii. 24, x. 28, 30, 32, etc. Undoubtedly וְאֵל only occurs in Judg. i. 1 and the appendix, and never earlier; but there is a similar expression in Num. xxvii. 21 and Josh. ix. 14, and the first passage shows how the mode of expression could be so abbreviated. I find no preterites with י, used in the place of the future with י in Judg. i.; for it is evident from the construction that the preterite must be used in vers. 8, 16, 25, etc.; and thus the only thing left that could strike us at all is the idiom שָׁלַח בָּאֵשׁ, which is common to both sections, but which is too isolated, and occurs again moreover in 2 Kings viii. 12 and Ps. lxxiv. 7." But even the "peculiar phrases belonging to a later age," which *Stähelin* and *Bertheau* discover in chap. xvii.-xxi. do not furnish any tenable proof of this assertion. The phrase "from Dan to Beersheba," in chap. xx. 1, was formed after the settlement of the Danites in Laish-Dan, which took place at the commencement of the time of the judges. נָשַׂא נָשִׁים, in chap. xxi. 23, is also to be found in Ruth i. 4; and the others either occur again in the books of Samuel, or have been wrongly interpreted.

We have a firm *datum* for determining more minutely the time when the book of Judges was written, in the statement in chap. i. 21, that the Jebusites in Jerusalem had not been rooted out by the Israelites, but dwelt there with the children of Benjamin "unto this day." The Jebusites remained in possession of Jerusalem, or of the citadel Zion, or the upper town of Jerusalem, until the time

when David went against Jerusalem after the twelve tribes had acknowledged him as king, took the fortress of Zion, and made it the capital of his kingdom under the name of the city of David (2 Sam. v. 6-9; 1 Chron. xi. 4-9). Consequently the book was written before this event, either during the first seven years of the reign of David at Hebron, or during the reign of Saul, under whom the Israelites already enjoyed the benefits of a monarchical government, since Saul not only fought with bravery against all the enemies of Israel, and "delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them" (1 Sam. xiv. 47, 48), but exerted himself to restore the authority of the law of God in his kingdom, as is evident from the fact that he banished the wizards and necromancers out of the land (1 Sam. xxviii. 9). The talmudical statement therefore in *Bava-bathra* (f. 14*b* and 15*a*), to the effect that Samuel was the author of the book, may be so far correct, that if it was not written by Samuel himself towards the close of his life, it was written at his instigation by a younger prophet of his school. More than this it is impossible to decide. So much, however, is at all events certain, that the book does not contain traces of a later age either in its contents or its language, and that chap. xviii. 30 does not refer to the time of the captivity (see the commentary on this passage).

With regard to the *sources* of which the author made use, unless we are prepared to accept untenable hypotheses as having all the validity of historical facts, it is impossible to establish anything more than that he drew his materials not only from oral tradition, but also from written documents. This is obvious from the exactness of the historical and chronological accounts, and still more so from the abundance of characteristic and original traits and expressions that meet the reader in the historical pictures, some of which are very elaborate. The historical fidelity, exactness, and vividness of description apparent in every part of the book are only to be explained in a work which embraces a period of 350 years, on the supposition that the author made use of trustworthy records, or the testimony of persons who were living when the events occurred. This stands out so clearly in every part of the book, that it is admitted even by critics who are compelled by their own dogmatical assumptions to deny the actual truth or reality of the miraculous parts of the history. With regard to the nature of these sources, however, we can only conjecture that chap. i. and xvii.-xxi. were founded upon written accounts, with which the author of the book of Joshua was also acquainted; and that the accounts of Deborah

and Barak, of Gideon, and of the life of Samson, were taken from different writings, inasmuch as these sections are distinguished from one another by many peculiarities. (Further remarks on this subject will be found in the exposition itself.)

EXPOSITION.

I.—ATTITUDE OF ISRAEL TOWARDS THE CANAANITES, AND TOWARDS JEHOVAH ITS GOD.

CHAP. I.—III. 6.

HOSTILITIES BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE CANAANITES AFTER JOSHUA'S DEATH.—CHAP. I. 1-II. 5.

AFTER the death of Joshua the tribes of Israel resolved to continue the war with the Canaanites, that they might exterminate them altogether from the land that had been given them for an inheritance. In accordance with the divine command, Judah commenced the strife in association with Simeon, smote the king of Bezek, conquered Jerusalem, Hebron and Debir upon the mountains, Zephath in the south land, and three of the chief cities of the Philistines, and took possession of the mountains; but was unable to exterminate the inhabitants of the plain, just as the Benjaminites were unable to drive the Jebusites out of Jerusalem (vers. 1-21). The tribe of Joseph also conquered the city of Bethel (vers. 22-26); but from the remaining towns of the land neither the Manassites, nor the Ephraimites, nor the tribes of Zebulun, Asher, and Naphthali expelled the Canaanites: all that they did was to make them tributary (vers. 27-33). The Danites were actually forced back by the Amorites out of the plain into the mountains, because the latter maintained their hold of the towns of the plain, although the house of Joseph conquered them and made them tributary (vers. 34-36). The angel of the Lord therefore appeared at Bochim, and declared to the Israelites, that because they had not obeyed the command of the Lord, to make no covenant with the Canaanites, the Lord would no more drive out these nations, but would cause them and their gods to become a snare to them (chap. ii. 1-5).

From this divine revelation it is evident, on the one hand, that the failure to exterminate the Canaanites had its roots in the negligence of the tribes of Israel; and on the other hand, that the accounts of the wars of the different tribes, and the enumeration of the towns in the different possessions out of which the Canaanites were not expelled, were designed to show clearly the attitude of the Israelites to the Canaanites in the age immediately following the death of Joshua, or to depict the historical basis on which the development of Israel rested in the era of the judges.

Vers. 1-7. With the words "*Now, after the death of Joshua, it came to pass,*" the book of Judges takes up the thread of the history where the book of Joshua had dropped it, to relate the further development of the covenant nation. A short time before his death, Joshua had gathered the elders and heads of the people around him, and set before them the entire destruction of the Canaanites through the omnipotent help of the Lord, if they would only adhere with fidelity to the Lord; whilst, at the same time, he also pointed out to them the dangers of apostasy from the Lord (Josh. xxiii.). Remembering this admonition and warning, the Israelites inquired, after Joshua's death, who should begin the war against the Canaanites who still remained to be destroyed; and the Lord answered, "*Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand*" (vers. 1, 2). שָׂאֵל בַּיהוָה, to ask with Jehovah for the purpose of obtaining a declaration of the divine will, is substantially the same as שָׂאֵל בְּמִשְׁפַּח הָאוּרִים (Num. xxvii. 21), to inquire the will of the Lord through the Urim and Thummim of the high priest. From this time forward inquiring of the Lord occurs with greater frequency (*vid.* chap. xx. 23, 27; 1 Sam. x. 22, xxii. 10, xxiii. 2, etc.), as well as the synonymous expression "ask of *Elohim*" in chap. xviii. 5, xx. 18; 1 Sam. xiv. 37, xxii. 13; 1 Chron. xiv. 10; whereas Moses and Joshua received direct revelations from God. The phrase יַעֲלֶה אֶל-הַכְּנָעֲנִי, "*go up to the Canaanites,*" is defined more precisely by the following words, "*to fight against them;*" so that עָלָה is used here also to denote the campaign against a nation (see at Josh. viii. 1), without there being any necessity, however, for us to take אֵל in the sense of עַל. עָלָה בְּתַחֲלָה signifies "*to go up in the beginning,*" i.e. to open or commence the war; not to hold the commandership in the war, as the *Sept.*, *Vulgate*, and others render it (see chap. x. 18, where יְהִי לְהָלָחֵם is expressly distinguished from being the chief or leader). Moreover, מִי does not mean who? i.e. what person, but, as the answer clearly shows, what tribe? Now a

tribe could open the war, and take the lead at the head of the other tribes, but could not be the commander-in-chief. In the present instance, however, Judah did not even enter upon the war at the head of all the tribes, but simply joined with the tribe of Simeon to make a common attack upon the Canaanites in their inheritance. The promise in ver. 2*b* is the same as that in Josh. vi. 2, viii. 1, etc. "*The land*" is not merely the land allotted to the tribe of Judah, or Judah's inheritance, as *Bertheau* supposes, for Judah conquered Jerusalem (ver. 8), which had been allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 28), but the land of Canaan generally, so far as it was still in the possession of the Canaanites and was to be conquered by Judah. The reason why Judah was to commence the hostilities is not to be sought for in the fact that Judah was the most numerous of all the tribes (*Rosenmüller*), but rather in the fact that Judah had already been appointed by the blessing of Jacob (Gen. xlix. 8 sqq.) to be the champion of his brethren.—Ver. 3. Judah invited Simeon his brother, i.e. their brother tribe, to take part in the contest. This epithet is applied to Simeon, not because Simeon and Judah, the sons of Jacob, were the children of the same mother, Leah (Gen. xxix. 33, 35), but because Simeon's inheritance was within the territory of Judah (Josh. xix. 1 sqq.), so that Simeon was more closely connected with Judah than any of the other tribes. "*Come up with me into my lot* (into the inheritance that has fallen to me by lot), *that we may fight against the Canaanites, and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him,*" i.e. joined with Judah in making war upon the Canaanites. This request shows that Judah's principal intention was to make war upon and exterminate the Canaanites who remained in his own and Simeon's inheritance. The different expressions employed, *come up* and *go*, are to be explained from the simple fact that the whole of Simeon's territory was in the *shephelah* and *Negeb*, whereas Judah had received the heart of his possessions upon the mountains.

Ver. 4. "*And Judah went up,*" sc. against the Canaanites, to make war upon them. The completion of the sentence is supplied by the context, more especially by ver. 2. So far as the sense is concerned, *Rosenmüller* has given the correct explanation of *וַיֵּלֶךְ*, "Judah entered upon the expedition along with Simeon." "*And they smote the Canaanites and the Perizzites in Bezek, 10,000 men.*" The result of the war is summed up briefly in these words; and then in vers. 5-7 the capture and punishment of the hostile king *Adoni-bezek* is specially mentioned as being the most important

event in the war. The foe is described as consisting of Canaanites and Perizzites, two tribes which have been already named in Gen. xiii. 7 and xxxiv. 30 as representing the entire population of Canaan, "*the Canaanites*" comprising principally those in the lowlands by the Jordan and the Mediterranean (*vid.* Num. xiii. 29; Josh. xi. 3), and "*the Perizzites*" the tribes who dwelt in the mountains (Josh. xvii. 15). On the *Perizzites*, see Gen. xiii. 7. The place mentioned, *Bezek*, is only mentioned once more, namely in 1 Sam. xi. 8, where it is described as being situated between Gibeah of Saul (see at Josh. xviii. 28) and Jabesh in Gilead. According to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Bezek*), there were at that time two places very near together both named *Bezek*, seventecn Roman miles from Neapolis on the road to *Scythopolis*, i.e. about seven hours to the north of Nabulus on the road to Beisan. This description is perfectly reconcilable with 1 Sam. xi. 8. On the other hand, *Clericus* (*ad h. l.*), *Rosenmüller*, and *v. Raumer* suppose the *Bezek* mentioned here to have been situated in the territory of Judah; though this cannot be proved, since it is merely based upon an inference drawn from ver. 3, viz. that Judah and Simeon simply attacked the Canaanites in their own allotted territories,—an assumption which is very uncertain. There is no necessity, however, to adopt the opposite and erroneous opinion of *Bertheau*, that the tribes of Judah and Simeon commenced their expedition to the south from the gathering-place of the united tribes at Shechem, and fought the battle with the Canaanitish forces in that region upon this expedition; since Shechem is not described in Josh. xxiv. as the gathering-place of the united tribes, i.e. of the whole of the military force of Israel, and the battle fought with Adoni-bezek did not take place at the time when the tribes prepared to leave Shiloh and march to their own possessions after the casting of the lots was over. The simplest explanation is, that when the tribes of Judah and Simeon prepared to make war upon the Canaanites in the possessions allotted to them, they were threatened or attacked by the forces of the Canaanites collected together by Adoni-bezek, so that they had first of all to turn their arms against this king before they could attack the Canaanites in their own tribe-land. As the precise circumstances connected with the occasion and course of this war have not been recorded, there is nothing to hinder the supposition that Adoni-bezek may have marched from the north against the possessions of Benjamin and Judah, possibly with the intention of joining the Canaanites in Jebus, and the Anakim in Hebron and upon the

mountains in the south, and then making a combined attack upon the Israelites. This might induce or even compel Judah and Simeon to attack this enemy first of all, and even to pursue him till they overtook him at his capital Bezek, and smote him with all his army. *Adoni-bezek*, i.e. lord of Bezek, is the official title of this king, whose proper name is unknown.

In the principal engagement, in which 10,000 Canaanites fell, Adoni-bezek escaped; but he was overtaken in his flight (vers. 6, 7), and so mutilated, by the cutting off of his thumbs and great toes, that he could neither carry arms nor flee. With this cruel treatment, which the Athenians are said to have practised upon the captured *Ægynetes* (*Ælian*, var. *hist.* ii. 9), the Israelites simply executed the just judgment of retribution, as Adoni-bezek was compelled to acknowledge, for the cruelties which he had inflicted upon captives taken by himself. "*Seventy kings*," he says in ver. 7, "*with the thumbs of their hands and feet cut off, were gathering under my table. As I have done, so God hath requited me.*" מִלֶּחְמִי . . . בְּהִנּוּתָם, lit. "cut in the thumbs of their hands and feet" (see *Ewald*, *Lehrb.* § 284, c.). The object to מִלֶּחְמִי, "gathering up" (viz. crumbs), is easily supplied from the idea of the verb itself. Gathering up crumbs under the table, like the dogs in Matt. xv. 27, is a figurative representation of the most shameful treatment and humiliation. "Seventy" is a round number, and is certainly an exaggerated hyperbole here. For even if every town of importance in Canaan had its own king, the fact that, when Joshua conquered the land, he only smote thirty-one kings, is sufficient evidence that there can hardly have been seventy kings to be found in all Canaan. It appears strange, too, that the king of Bezek is not mentioned in connection with the conquest of Canaan under Joshua. Bezek was probably situated more on the side towards the valley of the Jordan, where the Israelites under Joshua did not go. Possibly, too, the culminating point of Adoni-bezek's power, when he conquered so many kings, was before the arrival of the Israelites in Canaan, and it may at that time have begun to decline; so that he did not venture to undertake anything against the combined forces of Israel under Joshua, and it was not till the Israelitish tribes separated to go to their own possessions, that he once more tried the fortunes of war and was defeated. The children of Judah took him with them to Jerusalem, where he died.

Vers. 8-15. After his defeat, Judah and Simeon went against Jerusalem, and conquered this city and smote it, i.e. its inhabitants,

with the edge of the sword, or without quarter (see Gen. xxxiv. 26), and set the city on fire. *וְהָאֵשׁ נִתְּנָה*, to set on fire, to give up to the flames, only occurs again in chap. xx. 48, 2 Kings viii. 12, and Ps. lxxiv. 7. Joshua had already slain the king of Jerusalem and his four allies after the battle at Gibeon (Josh. x. 3, 18-26), but had not conquered Jerusalem, his capital. This was not done till after Joshua's death, when it was taken by the tribes of Judah and Simeon. But even after this capture, and notwithstanding the fact that it had been set on fire, it did not come into the sole and permanent possession of the Israelites. After the conquerors had advanced still farther, to make war upon the Canaanites in the mountains, in the *Negeb*, and in the *shephelah* (vers. 9 sqq.), the Jebusites took it again and rebuilt it, so that in the following age it was regarded by the Israelites as a foreign city (chap. xix. 11, 12). The Benjaminites, to whom Jerusalem had fallen by lot, were no more able to drive out the Jebusites than the Judæans had been. Consequently they continued to live by the side of the Benjaminites (chap. i. 21) and the Judæans (Josh xv. 63), who settled, as time rolled on, in this the border city of their possessions; and in the upper town especially, upon the top of Mount Zion, they established themselves so firmly, that they could not be dislodged until David succeeded in wresting this fortress from them, and made the city of Zion the capital of his kingdom (2 Sam. v. 6 sqq.).¹—Vers. 9 sqq. After the conquest of Jerusalem, the children of Judah (together with the Simeonites, ver. 3) went down into their own possessions, to make war upon the Canaanites in the mountains, the *Negeb*, and the *shephelah* (see at Josh. xv. 48, xxi. 33), and to exterminate them. They first of all conquered Hebron and Debir upon the mountains (vers. 10-15), as has already been related in Josh. xv.

¹ In this way we may reconcile in a very simple manner the different accounts concerning Jerusalem in Josh. xv. 63, Judg. i. 8, 21, xix. 11 sqq., 1 Sam. xvii. 54, and 2 Sam. v. vi., without there being the slightest necessity to restrict the conquest mentioned in this verse to the city that was built round Mount Zion, as *Josephus* does, to the exclusion of the citadel upon Zion itself; or to follow *Bertheau*, and refer the account of the Jebusites dwelling by the children of Judah in Jerusalem (Josh. xv. 63) to a time subsequent to the conquest of the citadel of Zion by David,—an interpretation which is neither favoured by the circumstance that the Jebusite *Araunah* still held some property there in the time of David (2 Sam. xxiv. 21 sqq.), nor by the passage in 1 Kings ix. 20 sqq., according to which the descendants of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites who still remained in the land were made into tributary bondmen by Solomon, and set to work upon the buildings that he had in hand.

14-19 (see the commentary on this passage). The forms עֲלִיָּה and תְּחִלָּתָהּ (ver. 15), instead of עֲלִיּוֹת and תְּחִלָּתוֹת (Josh. xv. 19), are in the singular, and are construed with the plural form of the feminine גִּלּוֹת, because this is used in the sense of the singular, "a spring" (see *Ewald*, § 318, a.).

Ver. 16. The notice respecting the Kenites, that they went up out of the palm-city with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah in the south of Arad, and dwelt there with the Judæans, is introduced here into the account of the wars of the tribe of Judah, because this migration of the Kenites belonged to the time between the conquest of Debir (vers. 12 sqq.) and Zephath (ver. 17); and the notice itself was of importance, as forming the intermediate link between Num. x. 29 sqq., and the later allusions to the Kenites in Judg. iv. 11, v. 24, 1 Sam. xv. 6, xxvii. 10, xxx. 29. "*The children of the Kenite*," i.e. the descendants of Hobab, the brother-in-law of Moses (compare chap. iv. 11, where the name is given, but קִנִּי occurs instead of קִנִּי, with Num. x. 29), were probably a branch of the Kenites mentioned in Gen. xv. 19 along with the other tribes of Canaan, which had separated from the other members of its own tribe before the time of Moses and removed to the land of Midian, where Moses met with a hospitable reception from their chief Reguel on his flight from Egypt. These Kenites had accompanied the Israelites to Canaan at the request of Moses (Num. x. 29 sqq.); and when the Israelites advanced into Canaan itself, they had probably remained as nomads in the neighbourhood of the Jordan near to Jericho, without taking any part in the wars of Joshua. But when the tribe of Judah had exterminated the Canaanites out of Hebron, Debir, and the neighbourhood, after the death of Joshua, they went into the desert of Judah with the Judæans as they moved farther towards the south; and going to the south-western edge of this desert, to the district on the south of Arad (Tell Arad, see at Num. xxi. 1), they settled there on the border of the steppes of the Negeb (Num. xxxiii. 40). "*The palm-city*" was a name given to the city of Jericho, according to chap. iii. 13, Deut. xxxiv. 3, 2 Chron. xxviii. 15. There is no ground whatever for thinking of some other town of this name in the desert of Arabia, near the palm-forest, φοινικῶν, of *Diod. Sic.* (iii. 42) and *Strabo* (p. 776), as *Clericus* and *Bertheau* suppose, even if it could be proved that there was any such town in the neighbourhood. וְהָיָה, "then he went" (the branch of the Kenites just referred to) and dwelt with the people" (of the children of Judah), that is to

say, with the people of Israel in the desert of Judah. The subject to קניז is קניז, the Kenite, as a tribe.

Vers. 17-21. *Remaining Conquests of the combined Tribes of Judah and Simeon.*—Ver. 17. *Zephath* was in the territory of Simeon. This is evident not only from the fact that Hormah (*Zephath*) had been allotted to the tribe of Simeon (compare Josh. xix. 4 with chap. xv. 30), but also from the words, "Judah went with Simeon his brother," which point back to ver. 3, and express the thought that Judah went with Simeon into his territory to drive out the Canaanites who were still to be found there. Going southwards from Debir, Judah and Simeon smote the Canaanites at Zephath on the southern boundary of Canaan, and executed the ban upon this town, from which it received the name of *Hormah*, i.e. banning. The town has been preserved in the ruins of *Sepâta*, on the south of Khalasa or Elusa (see at Josh. xii. 14). In the passage mentioned, the king of Hormah or Zephath is named among the kings who were slain by Joshua. It does not follow from this, however, that Joshua must necessarily have conquered his capital Zephath; the king of Jerusalem was also smitten by Joshua and slain, without Jerusalem itself being taken at that time. But even if Zephath were taken by the Israelites, as soon as the Israelitish army had withdrawn, the Canaanites there might have taken possession of the town again; so that, like many other Canaanitish towns, it had to be conquered again after Joshua's death (see the commentary on Num. xxi. 2, 3). There is not much probability in this conjecture, however, for the simple reason that the ban pronounced by Moses upon the country of the king of Arad (Num. xxi. 2) was carried out now for the first time by Judah and Simeon upon the town of Zephath, which formed a part of it. If Joshua had conquered it, he would certainly have executed the ban upon it. The name *Hormah*, which was already given to Zephath in Josh. xv. 30 and xix. 4, is no proof to the contrary, since it may be used proleptically there. In any case, the infliction of the ban upon this town can only be explained from the fact that Moses had pronounced the ban upon all the towns of the king of Arad.—Ver. 18. From the *Negeb* Judah turned into the *shephelah*, and took the three principal cities of the Philistines along the line of coast, viz. Gaza, Askalon, and Ekron, with their territory. The order in which the names of the captured cities occur is a proof that the conquest took place from the south. First of all Gaza, the southernmost of all the towns of the Philistines, the present *Guzzeh*; then

Askelon (*Askulân*), which is five hours to the north of Gaza; and lastly Ekron, the most northerly of the five towns of the Philistines, the present *Akîr* (see at Josh. xiii. 3). The other two, Ashdod and Gath, do not appear to have been conquered at that time. And even those that were conquered, the Judæans were unable to hold long. In the time of Samson they were all of them in the hands of the Philistines again (see chap. xiv. 19, xvi. 1 sqq.; 1 Sam. v. 10, etc.).—In ver. 19 we have a brief summary of the results of the contests for the possession of the land. “*Jehovah was with Judah;*” and with His help they took possession of the mountains. And they did nothing more; “*for the inhabitants of the plain they were unable to exterminate, because they had iron chariots.*” שָׁרִיָּה has two different meanings in the two clauses: first (שָׁרִיָּה), to seize upon a possession which has been vacated by the expulsion or destruction of its former inhabitants; and secondly (שָׁרִיָּה, with the accusative, of the inhabitants), to drive or exterminate them out of their possessions,—a meaning which is derived from the earlier signification of making it an emptied possession (see Ex. xxxiv. 24; Num. xxxii. 21, etc.). “*The mountain*” here includes the south-land (the *Negeb*), as the only distinction is between mountains and plain. “*The valley*” is the *shephelah* (ver. 9). לֹא שָׁרִיָּה, he was not (able) to drive out. The construction may be explained from the fact that לֹא is to be taken independently here as in Amos vi. 10, in the same sense in which יָצָא before the infinitive is used in later writings (2 Chron. v. 11; Esther iv. 2, viii. 8; Eccl. iii. 14: see *Ges.* § 132-3, anm. 1; *Ewald*, § 237, e.). On the iron chariots, i.e. the chariots tipped with iron, see at Josh. xvii. 16.—To this there is appended, in ver. 20, the statement that “*they gave Hebron unto Caleb,*” etc., which already occurred in Josh. xv. 13, 14, and was there explained; and also in ver. 21 the remark, that the Benjaminites did not drive out the Jebusites who dwelt in Jerusalem, which is so far in place here, that it shows, on the one hand, that the children of Judah did not bring Jerusalem into the undisputed possession of the Israelites through this conquest, and, on the other hand, that it was not their intention to diminish the inheritance of Benjamin by the conquest of Jerusalem, and they had not taken the city for themselves. For further remarks, see at ver. 8.

The hostile attacks of the other tribes upon the Canaanites who remained in the land are briefly summed up in vers. 22-36. Of these the taking of Bethel is more fully described in vers. 22-26.

Besides this, nothing more is given than the list of the towns in the territories of western Manasseh (vers. 27, 28), Ephraim (ver. 29), Zebulun (ver. 30), Asher (vers. 31, 32), Naphtali (ver. 33), and Dan (vers. 34, 35), out of which the Canaanites were not exterminated by these tribes. Issachar is omitted; hardly, however, because that tribe made no attempt to disturb the Canaanites, as *Bertheau* supposes, but rather because none of its towns remained in the hands of the Canaanites.

Vers. 22-26. Like Judah, so also ("they also," referring back to vers. 2, 3) did the house of Joseph (Ephraim and western Manasseh) renew the hostilities with the Canaanites who were left in their territory after the death of Joshua. The children of Joseph went up against Bethel, and Jehovah was with them, so that they were able to conquer the city. *Bethel* had indeed been assigned to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 22), but it was situated on the southern boundary of the tribe-land of Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 2, xviii. 13); so that the tribe of Joseph could not tolerate the Canaanites in this border town, if it would defend its own territory against them, and purge it entirely of them. This is a sufficient explanation of the fact that this one conquest is mentioned, and this only, without there being any necessity to seek for the reason, as *Bertheau* does, in the circumstance that the town of Bethel came into such significant prominence in the later history of Israel, and attained the same importance in many respects in relation to the northern tribes, as that which Jerusalem attained in relation to the southern. For the fact that nothing more is said about the other conquests of the children of Joseph, may be explained simply enough on the supposition that they did not succeed in rooting out the Canaanites from the other fortified towns in their possessions; and therefore there was nothing to record about any further conquests, as the result of their hostilities was merely this, that they did not drive the Canaanites out of the towns named in vers. 27, 29, but simply made them tributary. חִירִי, they had it explored, or spied out. חִיר is construed with ב here, because the spying laid hold, as it were, of its object. *Bethel*, formerly *Luz*, now *Beitin*: see at Gen. xxviii. 19 and Josh. vii. 2.—Ver. 24. And the watchmen (i.e. the spies sent out to explore Bethel) saw a man coming out of the town, and got him to show them the entrance into it, under a promise that they would show him favour, i.e. would spare the lives of himself and his family (see Josh. ii. 12, 13); whereupon they took the town and smote it without

quarter, according to the law in Deut. xx. 16, 17, letting none but the man and his family go. By "*the entrance into the city*" we are not to understand the gate of the town, but the way or mode by which they could get into the town, which was no doubt fortified. —Ver. 26. The man whom they had permitted to go free, went with his family into the land of the Hittites, and there built a town, to which he gave the name of his earlier abode, viz. *Luz*. The situation of this *Luz* is altogether unknown. Even the situation of the land of the Hittites cannot be more precisely determined; for we find Hittites at Hebron in the times of Abraham and Moses (Gen. xxiii.), and also upon the mountains of Palestine (Num. xiii. 29), and at a later period in the north-east of Canaan on the borders of Syria (1 Kings x. 29). That the Hittites were one of the most numerous and widespread of the tribes of the Canaanites, is evident from the fact that, in Josh. i. 4, the Canaanites generally are described as Hittites.

Vers. 27, 28. Manasseh did not root out the Canaanites from the towns which had been allotted to it in the territory of Asher and Issachar (Josh. xvii. 11), but simply made them tributary. *לֹא הִרְשָׁה אֶת-בֵּית־שֵׁאֵן וְנִי*, considered by itself, might be rendered: "*Manasseh did not take possession of Bethshean*," etc. But as we find, in the further enumeration, the inhabitants of the towns mentioned instead of the towns themselves, we must take *הִרְשָׁה* in the sense of rooting out, driving out of their possessions, which is the only rendering applicable in ver. 28; and thus, according to a very frequent metonymy, must understand by the towns the inhabitants of the towns. "*Manasseh did not exterminate Bethshean*," i.e. the inhabitants of Bethshean, etc. All the towns mentioned here have already been mentioned in Josh. xvii. 11, the only difference being, that they are not placed in exactly the same order, and that *Endor* is mentioned there after *Dor*; whereas here it has no doubt fallen out through a copyist's error, as the Manassites, according to Josh. xvii. 12, 13, did not exterminate the Canaanites from all the towns mentioned there. The change in the order in which the towns occur—Taanach being placed next to Bethshean, whereas in Joshua Bethshean is followed by Ibleam, which is placed last but one in the present list—may be explained on the supposition, that in Josh. xvii. 11, Endor, Taanach, and Megiddo are placed together, as forming a triple league, of which the author of our book has taken no notice. Nearly all these towns were in the plain of Jezreel, or in the immediate neighbourhood of the great com-

mercial roads which ran from the coast of the Mediterranean to Damascus and central Asia. The Canaanites no doubt brought all their strength to bear upon the defence of these roads; and in this their war-chariots, against which Israel could do nothing in the plain of Jezreel, were of the greatest service (see ver. 19; Josh. xvii. 16). For further particulars respecting the situation of the different towns, see at Josh. xvii. 11. *Dor* only was on the coast of the Mediterranean (see at Josh. xi. 2), and being a commercial emporium of the Phœnicians, would certainly be strongly fortified, and very difficult to conquer.—Ver. 28. As the Israelites grew strong, they made serfs of the Canaanites (see at Gen. xlix. 15). When this took place is not stated; but at all events, it was only done gradually in the course of the epoch of the judges, and not for the first time during the reign of Solomon, as *Bertheau* supposes on the ground of 1 Kings ix. 20–22 and iv. 12, without considering that even in the time of David the Israelites had already attained the highest power they ever possessed, and that there is nothing at variance with this in 1 Kings iv. 12 and ix. 20–22. For it by no means follows, from the appointment of a prefect by Solomon over the districts of Taanach, Megiddo, and Bethshean (1 Kings iv. 12), that these districts had only been conquered by Solomon a short time before, when we bear in mind that Solomon appointed twelve such prefects over all Israel, to remit in regular order the national payments that were required for the maintenance of the regal court. Nor does it follow, that because Solomon employed the descendants of the Canaanites who were left in the land as tributary labourers in the erection of his great buildings, therefore he was the first who succeeded in compelling those Canaanites who were not exterminated when the land was conquered by Joshua, to pay tribute to the different tribes of Israel.

Vers. 29–35. Ephraim did not root out the Canaanites in *Gezer* (ver. 29), as has already been stated in Josh. xvi. 10.—Ver. 30. Zebulun did not root out the Canaanites in *Kitron* and *Nahalol*. Neither of these places has been discovered (see at Josh. xix. 15).—Ver. 31. Asher did not root out those in *Acco*, etc. *Acco*: a seaport town to the north of Carmel, on the bay which is called by its name; it is called *Ake* by *Josephus*, *Diod. Sic.*, and *Pliny*, and was afterwards named *Ptolemais* from one of the Ptolemys (1 Macc. v. 15, 21, x. 1, etc.; Acts xxi. 7). The Arabs called it *Akka*, and this was corrupted by the crusaders into *Acker* or *Acre*. During the crusades it was a very flourishing maritime and commercial

town; but it subsequently fell into decay, and at the present time has a population of about 5000, composed of Mussulmans, Druses, and Christians (see *C. v. Raumer*, Pal. p. 119; *Rob. Bibl. Res.*; and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 725 sqq.). *Sidon*, now *Saida*: see at Josh. xi. 8. *Achlab* is only mentioned here, and is not known. *Achzib*, i.e. *Ecdippa*: see at Josh. xix. 29. *Helbah* is unknown. *Aphek* is the present *Afkah*: see Josh. xiii. 4, xix. 30. *Rehob* is unknown: see at Josh. xix. 28, 30. As seven out of the twenty-two towns of Asher (Josh. xix. 30) remained in the hands of the Canaanites, including such important places as Acco and Sidon, it is not stated in ver. 32, as in vers. 29, 30, that "the Canaanites dwelt among them," but that "*the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites*," to show that the Canaanites held the upper hand. And for this reason the expression "they became tributaries" (vers. 30, 35, etc.) is also omitted.—Ver. 33. Naphtali did not root out the inhabitants of *Beth-shemesh* and *Beth-anath*, two fortified towns, the situation of which is still unknown (see at Josh. xix. 38); so that this tribe also dwelt among the Canaanites, but did not make them tributary.—Vers. 34, 35. Still less were the Danites able to drive the Canaanites out of their inheritance. On the contrary, the Amorites forced Dan up into the mountains, and would not suffer them to come down into the plain. But the territory allotted to the Danites was almost all in the plain (see at Josh. xix. 40). If, therefore, they were forced out of that, they were almost entirely excluded from their inheritance. The Amorites emboldened themselves (see at Deut. i. 5) to dwell in *Har-cheres*, *Ajalon*, and *Shaalbim*. On the last two places see Josh. xix. 42, where *Ir-shemesh* is also mentioned. This combination, and still more the meaning of the names *Har-cheres*, i.e. sun-mountain, and *Ir-shemesh*, i.e. sun-town, make the conjecture a very probable one, that *Har-cheres* is only another name for *Ir-shemesh*, i.e. the present *Ain Shems* (see at Josh. xv. 10, and *Rob. Pal. iii. pp. 17, 18*). This pressure on the part of the Amorites induced a portion of the Danites to emigrate, and seek for an inheritance in the north of Palestine (see chap. xviii.). On the other hand, the Amorites were gradually made tributary by the powerful tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, who bounded Dan on the north. "*The hand of the house of Joseph lay heavy*," sc. upon the Amorites in the towns already named on the borders of Ephraim. For the expression itself, comp. 1 Sam. v. 6; Ps. xxxii. 4.

Ver. 36. In order to explain the supremacy of the Amorites in

the territory of Dan, a short notice is added concerning their extension in the south of Palestine. "*The territory of the Amorites was,*" i.e. extended (viz. at the time of the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites), "*from the ascent of Akrabbim, from the rock onwards and farther up.*" *Maaleh-Akrabbim* (*ascensus scorpiorum*) was the sharply projecting line of cliffs which intersected the Ghor below the Dead Sea, and formed the southern boundary of the promised land (see at Num. xxxiv. 4 and Josh. xv. 2, 3). מִן הַסֵּלֶעַ, from the rock, is no doubt given as a second point upon the boundary of the Amoritish territory, as the repetition of the מִן clearly shows, notwithstanding the omission of the copula וְ. הַסֵּלֶעַ, the rock, is supposed by the majority of commentators to refer to the city of *Petra*, the ruins of which are still to be seen in the *Wady Musa* (see *Burckhardt*, Syr. pp. 703 sqq.; *Rob. Pal.* ii. pp. 573 sqq., iii. 653), and which is distinctly mentioned in 2 Kings xiv. 7 under the name of הַסֵּלֶעַ, and in Isa. xvi. 1 is called simply סֵלֶעַ. *Petra* is to the south-east of the Scorpion heights. Consequently, with this rendering the following word וְעַלֶּיהָ (and upward) would have to be taken in the sense of *ulterius* (and beyond), and *Rosenmüller's* explanation would be the correct one: "The Amorites not only extended as far as the town of *Petra*, or inhabited it, but they even carried their dwellings beyond this towards the tops of those southern mountains." But a description of the territory of the Amorites in its southern extension into Arabia *Petræa* does not suit the context of the verse, the object of which is to explain how it was that the Amorites were in a condition to force back the Danites out of the plain into the mountains, to say nothing of the fact that it is questionable whether the Amorites ever really spread so far, for which we have neither scriptural testimony nor evidence of any other kind. On this ground even *Bertheau* has taken וְעַלֶּיהָ as denoting the direction upwards, i.e. towards the north, which unquestionably suits the usage of מִן הַסֵּלֶעַ as well as the context of the passage. But it is by no means in harmony with this to understand הַסֵּלֶעַ as referring to *Petra*; for in that case we should have two boundary points mentioned, the second of which was farther south than the first. Now a historian who had any acquaintance with the topography, would never have described the extent of the Amoritish territory from south to north in such a way as this, commencing with the Scorpion heights on the north, then passing to *Petra*, which was farther south, and stating that from this point the territory extended farther towards the north. If וְעַלֶּיהָ therefore refers to the exten-

sion of the territory of the Amorites in a northerly direction, the expression "from the rock" cannot be understood as relating to the city of Petra, but must denote some other locality well known to the Israelites by that name. Such a locality there undoubtedly was in the rock in the desert of Zin, which had become celebrated through the events that took place at the water of strife (Num. xx. 8, 10), and to which in all probability this expression refers. The rock in question was at the south-west corner of Canaan, on the southern edge of the *Rakhma* plateau, to which the mountains of the Amorites extended on the south-west (comp. Num. xiv. 25, 44, 45, with Deut. i. 44). And this would be very appropriately mentioned here as the south-western boundary of the Amorites, in connection with the Scorpion heights as their south-eastern boundary, for the purpose of giving the southern boundary of the Amorites in its full extent from east to west.

Chap. ii. 1-5. *The Angel of the Lord at Bochim.*—To the cursory survey of the attitude which the tribes of Israel assumed towards the Canaanites who still remained in their inheritances, there is appended an account of the appearance of the angel of the Lord, who announced to the people the punishment of God for their breach of the covenant, of which they had been guilty through their failure to exterminate the Canaanites. This theophany is most intimately connected with the facts grouped together in chap. i., since the design and significance of the historical survey given there are only to be learned from the reproof of the angel; and since both of them have the same aphoristic character, being restricted to the essential facts without entering minutely into any of the attendant details, very much is left in obscurity. This applies more particularly to the statement in ver. 1a, "*Then the angel of Jehovah came up from Gilgal to Bochim.*" The "angel of Jehovah" is not a prophet, or some other earthly messenger of Jehovah, either Phinehas or Joshua, as the *Targums*, the *Rabbins*, *Bertheau*, and others assume, but the angel of the Lord who is of one essence with God. In the simple historical narrative a prophet is never called *Maleach Jehovah*. The prophets are always called either *אִישׁ בְּנִיָּהּ* or *נָבִיא*, as in chap. vi. 8, or else "man of God," as in 1 Kings xii. 22, xiii. 1, etc.; and Hag. i. 13 and Mal. iii. 1 cannot be adduced as proofs to the contrary, because in both these passages the purely appellative meaning of the word *Maleach* is established beyond all question by the context itself. Moreover, no prophet ever identifies himself so entirely with God as the angel of Jehovah

does here. The prophets always distinguish between themselves and Jehovah, by introducing their words with the declaration "thus saith Jehovah," as the prophet mentioned in chap. vi. 8 is said to have done. On the other hand, it is affirmed that no angel mentioned in the historical books is ever said to have addressed the whole nation, or to have passed from one place to another. But even if it had been a prophet who was speaking, we could not possibly understand his speaking to the whole nation, or "to all the children of Israel," as signifying that he spoke directly to the 600,000 men of Israel, but simply as an address delivered to the whole nation in the persons of its heads or representatives. Thus Joshua spoke to "all the people" (Josh. xxiv. 2), though only the elders of Israel and its heads were assembled round him (Josh. xxiv. 1). And so an angel, or "the angel of the Lord," might also speak to the heads of the nation, when his message had reference to all the people. And there was nothing in the fact of his coming up from Gilgal to Bochim that was at all at variance with the nature of the angel. When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, it is stated in chap. vi. 11 that he came and sat under the terebinth at Ophra; and in the same way the appearance of the angel of the Lord at Bochim might just as naturally be described as coming up to Bochim. The only thing that strikes us as peculiar is his coming up "from Gilgal." This statement must be intimately connected with the mission of the angel, and therefore must contain something more than a simply literal notice concerning his travelling from one place to another. We are not to conclude, however, that the angel of the Lord came from Gilgal, because this town was the gathering-place of the congregation in Joshua's time. Apart altogether from the question discussed in pp. 92 sqq. as to the situation of Gilgal in the different passages of the book of Joshua, such a view as this is overthrown by the circumstance that after the erection of the tabernacle at Shiloh, and during the division of the land, it was not Gilgal but Shiloh which formed the gathering-place of the congregation when the casting of the lots was finished (Josh. xviii. 1, 10). We cannot agree with *H. Witsius*, therefore, who says in his *Miscell. ss.* (i. p. 170, ed. 1736) that "he came from that place, where he had remained for a long time to guard the camp, and where he was thought to be tarrying still;" but must rather assume that his coming up from Gilgal is closely connected with the appearance of the angel-prince, as described in Josh. v. 13, to announce to Joshua the fall of Jericho after the circumcision of

the people at Gilgal. Just as on that occasion, when Israel had just entered into the true covenant relation to the Lord by circumcision, and was preparing for the conquest of Canaan, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joshua as the prince of the army of Jehovah, to ensure him of the taking of Jericho; so here after the entrance of the tribes of Israel into their inheritances, when they were beginning to make peace with the remaining Canaanites, and instead of rooting them out were content to make them tributary, the angel of the Lord appeared to the people, to make known to all the children of Israel that by such intercourse with the Canaanites they had broken the covenant of the Lord, and to foretell the punishment which would follow this transgression of the covenant. By the fact, therefore, that he came up from Gilgal, it is distinctly shown that the same angel who gave the whole of Canaan into the hands of the Israelites when Jericho fell, had appeared to them again at Bochim, to make known to them the purposes of God in consequence of their disobedience to the commands of the Lord. How very far it was from being the author's intention to give simply a geographical notice, is also evident from the fact that he merely describes the place where this appearance occurred by the name which was given to it in consequence of the event, viz. *Bochim*, i.e. weepers. The situation of this place is altogether unknown. The rendering of the LXX., ἐπὶ τὸν Κλαυθμῶνα καὶ ἐπὶ Βαιθὴλ καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰσραὴλ, gives no clue whatever; for τὸν Κλαυθμῶνα merely arises from a confusion of כְּבִיִּים with כְּבִיִּים in 2 Sam. v. 23, which the LXX. have also rendered Κλαυθμών, and ἐπὶ τὸν Βαιθὴλ κ.τ.λ. is an arbitrary interpolation of the translators themselves, who supposed *Bochim* to be in the neighbourhood of Bethel, "in all probability merely because they thought of *Allon-bachuth*, the oak of weeping, at Bethel, which is mentioned in Gen. xxxv. 8" (*Bertheau*). With regard to the *piska* in the middle of the verse, see the remarks on Josh. iv. 1. In his address the angel of the Lord identifies himself with Jehovah (as in Josh. v. 14 compared with vi. 2), by describing himself as having made them to go up out of Egypt and brought them into the land which He swore unto their fathers. There is something very striking in the use of the imperfect אָעָלָה in the place of the perfect (cf. chap. vi. 8), as the substance of the address and the continuation of it in the historical tense וְאָבִיךָ and וְאִמֶּךָ require the preterite. The imperfect is only to be explained on the supposition that it is occasioned by the *imperf. consec.* which follows immediately afterwards and reacts through its proximity. "I will

*not break my covenant for ever," i.e. will keep what I promised when making the covenant, viz. that I would endow Israel with blessings and salvation, if they for their part would observe the covenant duties into which they had entered (see Ex. xix. 5 sqq.), and obey the commandments of the Lord. Among these was the commandment to enter into no alliance with the inhabitants of that land, viz. the Canaanites (see Ex. xxiii. 32, 33, xxxiv. 12, 13, 15, 16; Deut. vii. 2 sqq.; Josh. xxiii. 12). "Destroy their altars:" taken verbatim from Ex. xxxiv. 13, Deut. vii. 5. The words "and ye have not hearkened to my voice" recall to mind Ex. xix. 5. "What have ye done" (מה עשיתם, literally "what is this that ye have done") sc. in sparing the Canaanites and tolerating their altars?—Ver. 3. "And I also have said to you:" these words point to the threat already expressed in Num. xxxiii. 55, Josh. xxiii. 13, in the event of their not fulfilling the command of God, which threat the Lord would now fulfil. From the passages mentioned, we may also explain the expression וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְצִדִּים, they shall be in your sides, i.e. thorns in your sides. וְהָיוּ לָכֶם is an abbreviated expression for וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְצִדִּים in Num. xxxiii. 55, so that there is no necessity for the conjecture that it stands for וְהָיוּ לָכֶם. The last clause of ver. 3 is formed after Ex. xxiii. 33.—Vers. 4, 5. The people broke out into loud weeping on account of this reproof. And since the weeping, from which the place received the name of *Bochim*, was a sign of their grief on account of their sin, this grief led on to such repentance that "*they sacrificed there unto the Lord*," no doubt presenting sin-offerings and burnt-offerings, that they might obtain mercy and the forgiveness of their sins. It does not follow from this sacrifice, however, that the tabernacle or the ark of the covenant was to be found at *Bochim*. In any place where the Lord appeared to His people, sacrifices might be offered to Him (see chap. vi. 20, 26, 28, xiii. 16 sqq.; 2 Sam. xxiv. 25, and the commentary on Deut. xii. 5). On the other hand, it does follow from the sacrifice at *Bochim*, where there was no sanctuary of Jehovah, that the person who appeared to the people was not a prophet, nor even an ordinary angel, but *the angel of the Lord*, who is essentially one with Jehovah.*

CONDUCT OF ISRAEL TOWARDS THE LORD, AND TREATMENT OF
ISRAEL BY THE LORD, IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES.—CHAP.
II. 6-III. 6.

The attitude which the Israelites assumed towards the Canaanites who were left in their possessions, contained the germ of the peculiar direction given to the development of the nation of God in the times of the judges. To exhibit the course of this development in its most general principles, the age which commenced after Joshua's death is characterized as a period of constant alternation between idolatry and consequent subjugation by foreign nations as a punishment from God for the transgression of His covenant on the one hand, and return to God after receiving chastisement and consequent deliverance by judges expressly raised up by God for that purpose on the other. In this way the righteousness of the holy God is displayed so clearly in the punishment of the rebellious, and the mercy of the faithful covenant God in His forgiveness of the penitent, that the history of Israel at that time exhibits to us an example of the divine holiness and righteousness on the one hand, and of His grace and mercy on the other, as displayed in the church of God of all times, as a warning for the ungodly and for the consolation of the righteous.

Vers. 6-10. The account of this development of the covenant nation, which commenced after the death of Joshua and his contemporaries, is attached to the book of Joshua by a simple repetition of the closing verses of that book (Josh. xxiv. 28-31) in vers. 6-10, with a few unimportant differences, not only to form a link between Josh. xxiv. and Judg. ii. 11, and to resume the thread of the history which was broken off by the summary just given of the results of the wars between the Israelites and Canaanites (*Bertheau*), but rather to bring out sharply and clearly the contrast between the age that was past and the period of the Israelitish history that was just about to commence. The *vav consec.* attached to וְהָיָה expresses the order of thought and not of time. The apostasy of the new generation from the Lord (vers. 10 sqq.) was a necessary consequence of the attitude of Israel to the Canaanites who were left in the land, as described in chap. i. 1-ii. 5. This thought is indicated by the *vav consec.* in וְהָיָה; so that the meaning of vers. 6 sqq. as expressed in our ordinary phraseology would be as follows: Now when Joshua had dismissed the people, and the children of Israel had gone every one to his own inheritance to take

possession of the land, the people served the Lord as long as Joshua and the elders who survived him were alive; but when Joshua was dead, and that generation (which was contemporaneous with him) had been gathered to its fathers, there rose up another generation after them which knew not the Lord, and also (knew not) the work which He had done to Israel. On the death and burial of Joshua, see at Josh. xxiv. 29, 30. "*Gathered unto their fathers*" corresponds to "gathered to his people" in the Pentateuch (Gen. xxv. 8, 17, xxxv. 29, xlix. 29, 33, etc.: see at Gen. xxv. 8). They "*knew not the Lord,*" *sc.* from seeing or experiencing His wonderful deeds, which the contemporaries of Joshua and Moses had seen and experienced.

In the general survey of the times of the judges, commencing at ver. 11, the falling away of the Israelites from the Lord is mentioned first of all, and at the same time it is distinctly shown how neither the chastisements inflicted upon them by God at the hands of hostile nations, nor the sending of judges to set them free from the hostile oppression, availed to turn them from their idolatry (vers. 11-19). This is followed by the determination of God to tempt and chastise the sinful nation by not driving away the remaining Canaanites (vers. 20-23); and lastly, the account concludes with an enumeration of the tribes that still remained, and the attitude of Israel towards them (chap. iii. 1-6).

Vers. 11-19. *Repeated falling away of the People from the Lord.*—Vers. 11-13. The Israelites did what was evil in the eyes of the Lord (what was displeasing to the Lord); they served *Baalim*. The plural *Baalim* is a general term employed to denote all false deities, and is synonymous with the expression "other gods" in the clause "other gods of the gods of the nations round about them" (the Israelites). This use of the term *Baalim* arose from the fact that Baal was the chief male deity of the Canaanites and all the nations of Hither Asia, and was simply worshipped by the different nations with peculiar modifications, and therefore designated by various distinctive epithets. In ver. 12 this apostasy is more minutely described as forsaking Jehovah the God of their fathers, to whom they were indebted for the greatest blessing, viz. their deliverance out of Egypt, and following other gods of the heathen nations that were round about them (taken *verbatim* from Deut. vi. 14, and xiii. 7, 8), and worshipping them. In this way they provoked the Lord to anger (cf. Deut. iv. 25, ix. 18, etc.).—Ver. 13. Thus they forsook Jehovah, and served Baal and the Ashtartes. In

this case the singular *Baal* is connected with the plural *Ashtaroth*, because the male deities of all the Canaanitish nations, and those that bordered upon Canaan, were in their nature one and the same deity, viz. *Baal*, a sun-god, and as such the vehicle and source of physical life, and of the generative and reproductive power of nature, which was regarded as an effluence from its own being (see *Movers*, *Relig. der Phönizier*, pp. 184 sqq., and *J. G. Müller* in *Herzog's Cyclopædia*). *Ashtaroth*, from the singular *Ashtoreth*, which only occurs again in 1 Kings xi. 5, 33, and 2 Kings xxiii. 13, in connection with the Sidonian *Astharte*, was the general name used to denote the leading female deity of the Canaanitish tribes, a moon-goddess, who was worshipped as the feminine principle of nature embodied in the pure moon-light, and its influence upon terrestrial life. It corresponded to the Greek *Aphrodite*, whose celebrated temple at Askalon is described in *Herod.* i. 105. In chap. iii. 7, *Asheroth* is used as equivalent to *Ashtaroth*, which is used here, chap. x. 6; 1 Sam. vii. 4, xii. 10. The name *Asheroth*¹ was transferred to the deity itself from the idols of this goddess, which generally consisted of wooden columns, and are called *Asherim* in Ex. xxxiv. 13, Deut. vii. 5, xii. 3, xvi. 21. On the other hand, the word *Ashtoreth* is without any traceable etymology in the Semitic dialects, and was probably derived from Upper Asia, being connected with a Persian word signifying a star, and synonymous with *Ἀστροάρχη*, the star-queen of Sabæism (see *Ges. Thes.* pp. 1083-4; *Movers*, p. 606; and *Müller*, *ut sup.*).

With regard to the nature of the *Baal* and *Astharte* worship, into which the Israelites fell not long after the death of Joshua, and in which they continued henceforth to sink deeper and deeper, it is evident from the more precise allusions contained in the history of Gideon, that it did not consist of direct opposition to the worship of Jehovah, or involve any formal rejection of Jehovah, but that it was simply an admixture of the worship of Jehovah with the heathen or Canaanitish nature-worship. Not only was the ephod which Gideon caused to be made in his native town of Ophrah, and after which all Israel went a whoring (chap. viii. 27), an imitation of the high priest's ephod in the worship of Jehovah; but the worship of *Baal-berith* at Shechem, after which the Israelites went a whoring again when Gideon was dead (chap. viii. 33), was simply a corruption of the worship of Jehovah, in which *Baal* was put in the place of Jehovah and worshipped in a similar way,

¹ Rendered *groves* in the English version.—Tr.

as we may clearly see from chap. ix. 27. The worship of Jehovah could even be outwardly continued in connection with this idolatrous worship. Just as in the case of these nations in the midst of which the Israelites lived, the mutual recognition of their different deities and religions was manifested in the fact that they all called their supreme deity by the same name, *Baal*, and simply adopted some other epithet by which to define the distinctive peculiarities of each; so the Israelites also imagined that they could worship the Baals of the powerful nations round about them along with Jehovah their covenant God, especially if they worshipped them in the same manner as their covenant God. This will serve to explain the rapid and constantly repeated falling away of the Israelites from Jehovah into Baal-worship, at the very time when the worship of Jehovah was stedfastly continued at the tabernacle in accordance with the commands of the law. The Israelites simply followed the lead and example of their heathen neighbours. Just as the heathen were tolerant with regard to the recognition of the deities of other nations, and did not refuse to extend this recognition even to Jehovah the God of Israel, so the Israelites were also tolerant towards the Baals of the neighbouring nations, whose sensuous nature-worship was more grateful to the corrupt heart of man than the spiritual Jehovah-religion, with its solemn demands for sanctification of life. But this syncretism, which was not only reconcilable with polytheism, but actually rooted in its very nature, was altogether irreconcilable with the nature of true religion. For if Jehovah is the only true God, and there are no other gods besides or beside Him, then the purity and holiness of His nature is not only disturbed, but altogether distorted, by any admixture of His worship with the worship of idols or of the objects of nature, the true God being turned into an idol, and Jehovah degraded into Baal. Looking closely into the matter, therefore, the mixture of the Canaanitish worship of Baal with the worship of Jehovah was actually forsaking Jehovah and serving other gods, as the prophetic author of this book pronounces it. It was just the same with the worship of Baal in the kingdom of the ten tribes, which was condemned by the prophets Hosea and Amos (see *Hengstenberg*, *Christology*, i. pp. 168 sqq., Eng. trans.).—Vers. 14, 15. On account of this idolatrous worship, the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, so that He gave them up into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and sold them into the hands of their enemies. שָׁמַר from שָׁמַר, alternated with שָׁמַר in שָׁמַר, to plunder. This word

is not met with in the Pentateuch, whereas מָכַר, to sell, occurs in Deut. xxxii. 30, in the sense of giving helplessly up to the foe. "*They could no longer stand before their enemies,*" as they had done under Joshua, and in fact as long as Israel continued faithful to the Lord; so that now, instead of the promise contained in Lev. xxvi. 7, 8, being fulfilled, the threat contained in Lev. xxvi. 17 was carried into execution. "*Whithersoever they went out,*" i.e. in every expedition, every attack that they made upon their enemies, "*the hand of Jehovah was against them for evil, as He had said*" (Lev. xxvi. 17, 36; Deut. xxviii. 25), and "*had sworn unto them.*" There is no express oath mentioned either in Lev. xxvi. or Deut. xxviii.; it is implied therefore in the nature of the case, or in *virtute verborum*, as Seb. Schmidt affirms, inasmuch as the threats themselves were words of the true and holy God. וַיָּצַר לָהֶם מָאֹד, "*and it became to them very narrow,*" i.e. they came into great straits.—Vers. 16, 17. But the Lord did not rest content with this. He did still more. "*He raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of their plunderers,*" to excite them to love in return by this manifestation of His love and mercy, and to induce them to repent. But "*they did not hearken even to their judges,*" namely, so as not to fall back again into idolatry, which the judge had endeavoured to suppress. This limitation of the words is supported by the context, viz. by a comparison of vers. 18, 19.—"*But* (אֲבָרְכָה after a negative clause) *they went a whoring after other gods* (for the application of this expression to the spiritual adultery of idolatrous worship, see Ex. xxxiv. 15), *and turned quickly away* (vid. Ex. xxxii. 8) *from the way which their fathers walked in, to hearken to the commandments of the Lord,*" i.e. from the way of obedience to the divine commands. "*They did not so*" (or what was right) sc. as their fathers under Joshua had done (cf. ver. 7).—Vers. 18, 19. "*And when the Lord raised them up judges, and was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge* (i.e. as long as the judge was living), *because the Lord had compassion upon their sighing, by reason of them that oppressed them, and vexed them* (פָּקַד only occurs again as a verb in Joel ii. 8): *it came to pass when the judge was dead, that they returned and acted more corruptly than their fathers,*" i.e. they turned again to idolatry even more grievously than their fathers had done under the previous judges. "*They did not let fall from their deeds,*" i.e. they did not cease from their evil deeds, and "*from their stiff-necked way.*" שָׁקַף, hard, is to be understood as in Ex. xxxii. 9 and

xxxiii. 3, where Israel is called a hard-necked people which did not bend under obedience to the commandments of God.

Vers. 20–23. *Chastisement of the rebellious Nation.*—Vers. 20, 21. On account of this idolatry, which was not only constantly repeated, but continued to grow worse and worse, the anger of the Lord burned so fiercely against Israel, that He determined to destroy no more of the nations which Joshua had left when he died, before the people that had broken His covenant. In order to set forth this divine purpose most distinctly, it is thrown into the form of a sentence uttered by God through the expression 'יִאמָר וְה'. The Lord said, "Because this people has transgressed my covenant, . . . I also will no longer keep my covenant promise (Ex. xxiii. 23, 27 sqq., xxxiv. 10 sqq.), and will no more drive out any of the remaining Canaanites before them" (see Josh. xxiii. 13).—Ver. 22. The purpose of God in this resolution was "*to prove Israel through them* (the tribes that were not exterminated), *whether they* (the Israelites) *would keep the way of the Lord to walk therein* (cf. Deut. viii. 2), *as their fathers did keep it, or not.*" לִמְעַן נִסּוּם is not dependent upon the verb יִצַּח, as Studer supposes, which yields no fitting sense; nor can the clause be separated from the preceding one, as Bertheau suggests, and connected as a protasis with ver. 23 (this would be a thoroughly unnatural construction, for which Isa. xlv. 4 does not furnish any true parallel); but the clause is attached in the simplest possible manner to the main thought in vers. 20, 21, that is to say, to the words "*and He said*" in ver. 20: Jehovah said, *i.e.* resolved, that He would not exterminate the remaining nations any further, to tempt Israel through them. The plural נִסּוּם, in the place of the singular נִסּוּ, which the foregoing יִצַּח requires, is to be regarded as a *constructio ad sensum*, *i.e.* to be attributed to the fact, that keeping the way of God really consists in observing the commandments of God, and that this was the thought which floated before the writer's mind. The thought expressed in this verse, that Jehovah would not exterminate the Canaanites before Israel any more, to try them whether they would keep His commandments, just as He had previously caused the people whom He brought out of Egypt to wander in the wilderness for forty years with the very same intention (Deut. viii. 2), is not at variance with the design of God, expressed in Ex. xxiii. 29, 30, and Deut. vii. 22, not to exterminate the Canaanites all at once, lest the land should become waste, and the wild beasts multiply therein, nor yet with the motive assigned in chap. iii. 1, 2. For the determination not

to exterminate the Canaanites in one single year, was a different thing from the purpose of God to suspend their gradual extermination altogether. The former purpose had immediate regard to the well-being of Israel; the latter, on the contrary, was primarily intended as a chastisement for its transgression of the covenant, although even this chastisement was intended to lead the rebellious nation to repentance, and promote its prosperity by a true conversion to the Lord. And the motive assigned in chap. ii. 2 is in perfect harmony with this intention, as our explanation of this passage will clearly show.—Ver. 23. In consequence of this resolution, the Lord let these tribes (those mentioned in chap. iii. 3) remain at rest, *i.e.* quietly, in the land, without exterminating them rapidly. The expression *פָּחַד*, hastily, quickly, *i.e.* according to the distinct words of the following clause, through and under Joshua, appears strange after what has gone before. For what is threatened in ver. 21 is not the suspension of rapid extermination, but of any further extermination. This threat, therefore, is so far limited by the word “hastily,” as to signify that the Lord would not exterminate any more of these nations so long as Israel persisted in its idolatry. But as soon as and whenever Israel returned to the Lord its God in true repentance, to keep His covenant, the Lord would recall His threat, and let the promised extermination of the Canaanites go forward again. Had Israel not forsaken the Lord its God so soon after Joshua’s death, the Lord would have exterminated the Canaanites who were left in the land much sooner than He did, or have carried out their gradual extermination in a much shorter time than was actually the case, in consequence of the continual idolatry of the people.

Chap. iii. 1-6. *Nations which the Lord left in Canaan*: with a repetition of the reason why this was done.—Ver. 1. The reason, which has already been stated in chap. ii. 22, viz. “to prove Israel by them,” is still further elucidated here. In the first place (ver. 1), *אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדָעוּ* is more precisely defined as signifying “all those who had not known all the wars of Canaan,” *sc.* from their own observation and experience, that is to say, the generation of the Israelites which rose up after the death of Joshua. For “the wars of Canaan” were the wars which were carried on by Joshua with the almighty help of the Lord for the conquest of Canaan. The whole thought is then still further expanded in ver. 2 as follows: “only (for no other purpose than) that the succeeding generations (the generations which followed Joshua and his contemporaries) of the children of Israel,

that *He* (Jehovah) might teach them war, only those who had not known them (the wars of Canaan)." The suffix attached to *למלחמה* refers to "the wars of Canaan," although this is a feminine noun, the suffix in the masculine plural being frequently used in connection with a feminine noun. At first sight it would appear as though the reason given here for the non-extermination of the Canaanites was not in harmony with the reason assigned in chap. ii. 22, which is repeated in ver. 4 of the present chapter. But the differences are perfectly reconcilable, if we only give a correct explanation of the two expressions, "learning war," and the "wars of Canaan." Learning war in the context before us is equivalent to learning to make war upon the nations of Canaan. Joshua and the Israelites of his time had not overcome these nations by their own human power or by earthly weapons, but by the miraculous help of their God, who had smitten and destroyed the Canaanites before the Israelites. The omnipotent help of the Lord, however, was only granted to Joshua and the whole nation, on condition that they adhered firmly to the law of God (Josh. i. 7), and faithfully observed the covenant of the Lord; whilst the transgression of that covenant, even by Achan, caused the defeat of Israel before the Canaanites (Josh. vii.). In the wars of Canaan under Joshua, therefore, Israel had experienced and learned, that the power to conquer its foes did not consist in the multitude and bravery of its own fighting men, but solely in the might of its God, which it could only possess so long as it continued faithful to the Lord. This lesson the generations that followed Joshua had forgotten, and consequently they did not understand how to make war. To impress this truth upon them,—the great truth, upon which the very existence as well as the prosperity of Israel, and its attainment of the object of its divine calling, depended; in other words, to teach it by experience, that the people of Jehovah could only fight and conquer in the power of its God,—the Lord had left the Canaanites in the land. Necessity teaches a man to pray. The distress into which the Israelites were brought by the remaining Canaanites was a chastisement from God, through which the Lord desired to lead back the rebellious to himself, to keep them obedient to His commandments, and to train them to the fulfilment of their covenant duties. In this respect, learning war, *i.e.* learning how the congregation of the Lord was to fight against the enemies of God and of His kingdom, was one of the means appointed by God to tempt Israel, or prove whether it would listen to the commandments of

God (ver. 4), or would walk in the ways of the Lord. If Israel should so learn to war, it would learn at the same time to keep the commandments of God. But both of these were necessary for the people of God. For just as the realization of the blessings promised to the nation in the covenant depended upon its hearkening to the voice of the Lord, so the conflicts appointed for it were also necessary, just as much for the purification of the sinful nation, as for the perpetuation and growth of the kingdom of God upon the earth.—Ver. 3. The enumeration of the different nations rests upon Josh. xiii. 2-6, and, with its conciseness and brevity, is only fully intelligible through the light thrown upon it by that passage. The five princes of the Philistines are mentioned singly there. According to Josh. xiii. 4 sqq., “*all the Canaanites and the Sidonians and the Hivites*,” are the Canaanitish tribes dwelling in northern Canaan, by the Phœnician coast and upon Mount Lebanon. “*The Canaanites* :” viz. those who dwelt along the sea-coast to the south of Sidon. “*The Hivites* :” those who were settled more in the heart of the country, “from the mountains of Baal-hermon up to the territory of Hamath.” *Baal-hermon* is only another name for *Baal-gad*, the present *Banjas*, under the Hermon (cf. Josh. xiii. 5). When it is stated still further in ver. 4, that “they were left in existence (*i.e.* were not exterminated by Joshua) to prove Israel by them,” we are struck with the fact, that besides the Philistines, only these northern Canaanites are mentioned; whereas, according to chap. i., many towns in the centre of the land were also left in the hands of the Canaanites, and therefore here also the Canaanites were not yet exterminated, and became likewise a snare to the Israelites, not only according to the word of the angel of the Lord (chap. ii. 3), but also because the Israelites who dwelt among these Canaanitish tribes contracted marriages with them, and served their gods. This striking circumstance cannot be set aside, as *Bertheau* supposes, by the simple remark, that “the two lists (that of the countries which the tribes of Israel did not conquer after Joshua’s death in chap. i., and the one given here of the nations which Joshua had not subjugated) must correspond on the whole,” since the correspondence referred to really does not exist. It can only be explained on the ground that the Canaanites who were left in the different towns in the midst of the land, acquired all their power to maintain their stand against Israel from the simple fact that the Philistines on the south-west, and several whole tribes of Canaanites in the north, had been left by Joshua neither exterminated nor

even conquered, inasmuch as they so crippled the power of the Israelites by wars and invasions of the Israelitish territory, that they were unable to exterminate those who remained in the different fortresses of their own possessions. Because, therefore, the power to resist the Israelites and oppress them for a time resided not so much in the Canaanites who were dwelling in the midst of Israel, as in the Philistines and the Canaanites upon the mountains of Lebanon who had been left unconquered by Joshua, these are the only tribes mentioned in this brief survey as the nations through which the Lord would prove His people.—Vers. 5, 6. But the Israelites did not stand the test. Dwelling in the midst of the Canaanites, of whom six tribes are enumerated, as in Ex. iii. 8, 17, etc. (see at Deut. vii. 1), they contracted marriages with them, and served their gods, contrary to the express prohibition of the Lord in Ex. xxxiv. 16, xxiii. 24, and Deut. vii. 3, 4.

II.—HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL UNDER THE JUDGES.

CHAP. III. 7—XVI. 31.

In order that we may be able to take a distinct survey of the development of the Israelites in the three different stages of their history during the times of the judges, the first thing of importance to be done is to determine *the chronology of the period of the judges*, inasmuch as not only have greatly divergent opinions prevailed upon this point, but hypotheses have been set up, which endanger and to some extent directly overthrow the historical character of the accounts which the book of Judges contains.¹ If we take a superficial glance at the chronological data contained in

¹ *Rud. Chr. v. Bennigsen*, for example, reckons up fifty different calculations, and the list might be still further increased by the addition of both older and more recent attempts (see *Winer*, *Bibl. Real-Wörterb.* ii. pp. 327–8). *Lepsius* (*Chronol. der Äg.* i. 315–6, 365 sqq. and 377–8) and *Bunsen* (*Ägypten*, i. pp. 209 sqq. iv. 318 sqq., and *Bibelwerk*, i. pp. ccxxxvii. sqq.), starting from the position maintained by *Ewald* and *Bertheau*, that the chronological data of the book of Judges are for the most part to be regarded as round numbers, have sought for light to explain the chronology of the Bible in the darkness of the history of ancient Egypt, and with their usual confidence pronounce it an indisputable truth that the whole of the period of the Judges did not last longer than from 169 to 187 years.

the book, it appears a very simple matter to make the calculation required, inasmuch as the duration of the different hostile oppressions, and also the length of time that most of the judges held their office, or at all events the duration of the peace which they secured for the nation, are distinctly given. The following are the numbers that we find :—

1. Oppression by Chushan-rishathaim . . .	(chap. iii. 8), .	8 years.
Deliverance by Othniel, and rest . . .	(chap. iii. 11), .	40 "
2. Oppression by the Moabites . . .	(chap. iii. 14), .	18 "
Deliverance by Ehud, and rest . . .	(chap. iii. 30), .	80 "
3. Oppression by the Canaanitish king Jabin . . .	(chap. iv. 3), .	20 "
Deliverance by Deborah and Barak, and rest . . .	(chap. v. 31), .	40 "
4. Oppression by the Midianites . . .	(chap. vi. 1), .	7 "
Deliverance by Gideon, and rest . . .	(chap. viii. 28), .	40 "
Abimelech's reign . . .	(chap. ix. 22), .	3 "
Tola, judge . . .	(chap. x. 2), .	23 "
Jair, judge . . .	(chap. x. 3), .	22 "

Total, . 301 years.

5. Oppression by the Ammonites . . .	(chap. x. 8), .	18 "
Deliverance by Jephthah, who judged Israel . . .	(chap. xii. 7), .	6 "
Ibzan, judge . . .	(chap. xii. 9), .	7 "
Elon, judge . . .	(chap. xii. 11), .	10 "
Abdon, judge . . .	(chap. xii. 14), .	8 "
6. Oppression by the Philistines . . .	(chap. xiii. 1), .	40 "
At this time Samson judged Israel for 20 years (chap. xv. 20; xvi. 31).		

Total, . 390 years.

For if to this we add (a) the time of Joshua, which is not distinctly mentioned, and . . .	. . .	20 "
(b.) The time during which Eli was judge (1 Sam. iv. 18), . . .	. . .	40 "

We obtain . 450 years.¹

And if we add still further—

(c.) The times of Samuel and Saul combined, . . .	. . .	40 "
(d.) The reign of David (2 Sam. v. 4; 1 Kings ii. 11), . . .	. . .	40 "
(e.) The reign of Solomon to the building of the temple (1 Kings vi. 1), . . .	. . .	3 "

The whole time from the entrance of Israel into Canaan to the building of the temple amounted to . . . 533 years.

¹ The earlier chronologists discovered a confirmation of this as the length of time that the period of the judges actually lasted in Acts xiii. 20, where Paul in his speech at Antioch in Pisidia says, according to the *textus receptus*, "After that He gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years

Or if we add the forty years spent in the wilderness, the time that elapsed between the exodus from Egypt and the building of the temple was 573 years. But the interval was not so long as this; for, according to 1 Kings vi. 1, Solomon built the house of the Lord in the 480th year after the children of Israel came out of Egypt, and in the fourth year of his reign. And no well-founded objections can be raised as to the correctness and historical credibility of this statement. It is true that the LXX. have "the 440th year" instead of the 480th; but this reading is proved to be erroneous by *Aquila* and *Symmachus*, who adopt the number 480 in common with all the rest of the ancient versions, and it is now almost unanimously rejected (see *Ewald*, *Gesch.* ii. p. 479). In all probability it owed its origin to an arbitrary mode of computing the period referred to by reckoning eleven generations of forty years each (see *Ed. Preuss*; *die Zeitrechnung der LXX.* pp. 78 sqq.). On the other hand, the number 480 of the Hebrew text cannot rest upon a mere reckoning of generations, since the year and month of Solomon's reign are given in 1 Kings vi. 1; and if we deduct this date from the 480, there remain 477 or 476 years, which do not form a cyclical number at all.¹ Again, the exodus of Israel from Egypt

until Samuel the prophet." The discrepancy between this verse and the statement in 1 Kings vi. 1, that Solomon built the temple in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of Egypt, many have endeavoured to remove by a remark, which is correct in itself, viz. that the apostle merely adopted the traditional opinion of the Jewish schools, which had been arrived at by adding together the chronological data of the book of Judges, without entering into the question of its correctness, as it was not his intention to instruct his hearers in chronology. But this passage cannot prove anything at all; for the reading given in the *lect. rec.* is merely founded upon *Cod. Cant.* and *Laud.*, and the text of *Matthæi*; whilst the oldest reading not only according to the *Codd. Al.*, *Vat.*, *Ephr. S. rescr.*, but according to the *Cod. Sinait. ed. Tischendorf* and several *minuscule*, as well as the *Copt. Sahid. Arm. Vers.* and *Vulg.*, is, καὶ καθελὼν ἔθνη ἑπτὰ ἐν γῇ Χαναὰν κατεκληρονόμησεν αὐτοῖς τὴν γῆν αὐτῶν ὡς ἔτισιν τετρακοσίοις καὶ πενήκοντα, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἔδωκεν κριτὰς ὡς Σαμουὴλ τ. πρ. This text is rendered thus in the *Vulgate*: *et destruens gentes septem in terra Chanaan sorte distribuit eis terram eorum quasi post quadringentos et quinquaginta annos: et post hæc dedit iudices usque ad Samuel prophetam*, and can hardly be understood in any other sense than this, that Paul reckoned 450 as the time that elapsed between the call of Abraham (or the birth of Isaac) and the division of the land, namely 215 + 215 (according to the *Alex. reading* of *Ex. xii. 40*: see the *comm.* on this passage) + 40 = 470, or about 450.

¹ *Bertheau* has quite overlooked this when he endeavours to make the 480 years from the exodus to the building of the temple into a cyclical number, and

was an "epoch-making" event, which was fixed in the recollection of the people as no other ever was, so that allusions to it run through the whole of the Old Testament. Moreover, the very fact that it does not tally with the sum total of the numbers in the book of Judges is an argument in favour of its correctness; whereas all the chronological calculations that differ from this bring us back to these numbers, such, for example, as the different statements of Josephus, who reckons the period in question at 592 years in Ant. viii. 3, 1, and on the other hand, at 612 years in Ant. xx. 10 and c. Ap. ii. 2.¹ Lastly, it may easily be shown that there are several things assumed in this chronological survey which have no foundation in the text. This applies both to the assumed succession of the Ammonitish and Philistine oppressions, and also to the introduction of the forty years of Eli's life as judge after or in addition to the forty years that the Philistines ruled over Israel.

The current view, that the forty years of oppression on the part of the Philistines did not commence till after the death of Jephthah or Abdon, is apparently favoured, no doubt, by the circumstance, that this oppression is not described till after the death of Abdon (chap. xii. 15), and is introduced with the usual formula, "And the

appeals in support of this to 1 Chron. vi. 35 sqq. (cf. v. 29 sqq.), where twelve generations are reckoned from Aaron to Ahimaaz, the contemporary of David. But it is perfectly arbitrary on his part to include Ahimaaz, who was a boy in the time of David (2 Sam. xv. 27, 36, xviii. 19, 22, 27 sqq.), as the representative of a generation that was contemporaneous with David; whereas it was not Ahimaaz, but his father Zadok, i.e. the eleventh high priest from Aaron, who anointed Solomon as king (1 Kings i. 39, ii. 35), and therefore there had been only eleven high priests from the exodus to the building of the temple. If therefore this period was to be divided into generations of forty years each on the ground of the genealogies in the Chronicles, there could only be eleven generations counted, and this is just what the LXX. have done.

¹ Josephus adds together the numbers which occur in the book of Judges. Reckoning from the invasion of Chushan-rishathaim to the forty years' oppression of the Philistines (inclusive), these amount to 390 years, if we regard Samson's twenty years as forming part of the Philistine oppression, or to 410 years if they are reckoned separately. Let us add to this the forty years of the journey through the wilderness, the twenty-five years which Josephus assigns to Joshua (Ant. v. 1, 29), the forty years of Eli, the twelve years which he allots to Samuel before the election of Saul as king (vi. 13, 5), and the forty years which he reckons to Samuel and Saul together, and lastly, the forty and a half years of David's reign and the four years of Solomon's up to the time when the temple was built, and we obtain $40 + 25 + 40 + 12 + 40 + 40\frac{1}{2} + 4 = 201\frac{1}{2}$ years; and these added to 390 make 591 $\frac{1}{2}$, or added to 410 they amount to 611 years.

children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord," etc. (chap. xiii. 1). But this formula, taken by itself, does not furnish any certain proof that the oppression which it introduces did not take place till after what has been already described, especially in the absence of any more definite statement, such as the clause introduced into chap. iv. 1, "when Ehud was dead," or the still more definite remark, that the land had rest so many years (chap. iii. 11, 30, v. 31; cf. chap. viii. 32). Now in the case before us, instead of any such statement as to time, we find the general remark in chap. x. 6 sqq., that when the Israelites sank into idolatry again, Jehovah sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon; and after this there simply follows an account of the oppression on the part of the Ammonites, and the eventual deliverance effected by Jephthah (chap. x. 8-xiii. 7), together with an enumeration of three judges who succeeded Jephthah (chap. xii. 8-15); but we learn nothing further about the oppression on the part of the Philistines which is mentioned in chap. x. 7. When, therefore, it is still further related, in chap. xiii. 1, that the Lord delivered the Israelites into the hand of the Philistines forty years, this cannot possibly refer to another oppression on the part of the Philistines subsequent to the one noticed in chap. x. 7; but the true explanation must be, that the historian proceeds here for the first time to describe the oppression noticed in chap. x. 7, and introduces his description with the formula he generally adopted: "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord," etc. The oppression itself, therefore, commenced at the same time as that of the Ammonites, and continued side by side with it; but it lasted much longer, and did not come to an end till a short time before the death of Elon the judge. This is confirmed beyond all doubt by the fact, that although the Ammonites crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim, it was chiefly the tribes of Israel who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan that were oppressed by them (chap. x. 8, 9), and that it was only by these tribes that Jephthah was summoned to make war upon them, and was elected as their head and prince (chap. xi. 5-11), and also that it was only the Ammonites in the country to the east of the Jordan whom he subdued then before the Israelites (chap. xi. 32, 33). From this it is very evident that Jephthah, and his successors Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, were not judges over all Israel, and neither fought against the Philistines nor delivered Israel from the oppression of those enemies who invaded the land from the

south-west; so that the omission of the expression, "the land had rest," etc., from chap. xi. and xii., is very significant.¹

But if the Ammonitish and Philistine oppressions occurred at the same time, of course only one of them must be taken into account in our chronological calculations as to the duration of the period of the judges; and the one selected must be the one to the close of which the chronological data of the next period are immediately appended. But this is not the case with the account of the Ammonitish oppression, of the deliverance effected by Jephthah, and of the judges who succeeded him (Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon), because the chronological thread of this series of events is broken off with the death of Abdon, and is never resumed again. It is so, however, with the Philistine oppression, which is said to have lasted forty years, though the termination of it is not given in the book of Judges. Samson merely began to deliver Israel out of the power of the Philistines (chap. xiii. 5), but did not accomplish their complete deliverance. He judged Israel for twenty years in the days

¹ Even *Hitzig*, who denies that the oppression of the Philistines was contemporaneous with that of the Ammonites, is obliged to acknowledge that "it is true, the author first of all disposed very properly of the Ammonitish war before entering into the details of the war with the Philistines, with which it had no connection, and which was not brought to a close so soon." When therefore, notwithstanding this, he adduces as evidence that they were not contemporaneous, the fact that "according to the context, and to all analogy (cf. chap. iv. 1, iii. 11, 12), the author intends to write, in chap. xiii. 1, that after the death of Abdon, when there was no judge in Israel, the nation fell back into its former lawlessness, and as a punishment was given up to the Philistines," a more careful study of the passages cited (chap. iv. 1, iii. 11, 12) will soon show that the supposed analogy does not exist at all, since the expression, "the land had rest," etc., really occurs in both instances (see chap. iii. 11 and 31), whereas it is omitted before chap. xiii. 1. The still further assertion, however, that the account of the Philistine war ought to have followed immediately upon that of the war with the Ammonites, if the intention was to describe this with equal fulness, has no force whatever. If neither Jephthah nor the three judges who followed him had anything to do with the Philistines, if they merely judged the tribes that were oppressed and threatened by the Ammonites, it was natural that everything relating to them should be attached to the account of the defeat of the Ammonites, in order that there might be no unnecessary separation of what was so intimately connected together. And whilst these objections are thus proved to have no force, the objection raised to the contemporaneous occurrence of the two oppressions is wrecked completely upon the distinct statement in chap. x. 7, that Jehovah sold the Israelites into the hands of the Philistines and Ammonites, which *Hitzig* can only get over by declaring, without the slightest foundation, that the words "into the hands of the Philistines" are spurious, simply because they stand in the way of his own assumption.

of the Philistines, *i.e.* during the oppression of the Philistines (chap. xv. 20); consequently the twenty years of his labours must not be taken into account in the chronology of the period of the judges, inasmuch as they are all included in the forty years of the Philistines' rule. At the death of Samson, with which the book of Judges closes, the power of the Philistines was not yet broken; and in chap. iv. of the first book of Samuel we find the Philistines still fighting against the Israelites, and that with such success that the Israelites were defeated by them, and even lost the ark of the covenant. This war must certainly be a continuation of the Philistine oppression, to which the acts of Samson belonged, since the termination of that oppression is not mentioned in the book of Judges; and on the other hand, the commencement of the oppression referred to in 1 Sam. iv. 9 sqq. is not given in the book of Samuel. Consequently even *Hitzig* supports the view which I have expressed, that the forty years' supremacy of the Philistines, noticed in Judg. xiii. 1, is carried on into the book of Samuel, and extends to 1 Sam. vii. 3, 7, and that it was through Samuel that it was eventually brought to a termination (1 Sam. vii. 10 sqq.). But if this is established, then the forty years during which Eli was judge cannot have followed the Philistine oppression and the deeds performed by Samson, and therefore must not be reckoned separately. For since Eli died in consequence of the account of the capture of the ark by the Philistines (1 Sam. iv. 18), and seven months (1 Sam. vi. 1) and twenty years elapsed after this catastrophe before the Philistines were defeated and humiliated by Samuel (1 Sam. vii. 2), only the last half of the forty years of Eli's judicial life falls within the forty years of the Philistine rule over Israel, whilst the first half coincides with the time of the judge Jair. Eli himself was not a judge in the strict sense of the word. He was neither commander of the army, nor secular governor of the nation, but simply the high priest; and in this capacity he administered the civil law in the supreme court, altogether independently of the question whether there was a secular governor at the time or not. After the death of Eli, Israel continued for more than twenty years utterly prostrate under the yoke of the Philistines. It was during this period that Samson made the Philistines feel the power of the God of Israel, though he could not deliver the Israelites entirely from their oppression. Samuel laboured at the same time, as the prophet of the Lord, to promote the inward and spiritual strength of Israel, and that with such success, that the people came to Mizpeh at his

summons, and there put away the strange gods that they had hitherto worshipped, and worshipped the Lord alone; after which the Lord hearkened to Samuel's prayer, and gave them a complete victory over the Philistines (1 Sam. vii. 2-11). After this victory, which was gained not very long after the death of Samson, Samuel undertook the supreme government of Israel as judge, and eventually at their own desire, and with the consent of God, gave them a king in the person of Saul the Benjaminite. This was not till Samuel himself was old, and had appointed as his successors in the office of judge his own sons, who did not walk in their father's ways (1 Sam. viii.-x.). Even under Saul, however, Samuel continued to the very end of his life to labour as the prophet of the Lord for the well-being of Israel, although he laid down his office of judge as soon as Saul had been elected king. He announced to Saul how he had been rejected by God on account of his disobedience; he anointed David as king; and his death did not occur till after Saul had begun to be troubled by the evil spirit, and to plot for David's life (1 Sam. xxv. 1), as we may learn from the fact that David fled to Samuel at Ramah when Saul resolved to slay him (1 Sam. xix. 18).

How long Samuel judged Israel between the victory gained at Ebenezer (1 Sam. vii.) and the election of Saul as king of Israel, is not stated in the Old Testament, nor even the length of Saul's reign, as the text of 1 Sam. xiii. 1 is corrupt. But we shall not be very far from the truth, if we set down about forty years as the time covered by the official life of Samuel as judge after that event and the reign of Saul, and reckon from seventeen to nineteen years as the duration of Samuel's judgeship, and from twenty to twenty-two as the length of Saul's reign. For it is evident from the accounts that we possess of the lives and labours of Samuel and Saul, that Saul did not reign forty years (the time given by Paul in Acts xiii. 21, according to the traditional opinion current in the Jewish schools), but at the most from twenty to twenty-two; and this is now pretty generally admitted (see at 1 Sam. xiii. 1). When David was chosen king of Judah at Hebron after the death of Saul, he was thirty years old (2 Sam. v. 1-4), and can hardly have been anointed king by Samuel at Bethlehem before the age of twenty. For though his father Jesse was still living, and he himself was the youngest of Jesse's eight sons, and was feeding the flock (1 Sam. xvi. 6-12), and even after this is still described as *יָעַר* (1 Sam. xvii. 42, 55), Jesse was *זָקֵן* (an old man) at the time (1 Sam. xvii. 12), at any rate sixty years old or more, so that his

eldest son might be forty years old, and David, the youngest, as much as twenty. For עָרַב was not only applied to a mere boy, but to a young man approaching twenty; and the keeping of sheep was not merely a task performed by shepherd boys, but also by the grown-up sons of a family, among whom we must certainly reckon David, since he had already contended with lions and bears in the steppe, and slain these beasts of prey (1 Sam. xvii. 34-36), and shortly afterwards was not only recommended to king Saul by his courtiers, as "a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and wise in speech," to cheer up the melancholy king by his playing upon the harp (1 Sam. xvi. 18), but also undertook to fight with the giant Goliath (1 Sam. xvii.), and was placed in consequence over the men of war, and was afterwards made captain of a thousand, and betrothed to his daughter Michal (1 Sam. xviii. 5, 13, 17 sqq.). But if David was anointed by Samuel at the age of about twenty years, Saul could not have reigned more than ten years after that time, as David was made king at the age of thirty. And he cannot have reigned much longer before that time. For, apart from the fact that everything which is related of his former wars and deeds could easily have occurred within the space of ten years, the circumstance that Samuel lived till the last years of Saul's reign, and died but a few years before Saul's death (1 Sam. xxv. 1), precludes the assumption that he reigned any longer than that. For Samuel was already so old that he had appointed his sons as judges, whereupon the people desired a king, and assigned as the reason, that Samuel's sons did not walk in his ways (1 Sam. viii. 1-4), from which it is very evident that they had already filled the office of judge for some considerable time. If we add to this the fact that Samuel was called to be a prophet before the death of Eli, and therefore was no doubt twenty-five or thirty years old when Eli died, and that twenty years and seven months elapsed between the death of Eli and the defeat of the Philistines, so that Samuel may have been about fifty years old at that time, and that he judged the people from this time forward till he had become an old man, and then gave the nation a king in the person of Saul, we cannot assign more than forty years as the interval between the defeat of the Philistines and the death of Saul, without attributing to Samuel an age of more than ninety years, and therefore we cannot reckon more than forty or thirty-nine years as the time that intervened between the installation of Samuel in his office as judge and the commencement of the reign of Saul.

According to this, the chronology of the times of the judges may be arranged as follows :—

a. From the oppression of Chushan-rishathaim to the death of Jair the judge (<i>vid.</i> p. 277),	301 years.
b. Duration of the Philistine oppression,	40 „
c. Judgeship of Samuel and reign of Saul,	39 „
d. David's reign ($7\frac{1}{2}$ and 33 years),	40 „
e. Solomon's reign to the building of the temple,	3 „
	<hr/>
	423 years.
a. The wandering in the desert,	40 „
b. The time between the entrance into Canaan and the division of the land,	7 „
c. From the division of Canaan to the invasion of Chushan-rishathaim,	10 „
	<hr/>
	480 years.

These numbers are as thoroughly in harmony with 1 Kings vi. 1, and also with the statement made by Jephthah in his negotiations with the king of the Ammonites, that Israel dwelt in Heshbon and the cities along the bank of the Arnon for three hundred years (Judg. xi. 26), as we could possibly expect so general a statement in round numbers to be. For instance, as the chronological data of the book of Judges give 301 years as the interval between the invasion of Chushan-rishathaim and the commencement of the Ammonitish oppression, and as only about ten years elapsed between the division of Canaan, after which the tribes on the east of the Jordan first established themselves firmly in Gilead, and the invasion of Chushan, the Israelites had dwelt 310 years in the land on the other side of the Jordan at the time of Jephthah's negotiations with the Ammonites, or at the most 328, admitting that these negotiations may possibly not have taken place till towards the end of the eighteen years' oppression on the part of the Ammonites, so that Jephthah could appeal with perfect justice to the fact that they had been in possession of the land for 300 years.

This statement of Jephthah, however, furnishes at the same time an important proof that the several chronological data contained in our book are to be regarded as historical, and also that the events are to be reckoned as occurring successively; so that we have no right to include the years of oppression in the years of rest, as is frequently done, or to shorten the whole period from Othniel to Jephthah by arbitrary assumptions of synchronisms, in direct opposition to the text. This testimony removes all foundation from

the hypothesis that the number forty which so frequently occurs is a so-called round number, that is to say, is nothing more than a number derived from a general estimate of the different periods according to generations, or cyclical periods. For if the sum total of the different chronological notices tallies on the whole with the actual duration of the period in question as confirmed by this testimony, the several notices must be regarded as historically true, and that all the more because the greater part of these data consist of such numbers as 6, 8, 18, 20, 22, 23, which can neither be called round nor cyclical. Moreover, the purely cyclical significance of the number forty among the Israelites must first of all be proved. Even *Ewald* (*Gesch.* ii. pp. 480, 481) most justly observes, that "it is very easy to say that the number forty was a round number in the case of different nations; but this round number must first of all have had its origin in life, and therefore must have had its limited application." If, however, we look more closely at the different occasions on which the space of forty years is mentioned, between the exodus from Egypt and the building of the temple, we shall find that at any rate the first and last passages contain very definite notices of time, and cannot possibly be regarded as containing merely round or cyclical numbers. In the case of the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, this is placed beyond the reach of doubt by the fact that even the months are given of both the second and fortieth years (*Num.* x. 11, xx. 1; *Deut.* i. 3), and the intervening space is distinctly stated to have been thirty-eight years (*Dent.* ii. 14). And the forty years that David is said to have reigned also give the precise number, since he reigned seven and a half years at Hebron, and thirty-three at Jerusalem (*2 Sam.* v. 4, 5; *1 Kings* ii. 11). Between these two extreme points we certainly meet with the number forty five times: viz. forty years of rest under Othniel (*Judg.* iii. 11), the same under Barak and Deborah (*chap.* v. 31), and the same again under Gideon (*chap.* viii. 28); also forty years of oppression by the Philistines (*chap.* xiii. 1), and the forty years that Eli was judge (*1 Sam.* iv. 18); and in addition to these, we find eighty years of rest after Ehnd's victory (*Judg.* iii. 30). But there are also twelve or thirteen passages in which we find either odd numbers, or at all events numbers that cannot be called cyclical or round (viz. *Jndg.* iii. 8, 14, iv. 3, vi. 1, ix. 22, x. 2, 3, xii. 7, 9, 11, 14, xv. 20, xvi. 31). What is there then to justify our calling the number forty cyclical or round? Is it the impossibility or improbability that in the course

of 253 years Israel should have had rest from hostile oppression on three occasions for forty years, and on one for eighty? Is there anything impossible in this? Certainly not. Is there even an improbability? If there be, surely improbabilities have very often been perfectly true. And in the case before us, the appearance itself loses all significance, when we consider that although if we take entire years the number forty is repeated, yet it cannot be taken so literally as that we are to understand that entire years are intended every time. If David's reign is reckoned as forty years in 2 Sam. v. 4, although according to ver. 5, he reigned seven years and six months in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem, it may also be the case that, although forty years is the number given in the book of Judges, the period referred to may actually have been only thirty-nine years and a half, or may have been forty and a half. To this must be added the fact that the time during which the war with the enemy lasted is also included in the years of rest; and this must always have occupied several months, and may sometimes have lasted even more than a year. Now, if we give all these circumstances their due weight, every objection that can be raised as to the correctness and historical credibility of the chronological data of the book of Judges vanishes away, whilst all the attempts that have been made to turn these data into round or cyclical numbers are so arbitrary as to need no special refutation whatever.¹

¹ The principal representatives of this hypothesis are *Ewald* and his pupil *Bertheau*. According to *Ewald* (*Gesch.* ii. pp. 473 sqq.), the twelve judges from Othniel to Samson form the historical groundwork of the book, although there are distinct traces that there were many more such rulers, because it was only of these that any reminiscences had been preserved. When, therefore, after the expiration of the whole of this period, the desire arose to bring out into distinct prominence the most important points connected with it, the first thing that was done was to group together these twelve judges, with such brief remarks as we find in the case of five of them (Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon) in chap. x. 1-5 and xii. 8-15. In their case, too, the precise time was given, so far as it could be still remembered. But, independently of this, the attempt was also made to connect the order of the many alternations of war and peace during these 480 years which occurred, according to 1 Kings vi. 1, between the exodus from Egypt and the building of Solomon's temple, to certain grand and easily remembered divisions; and for this the number forty at once presented itself. For since, according to the oldest traditions, Israel spent forty years in the wilderness, and since David also reigned forty years, it might easily be regarded as a suitable thing to divide the whole into twelve equal parts, and to assign to each forty years a great hero and some striking event: *e.g.* (1) Moses and the wilderness; (2) Joshua and the prosperous rule of the elders; (3) the war with Chushan-rishathaim, and Othniel; (4) the Moabites and

The historical character of the chronological data of the book of Judges being thus established, we obtain a continuous chronology for the history of the Israelitish nation, as we may see from the following survey, to which we append a calculation of the years before Christ :—

Ehud; (5) the Aramæans and Jair; (6) the Canaanites under Jabin, and Deborah; (7) the Midianites and Gideon; (8) Tola, with whose opponents we are not acquainted; (9) the Ammonites and Philistines, or Jephthah and Samson; (10) the Philistines and Eli; (11) Samuel and Saul; (12) David. "Finally, then, these twelve judges from Othniel to Samson were necessarily connected with this different mode of reckoning, so that the several numbers, as well as the order in which the judges occur, which show so evidently (?) that the last editor but one compiled the section extending from chap. iii. to xvi. out of a great variety of sources, *must* have been the resultant of many changes." But *Ewald* looks in vain for any reason for this "must." And the question starts up at once, how could the idea ever have entered any one's mind of dividing these 480 years, from the exodus to the building of the temple, among the twelve judges in this particular manner; that to all the judges, concerning whom it was not known how long their period of labour lasted, forty years each were assigned, when it was known that Israel had wandered forty years in the wilderness, that Joshua had governed forty years with the elders, and Samuel and Saul together had ruled for the same time, and David also, so that there only remained for the judges from Othniel to Samson $480 - 4 \times 40$, i.e. only 320 years, or, deducting the first three or four years of Solomon's reign, only 317 or 316 years? These years, if divided among twelve judges, would give only twenty-six or twenty-seven years for each. Or how did they come to allot eighty years to Ehud, and only twenty-two to Jair and twenty-three to Tola, if the two latter had also conquered the hostile oppressors of Israel? And lastly, why was Shamgar left without any, when he delivered Israel from the Philistines? To these and many other questions the author of this hypothesis is unable to give any answer at all; and the arbitrary nature of his mode of manufacturing history is so obvious, that it is unnecessary to waste words in proving it. It is no better with *Bertheau's* hypothesis (*Jndg.* pp. xvi. sqq.). According to this hypothesis, out of the twelve generations from Moses to David which he derives from 1 Chron. vi. 35 sqq., only six (or 240 years) belong to the judges from Othniel to Samson. These have been variously reckoned. One calculation takes them as six generations of forty years each; another reckons them more minutely, adopting smaller numbers which were assigned to the twelve judges and the son of Gideon. But six generations and twelve judges could not be combined in any other way than by assigning twenty years to each judge. Now there was not a single judge who judged Israel for twenty years, with the exception of Samson. And the total number of the years that they judged is not 240, but 296 years ($40 + 80 + 40 + 40 + 23 + 22 + 6 + 7 + 10 + 8 + 20 + x$). Consequently we do not find any trace throughout the book, that the period of the judges was reckoned as consisting of six generations of forty years each. (Compare with this a more elaborate refutation by *Bachmann*, pp. 3 sqq.).

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS FROM THE EXODUS
TO THE BUILDING OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

The Principal Events.	Duration.	Years before the Birth of Christ.
Exodus of Israel from Egypt,	—	1492
The law given at Sinai,	—	1492—1491
Death of Aaron and Moses in the fortieth year of the wandering in the desert,	40	1453
Conquest of Canaan by Joshua,	7	1452—1445
From the division of the land to the invasion of Chushan-rishathaim,	10	1445—1435
Death of Joshua,	—	c. 1442
Wars of the tribes of Israel with the Canaanites,	—	1442 onwards
War of the congregation with Benjamin,	—	c. 1436
Oppression by Chushan-rishathaim,	8	1435—1427
Deliverance by Othniel, and rest,	40	1427—1387
Oppression by the Moabites,	18	1387—1369
Deliverance by Ehud, and rest,	80	1369—1289
Victory of Shamgar over the Philistines,	—	
Oppression by Jabin,	20	1289—1269
Deliverance by Deborah and Barak, and rest,	40	1269—1229
Oppression by the Midianites,	7	1229—1222
Deliverance by Gideon, and rest,	40	1222—1182
Rule of Abimelech,	3	1182—1179
Tola, judge,	23	1179—1156
Jair, judge,	22	1156—1134
Eli, high priest and judge forty years,	—	1154—1114
After repeated apostasy, oppression		
(a) In the East.	(b) In the West.	
By the Ammonites 18 years,	By the Philistines,	40 1134—1094
from 1134 to 1116 B.C.	Loss of the ark,	— c. 1114
Jephthah judge 6 years,	Samson's deeds,	— 1116—1096
from 1116 to 1110 B.C.	Samuel's prophetic labours,	— 1114 onwards
Ibzan judge 7 years,	Defeat of the Philistines,	— 1094
from 1110 to 1103 B.C.	Samuel, judge,	19 1094—1075
Elon judge 10 years,	Saul, king,	20 1075—1055
from 1103 to 1093 B.C.	David king at Hebron,	7 1055—1048
Abdon judge 8 years,	„ „ at Jerusalem,	33 1048—1015
from 1093 to 1085 B.C.	Solomon's reign on the building of the temple,	3 1015—1012
Total,		480 years.

All that is required to establish our calculation as to the period of the judges, is to justify our estimate of ten years as the time that intervened between the division of the land and the invasion by Chushan-rishathaim, since the general opinion, founded upon the statement of *Josephus* (*Ant. v. 1, 29*), that Joshua was στρατηγός of the nation for twenty-five years after the death of Moses, and (*vi. 5, 4*) that his death was followed by a state of anarchy for eighteen years, is that it was at least thirty-five years. But *Josephus* at all events ought not to be appealed to, as he had no other sources of information with regard to the earlier portion of the Israelitish history than the Old Testament itself; and he so frequently contradicts himself in his chronological statements, that no reliance can be placed upon them even in cases where their incorrectness cannot be clearly proved. And if we consider, on the other hand, that Joshua was an old man when the two great campaigns in the south and north of Canaan were over, and in fact was so advanced in years, that God commanded him to divide the land, although many districts were still unconquered (*Josh. xiii. 1 sqq.*), in order that he might finish this part of his calling before his death, there is very little probability that he lived for twenty-five years after that time. The same words are used to describe the last days of his life in *chap. xxiii. 1*, that had previously been employed to describe his great age (*chap. xiii. 1 sqq.*). No doubt the statement in *chap. xxiii. 1*, to the effect that "many days after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their foes," Joshua called together the representatives of the nation, to renew the covenant of the nation with the Lord before his death, when taken in connection with the statement in *chap. xix. 50*, that he built the city of Timnath-serah, which the tribes had given him for an inheritance after the distribution of the land by lot was over, and dwelt therein, proves very clearly that there were certainly "many days" (*Eng. Ver. "a long time"*) between the division of the land and the death of Joshua. But this is so comparative a term, that it hardly embraces more than two or three years. And Joshua might build, *i.e.* fortify Timnath-serah, and dwell therein, even if he only lived for two or three years after the division of the land. On the other hand, there appears to have been a longer interval than the seven or eight years allowed in our reckoning between the death of Joshua and the invasion of Chushan; since it not only includes the defeat of Adoni-bezek, the capture of Jerusalem, Hebron, and other towns, by the tribes of Judah and Simeon (*chap. i. 1-14*), and the con-

quest of Bethel by the tribe of Joseph (chap. i. 22 sqq.), but also the war of the congregation with the tribe of Benjamin (chap. xix.-xxi.). But it is only in appearance that the interval allowed is too short. All these events together would not require many years, but might very well have occurred within the space of about five years. And it is quite possible that the civil war of the Israelites might have been regarded by king Chushan-rishathaim as a favourable opportunity for carrying out his design of making Israel tributary to himself, and that he took advantage of it accordingly. The very fact that Othniel delivered Israel from this oppression, after it had continued for eight years, precludes us from postponing the invasion itself to a longer period after the death of Joshua. For Othniel was not Caleb's nephew, as many suppose, but his younger brother (see at Josh. xv. 17). Now Caleb was eighty-five years old when the distribution of the land commenced (Josh. xiv. 10); so that even if his brother Othniel was thirty, or even forty years younger, he would still be fifty-five, or at any rate forty-five years old, when the division of the land commenced. If the statements of Josephus were correct, therefore, Othniel would have been ninety-one years old, or at any rate eighty-one, when he defeated the Aramæan king Chushan-rishathaim; whereas, according to our calculation, he would only have been fifty or sixty years old when Debir was taken, and sixty-three or seventy-three when Chushan was defeated. Now, even if we take the lower number as the correct one, this would be a sufficiently great age for such a warlike undertaking, especially when we consider that Othniel lived for some time afterwards, as is evident from the words of chap. iii. 11, "And the land had rest forty years: and Othniel the son of Kenaz died," though they may not distinctly affirm that he did not die till the termination of the forty years' rest.

The fact that Caleb's younger brother Othniel was the first judge of Israel, also upsets the hypothesis which *Bertheau* has founded upon a mistaken interpretation of chap. ii. 11-iii. 6, that a whole generation of forty years is to be reckoned between the death of Joshua and the invasion of Chushan, and also the misinterpretation of chap. ii. 7, 10 (cf. Josh. xxiv. 31), according to which the sinful generation did not grow up until after Joshua and all the elders who lived a *long time* after him were dead,—an interpretation which has no support in chap. ii. 7, since *וַיִּמָּוֶת אַחֲרָיו* does not mean "to live *long* after a person," but simply "to survive him." The "other generation which knew not the Lord," etc., that arose

after the death of Joshua and the elders who outlived him, was not a different generation from the succeeding generations, which were given up to the power of their foes on account of their apostasy from the Lord, but the younger generation generally, which took the place of the older men who had seen the works of the Lord under Joshua; in other words, this is only a comprehensive expression for all the succeeding generations who forgot Jehovah their God and served Baalim. So much may be said in vindication of our calculations as to the period of the judges.

I. TIMES OF THE JUDGES: OTHNIEL; EHUD AND SHAMGAR, DEBORAH AND BARAK.—CHAP. III. 7-V.

In this first stage of the times of the judges, which embraces a period of 206 years, the Israelites were oppressed by hostile nations on three separate occasions: first of all by the Mesopotamian king Chushan-rishathaim, whom they were obliged to serve for eighteen years, until Othniel brought them deliverance, and secured them rest for forty years (chap. iii. 7-11); secondly by the Moabitish king Eglon for eighteen years, until Ehud slew this king and smote the Moabites, and so humiliated them, that the land had rest for eighty years (chap. iii. 12-30), whilst Shamgar also smote a host of Philistines during the same period (chap. iii. 31); and lastly by the Canaanitish king Jabin of Hazor, who oppressed them heavily for twenty years, until Barak gathered an army together at the summons of Deborah the prophetess and with her assistance, and completely defeated the foe (chap. iv.). After this victory, which Deborah celebrated in a triumphal song, the land had rest again for forty years (chap. v.).

Oppression of Israel by Chushan-rishathaim, and Deliverance by Othniel.—Chap. iii. 7-11.

Vers. 7, 8. The first chastisement which the Israelites suffered for their apostasy from the Lord, is introduced with the same formula which had been used before to describe the times of the judges generally (chap. ii. 11, 12), except that instead of *וַיַּעֲזֹבוּ אֶת־יְהוָה* ("they forsook the Lord") we have here *וַיִּשְׁכַּחוּ אֶת־יְהוָה* ("they forgot the Lord their God") from Deut. xxxii. 18 (cf. 1 Sam. xii. 9), and *Asheroth* (rendered "groves") instead of *Ashtaroth* (see at chap. ii. 13). As a punishment for this apostasy, the Lord sold them (chap. ii. 14) into the hand of *Chushan-rishathaim*, the king of Meso-

potamia, whom they were obliged to serve for eight years. All that we know about this king of Mesopotamia is what is recorded here. His name, Chushan-rishathaim, is probably only a title which was given to him by the Israelites themselves. *Rishathaim* signifies "double wickedness," and the word was rendered as an appellative with this signification in the Targums and the Syriac and Arabic versions. *Chushan* is also formed as an adjective from *Cush*, and may denote the Cushites. According to *M. v. Niebuhr* (*Gesch. Assurs u. Babels*, p. 272), the rulers of Babylon at that time (1518-1273) were Arabs. "Arabs, however, may have included not only Shemites of the tribe of Joktan or Ishmael, but Cushites also." The invasion of Canaan by this Mesopotamian or Babylonian king has a historical analogy in the campaign of the five allied kings of Shinar in the time of Abraham (*Gen. xiv.*).

Vers. 9-11. In this oppression the Israelites cried to the Lord for help, and He raised them up מִשְׁעֵיב, a deliverer, helper, namely the Kenizzite *Othniel*, the younger brother and son-in-law of Caleb (see at *Josh. xv. 17*). "*The Spirit of Jehovah came upon him.*" The Spirit of God is the spiritual principle of life in the world of nature and man; and in man it is the principle both of the natural life which we receive through birth, and also of the spiritual life which we receive through regeneration (*vid. Auberlen*, *Geist des Menschen*, in *Herzog's Cycl.* iv. p. 731). In this sense the expressions "Spirit of God" (*Elohim*) and "Spirit of the Lord" (*Jehovah*) are interchanged even in *Gen. i. 2*, compared with *Gen. vi. 3*, and so throughout all the books of the Old Testament; the former denoting the Divine Spirit generally in its supernatural causality and power, the latter the same Spirit in its operations upon human life and history in the working out of the plan of salvation. In its peculiar operations the Spirit of Jehovah manifests itself as a spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord (*Isa. xi. 2*). The communication of this Spirit under the Old Testament was generally made in the form of extraordinary and supernatural influence upon the human spirit. The expression employed to denote this is usually יְהוָה עָלָיו רִיחַ ("the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him:" thus here, chap. xi. 29; 1 Sam. xix. 20, 23; 2 Chron. xx. 14; Num. xxiv. 2). This is varied, however, with the expressions נְפִילָה (צִלְחָה) "נְפִילָה" (chap. xiv. 6, 19, xv. 14; 1 Sam. x. 10, xi. 6, xvi. 13) and רִיחַ יְהוָה לְבָשָׁה אָדָם, "the Spirit of Jehovah clothed the man" (chap. vi. 34; 1 Chron. xii. 18; 2 Chron. xxiv. 20). Of these the

former denotes the operations of the Divine Spirit in overcoming the resistance of the natural will of man, whilst the latter represents the Spirit of God as a power which envelopes or covers a man. The recipients and bearers of this Spirit were thereby endowed with the power to perform miraculous deeds, in which the Spirit of God that came upon them manifested itself generally in the ability to prophesy (*vid.* 1 Sam. x. 10, xix. 20, 23; 1 Chron. xii. 18; 2 Chron. xx. 14, xxiv. 20), but also in the power to work miracles or to accomplish deeds which surpassed the courage and strength of the natural man. The latter was more especially the case with the judges; hence the *Chaldee* paraphrases "the Spirit of Jehovah" in chap. vi. 34 as the "spirit of might from the Lord;" though in the passage before us it gives the erroneous interpretation רִיחַ נְבוּאָה, "the spirit of prophecy." *Kimchi* also understands it as signifying "the spirit of bravery, under the instigation of which he was able fearlessly to enter upon the war with Chushan." But we are hardly at liberty to split up the different powers of the Spirit of God in this manner, and to restrict its operations upon the judges to the spirit of strength and bravery alone. The judges not only attacked the enemy courageously and with success, but they also judged the nation, for which the spirit of wisdom and understanding was indispensably necessary, and put down idolatry (chap. ii. 18, 19), which they could not have done without the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. "*And he judged Israel and went out to war.*" The position of רִיחַ נְבוּאָה before וַיֵּצֵא לְמִלְחָמָה does not warrant us in explaining רִיחַ נְבוּאָה as signifying "he began to discharge the functions of a judge," as *Rosenmüller* has done: for נָשַׁט must not be limited to a settlement of the civil disputes of the people, but means to restore *right* in Israel, whether towards its heathen oppressors, or with regard to the attitude of the nation towards the Lord. "*And the Lord gave Chushan-rishathaim into his hand* (cf. chap. i. 2, iii. 28, etc.), *and his hand became strong over him;*" i.e. he overcame him (cf. chap. vi. 2), or smote him, so that he was obliged to vacate the land. In consequence of this victory, the land had rest from war (cf. Josh. xi. 23) forty years. "*And then Othniel died:*" the expression וַיָּמָת with 1 *consec.* does not necessarily imply that Othniel did not die for forty years, but simply that he died after rest had been restored to the land.

*Oppression of Israel by Eglon, and Deliverance by Ehud;
Shamgar's heroic Deeds.*—Chap. iii. 12-31.

In vers. 12-30 the subjugation of the Israelites by *Eglon*, the king of the Moabites, and their deliverance from this bondage, are circumstantially described. First of all, in vers. 12-14, *the subjugation*. When the Israelites forsook the Lord again (in the place of 'אֶת־הָרֶע וְנָתַן, ver. 7, we have here the appropriate expression לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרָע . . . וַיַּסְפִּי, they added to do, i.e. did again, evil, etc., as in chap. iv. 1, x. 6, xiii. 1), the Lord made Eglon the king of the Moabites strong over Israel. הָזִק עַל, to give a person strength to overcome or oppress another. עַל כִּי, as in Deut. xxxi. 17, instead of the more usual עַל אֲשֶׁר (cf. Jer. iv. 28; Mal. ii. 14; Ps. cxxxix. 14). Eglon allied himself with the Ammonites and Amalekites, those arch-foes of Israel, invaded the land, took the palm-city, i.e. Jericho (see at chap. i. 16), and made the Israelites tributary for eighteen years. Sixty years had passed since Jericho had been burnt by Joshua. During that time the Israelites had rebuilt the ruined city, but they had not fortified it, on account of the curse pronounced by Joshua upon any one who should restore it as a fortress; so that the Moabites could easily conquer it, and using it as a base, reduce the Israelites to servitude.—Ver. 15. But when the Israelites cried to the Lord for help, He set them free through the Benjaminite *Ehud*, whom He raised up as their deliverer. *Ehud* was "the son of Gera." This probably means that he was a descendant of Gera, since Gera himself, according to 1 Chron. viii. 3, was a son of Bela the son of Benjamin, and therefore was a grandson of Benjamin; and Shimei the contemporary of David, a man belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, is also called a son of Gera in 2 Sam. xvi. 5, xix. 17. At the same time, it is possible that the name *Gera* does not refer to the same person in these different passages, but that the name was repeated again and again in the same family. "*A man shut with regard to his right hand,*" i.e. hindered in the use of his right hand, not necessarily crippled, but in all probability disabled through want of use from his youth upwards. That the expression does not mean crippled, is confirmed by the fact that it is used again in connection with the 700 brave slingers in the army of the Benjaminites in chap. xx. 16, and it certainly cannot be supposed that they were all actual cripples. So much is certain, however, that it does not mean ἀμφοτεροδέξιος, qui utraque manu pro dextera utebatur (LXX.,

Vulg.), since **אָטַר** signifies *clausit* (shut) in Ps. lxix. 16. It is merely with reference to what follows that this peculiarity is so distinctly mentioned.—The Israelites sent a present by him to king Eglon. **בְּיָדוֹ** does not mean *in*, but *through*, his hand, *i.e.* through his intervention, for others were actually employed to carry the present (ver. 18), so that Ehud merely superintended the matter. *Minchah*, a gift or present, is no doubt a euphemism for tribute, as in 2 Sam. viii. 2, 6, 1 Kings v. 1.—Ver. 16. Ehud availed himself of the opportunity to approach the king of the Moabites and put him to death, and thus to shake off the yoke of the Moabites from his nation. To this end he provided himself with a sword, which had two edges (**פָּה** from **פִּי**, like **שֵׁי**, Deut. xxii. 1, from **שָׁ**), a cubit long (**וּכְפֵי**, *ἀπ. λεγ.*, signified primarily a staff, here a cubit, according to the Syriac and Arabic; not “a span,” *σπιθαμή*, LXX.), and “*did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.*”—Ver. 17. Provided with this weapon, he brought the present to king Eglon, who—as is also mentioned as a preparation for what follows—was a very fat man.—Vers. 18, 19. After presenting the gift, Ehud dismissed the people who had carried the present to their own homes; namely, as we learn from ver. 19, after they had gone some distance from Jericho. But he himself returned from the stone-quarries at Gilgal, *sc.* to Jericho to king Eglon. **מִן הַבְּסָלִים** refers to some place by Gilgal. In Deut. vii. 25, Isa. xxi. 9, Jer. viii. 19, *pesilim* signifies idols. And if we would retain this meaning here, as the LXX., *Vulg.*, and others have done, we must assume that in the neighbourhood of Gilgal there were stone idols set up in the open air,—a thing which is very improbable. The rendering “stone quarries,” from **בְּסָל**, to hew out stones (Ex. xxxiv. 1, etc.), which is the one adopted in the *Chaldee*, and by *Rashi* and others, is more likely to be the correct one. *Gilgal* cannot be the Gilgal between Jericho and the Jordan, which was the first encampment of the Israelites in Canaan, as is commonly supposed, since Ehud passed the *Pesilim* on his flight from the king’s dwelling-place to the mountains of Ephraim (vers. 26, 27); and we can neither assume, as *Bertheau* does, that Eglon did not reside in the conquered palm-city (Jericho), but in some uncultivated place in the neighbourhood of the Jordan, nor suppose that after the murder of Eglon Ehud could possibly have gone from Jericho to the Gilgal which was half an hour’s journey towards the east, for the purpose of escaping by a circuitous route of this kind to Seirah in the mountains of Ephraim, which was on the north-west of

Jericho. *Gilgal* is more likely to be *Geliloth*, which was on the west of Jericho opposite to the ascent of Adummim (*Kaalat ed Dom*), on the border of Judah and Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 17), and which was also called *Gilgal* (Josh. xv. 7). Having returned to the king's palace, Ehud sent in a message to him: "*I have a secret word to thee, O king.*" The context requires that we should understand "*he said*" in the sense of "*he had him told*" (or bade say to him), since Ehud himself did not go in to the king, who was sitting in his room, till afterwards (ver. 20). In consequence of this message the king said: שָׁקֵט, *lit.* be silent (the imperative of שָׁקַט); here it is a proclamation, Let there be quiet. Thereupon all who were standing round (viz. his attendants) left the room, and Ehud went in (ver. 20). The king was sitting "in his upper room of cooling alone." The "room of cooling" (*Luther, Sommerlaube*, summer-arbour) was a room placed upon the flat roof of a house, which was open to the currents of air, and so afforded a cool retreat, such as are still met with in the East (*vid. Shaw*, pp. 188-9). Then Ehud said, "*A word of God I have to thee;*" whereupon the king rose from his seat, from reverence towards the word of God which Ehud pretended that he had to deliver to him, not to defend himself, as *Bertheau* supposes, of which there is not the slightest intimation in the text.—Vers. 21, 22. But when the king stood up, Ehud drew his sword from under his garment, and plunged it so deeply into his abdomen that even the hilt followed the blade, and the fat closed upon the blade (so that there was nothing to be seen of it in front, because he did not draw the sword again out of his body), and the blade came out between the legs. The last words have been rendered in various ways. *Luther* follows the Chaldee and *Vulgate*, and renders it "so that the dirt passed from him," taking the ἀπ. λεγ. פֶּרֶשְׁתִּינָה as a composite noun from פֶּרֶשׁ, *stercus*, and שָׁרֵה, *jecit*. But this is hardly correct, as the form of the word פֶּרֶשְׁתִּינָה, and its connection with צִנָּה, rather points to a noun, פֶּרֶשְׁתִּין, with ה local. The explanation given by *Gesenius* in his *Thes.* and *Heb. lex.* has much more in its favour, viz. *interstitium pedum*, the place between the legs, from an Arabic word signifying *pedes dissitos habuit*, used as a euphemism for *anus*, *podex*. The subject to the verb is the blade.¹—Ver. 23. As soon as the deed was

¹ At any rate the rendering suggested by *Ewald*, "Ehud went into the open air, or into the enclosure, the space in front of the *Alija*," is untenable, for the simple reason that it is perfectly irreconcilable with the next clause, "Ehud went forth," etc. (consequently *Fr. Böttcher* proposes to erase this

accomplished, Ehud went out into the porch or front hall, shut the door of the room behind him (עַד־בֵּית, not behind himself, but literally round him, *i.e.* Eglon; cf. Gen. vii. 16, 2 Kings iv. 4) and bolted it (this is only added as a more precise explanation of the previous verb).—Vers. 24, 25. When the servants of Eglon came (to enter in to their lord) after Ehud's departure and saw the door of the upper room bolted, they thought "surely (וְאֵל, *lit.* only, nothing but) he covers his feet" (a euphemism for performing the necessities of nature; cf. 1 Sam. xxiv. 3), and waited to shaming (cf. 2 Kings ii. 17, viii. 11), *i.e.* till they were ashamed of their long waiting (see at chap. v. 28). At length they opened the door with the key, and found their lord lying dead upon the floor.

Ehud's conduct must be judged according to the spirit of those times, when it was thought allowable to adopt any means of destroying the enemy of one's nation. The treacherous assassination of a hostile king is not to be regarded as an act of the Spirit of God, and therefore is not set before us as an example to be imitated. Although Jehovah raised up Ehud as a deliverer to His people when oppressed by Eglon, it is not stated (and this ought particularly to be observed) that the Spirit of Jehovah came upon Ehud, and still less that Ehud assassinated the hostile king under the impulse of that Spirit. Ehud proved himself to have been raised up by the Lord as the deliverer of Israel, simply by the fact that he actually delivered his people from the bondage of the Moabites, and it by no means follows that the means which he selected were either commanded or approved by Jehovah.—Vers. 26 sqq. Ehud had escaped whilst the servants of Eglon were waiting, and had passed the stone quarries and reached Seirah. *Seirah* is a place that is never mentioned again; and, judging from the etymology (the hairy), it was a wooded region, respecting the situation of which all that can be decided is, that it is not to be sought for in the neighbourhood of Jericho, but "upon the mountains of Ephraim" (ver. 27). For when Ehud had come to Seirah, he blew the trumpet "*upon the mountains of Ephraim*," to announce to the people the victory that was placed within their reach by the death of Eglon, and to summon them to war with the Moabites, and then went down from the mountain into the plain near Jericho; "*and he was before them*," *i.e.* went in front as their leader, saying to the people, clause from the text, without any critical authority whatever). For if Ehud were the subject to the verb, the subject would necessarily have been mentioned, as it really is in the next clause, ver. 23a.

"Follow me; for Jehovah has given your enemies the Moabites into your hand." Then they went down and took (*i.e.* took possession of) the fords near Jericho (see at Josh. ii. 7), לְמוֹאָב, either "from the Moabites" or "towards Moab," and let no one (of the Moabites) cross over, *i.e.* escape to their own land.—Ver. 29. Thus they smote at that time about 10,000 Moabites, all fat and powerful men, *i.e.* the whole army of the enemy in Jericho and on this side of the Jordan, not letting a man escape. The expression "at that time" seems to imply that they did not destroy this number in one single engagement, but during the whole course of the war.—Ver. 30. Thus Moab was subdued under the hand of Israel, and the land had rest for eighty years.

Ver. 31. After him (Ehud) was, *i.e.* there rose up, Shamgar the son of Anath. He smote the Philistines, who had probably invaded the land of the Israelites, six hundred men, with an ox-goad, so that he also (like Othniel and Ehud, vers. 9 and 15) delivered Israel. מַלְמֶר הַבָּקָר, ἀπ. λεγ., signifies, according to the Rabbins and the ancient versions, an instrument with which they trained and drove oxen; and with this the etymology agrees, as מַלְמֶר is used in Hos. x. 11 and Jer. xxxi. 18 to denote the training of the young ox. According to *Rashi*, מַלְמֶר בָּקָר is the same as מַלְמֶר, βούκεντρον, in 1 Sam. xiii. 21. According to *Maundrell in Paulus' Samml. der merkw. Reisen nach d. Or.* i. p. 139, the country people in Palestine and Syria use when ploughing goads about eight feet long and six inches in circumference at the thick end. At the thin end they have a sharp point to drive the oxen, and at the other end a small hoe, to scrape off any dirt that may stick to the plough. Shamgar may have smitten the Philistines with some such instrument as this, just as the Edonian prince Lycurgus is described by Homer (Il. vi. 135) as putting Dionysius and the Bacchantines to flight with a βουπλήξ. Nothing is recorded about the descent of Shamgar, either here or in the Song of Deborah, in chap. v. 6. The heroic deed recorded of him must be regarded, as *O. v. Gerlach* affirms, as "merely the result of a holy inspiration that suddenly burst forth within him, in which he seized upon the first weapon that came to his hand, and put to flight the enemy when scared by a terror for God, just as Samson did on a later occasion." For he does not seem to have secured for the Israelites any permanent victory over the Philistines. Moreover, he is not called judge, nor is the period of his labours taken into account, but in chap. iv. 1 the renewed apostasy of Israel from the Lord is dated from the death of Ehud.

Oppression of Israel by Jabin, and Deliverance by Deborah and Barak.—Chap. iv. and v.

This fresh oppression of the Israelites, and the glorious victory which they obtained over Sisera, Jabin's general, through the judge Deborah and the heroic warrior Barak, are so fully described in Deborah's triumphal song in chap. v., that this song may be regarded as a poetical commentary upon that event. It by no means follows from this fact, however, that the historical account in chap. iv. was first of all founded upon the ode, and was merely intended to furnish an explanation of the song itself. Any such assumption is overthrown by the fact that the prose account in chap. iv. contains, as even *Bertheau* acknowledges, some historical details which we look for in vain in the song, and which are of great assistance in the interpretation of it. All that we can infer with any probability from the internal connection between the historical narrative and the Song of Deborah is, that the author of our book took both of them from one common source; though the few expressions and words which they contain, such as שָׁמִיכָה in ver. 18, הִצִּיחַ in ver. 21, מִשְׁבֶּה in ver. 6, and יָהָם in ver. 15, do not throw any light upon the source from which they were derived. For, with the exception of the first, which is not met with again, the whole of them occur in other passages,—the second in chap. i. 14 and Josh. xv. 18, the third in the same sense in chap. xx. 37, and the fourth in Ex. xiv. 24 and Josh. x. 10. And it by no means follows, that because in the passages referred to, "יָהָם" is found in close association with songs or poetical passages" (*Bertheau*), the word itself must be borrowed from the same source as the songs, viz. from the book of Jasher (Josh. x. 13). For הָמָם is found in the same signification in 1 Sam. vii. 10, Ex. xxiii. 27, and Deut. ii. 15, where we look in vain for any songs; whilst it always occurs in connection with the account of a miraculous overthrow of the foe by the omnipotent power of God.

Chap. iv. *The Victory over Jabin and his General Sisera.*—Vers. 1–3. As the Israelites fell away from the Lord again when Ehud was dead, the Lord gave them into the hand of the Canaanitish king *Jabin*, who oppressed them severely for twenty years with a powerful army under *Sisera* his general. The circumstantial clause, "when Ehud was dead," places the falling away of the Israelites from God in direct causal connection with the death of Ehud on the one hand, and the deliverance of Israel into the power of Jabin on the other, and clearly indicates that as long as Ehud lived he

kept the people from idolatry (cf. chap. ii. 18, 19), and defended Israel from hostile oppressions. Joshua had already conquered one king, *Jabin* of *Hazor*, and taken his capital (Josh. xi. 1, 10). The king referred to here, who lived more than a century later, bore the same name. The name *Jabin*, "the discerning," may possibly have been a standing name or title of the Canaanitish kings of *Hazor*, as *Abimelech* was of the kings of the Philistines (see at Gen. xxvi. 8). He is called "king of Canaan," in distinction from the kings of other nations and lands, such as *Moab*, *Mesopotamia*, etc. (chap. iii. 8, 12), into whose power the Lord had given up His sinful people. *Hazor*, once the capital of the kingdoms of northern Canaan, was situated over (above or to the north of) *Lake Huleh*, in the tribe of *Naphtali*, but has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xi. 1). *Sisera*, the general of *Jabin*, dwelt in *Harosheth* of the *Goyim*, and oppressed the Israelites most tyrannically (*mightily*: cf. chap. viii. 1, 1 Sam. ii. 16) for twenty years with a force consisting of 900 chariots of iron (see at Josh. xvii. 16). The situation of *Harosheth*, which only occurs here (vers. 2, 13, 16), is unknown; but it is certainly to be sought for in one of the larger plains of Galilee, possibly the plain of *Buttauf*, where *Sisera* was able to develop his forces, whose strength consisted chiefly in war-chariots, and to tyrannize over the land of Israel.

Vers. 4-11. At that time the Israelites were judged by *Deborah*, a prophetess, the wife of *Lapidoth*, who dwelt under the *Deborah-palm* between *Ramah* (or *Râm*: see at Josh. xviii. 25) and *Bethel* (*Beitin*: see at Josh. vii. 2) in the tribe of *Benjamin*, upon the mountains of *Ephraim*. *Deborah* is called אִשָּׁה נְבִיאָה on account of her prophetic gift, like *Miriam* in Ex. xv. 20, and *Hulda* the wife of *Shallum* in 2 Kings xxii. 14. This gift qualified her to judge the nation (the participle שֹׁפֵט expresses the permanence of the act of judging), i.e. first of all to settle such disputes among the people themselves as the lower courts were unable to decide, and which ought therefore, according to Deut. xvii. 8, to be referred to the supreme judge of the whole nation. The palm where she sat in judgment (cf. Ps. ix. 5) was called after her the *Deborah-palm*. The Israelites went up to her there to obtain justice. The expression "came up" is applied here, as in Deut. xvii. 8, to the place of justice, as a spiritual height, independently of the fact that the place referred to here really stood upon an eminence.—Vers. 6 sqq. But in order to secure the rights of her people against their outward foes also, she summoned *Barak* the son of *Abinoam* from *Kedesh*,

in the tribe of Naphtali, on the west of the Huleh lake (see at Josh. xii. 22), and made known to him the commands of the Lord: "*Up and draw to Mount Tabor, and take with thee 10,000 men of the children of Naphtali and Zebulun; and I will draw to thee into the brook-valley of Kishon, Sisera the captain of Jabin's army, and his chariots, and his multitude (his men of war), and give him into thy hand.*" מִשְׁכָּח has been explained in different ways. *Seb. Schmidt, Clericus*, and others supply הִקְפִּיז or הִשְׁפִּיז, draw with the trumpet (cf. Ex. xix. 13, Josh. vi. 5), i.e. blow the trumpet in long-drawn tones, upon Mount Tabor, and regard this as the signal for convening the people; whilst *Hengstenberg* (Diss. ii. pp. 76, 77) refers to Num. x. 9, and understands the blowing of the horn as the signal by which the congregation of the Lord made known its need to Him, and appealed to Him to come to its help. It cannot indeed be proved that the blowing of the trumpet was merely the means adopted for convening the people together; in fact, the use of the following מִשְׁכָּח, in the sense of draw, is to be explained on the supposition that מִשְׁכָּח is used in a double sense. "The long-drawn notes were to draw the Lord to them, and then the Lord would draw to them Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army. Barak first calls the helper from heaven, and then the Lord calls the enemy upon earth." Nevertheless we cannot subscribe to this explanation, *first* of all because the supposed ellipsis cannot be sustained in this connection, when nothing is said about the blowing of a trumpet either in what precedes or in what follows; and *secondly*, because Num. x. 9 cannot be appealed to in explanation, for the simple reason that it treats of the blowing of the *silver trumpets* on the part of the priests, and they must not be confounded with the *shopharoth*. And the use made of the trumpets at Jericho cannot be transferred to the passage before us without some further ground. We are disposed therefore to take the word מִשְׁכָּח in the sense of *draw* (intransitive), i.e. proceed one after another in a long-drawn train (as in chap. xx. 37 and Ex. xii. 21), referring to the captain and the warriors drawing after him; whilst in ver. 7 it is to be translated in the same way, though with a transitive signification. Mount Tabor, called Ἰταβύριον by the Greeks (see LXX. Hos. v. 1), the mountain of Christ's transfiguration according to an early tradition of the church, the present *Jebel et Tur*, is a large truncated cone of limestone, which is almost perfectly insulated, and rises to the height of about a thousand feet, on the north-eastern border of the plain of Jezreel. The sides of the mountain are covered with a forest of oaks and wild pistachios,

and upon its flat summit, which is about half an hour in circumference, there are the remains of ancient fortifications (see *Robinson*, Pal. iii. pp. 211 sqq., and *v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 37, 38). The words "and take with thee 10,000 men" are not to be understood as signifying that Barak was to summon the people together upon the top of Mount Tabor, but the assembling of the people is presupposed; and all that is commanded is, that he was to proceed to Mount Tabor with the assembled army, and make his attack upon the enemy, who were encamped in the valley of Kishon, *from that point*. According to ver. 10, the army was collected at Kedesh in Naphtali. *Nachal Kishon* is not only the brook *Kishon*, which is formed by streams that take their rise from springs upon Tabor and the mountains of Gilboa, flows in a north-westerly direction through the plain of Jezreel to the Mediterranean, and empties itself into the bay of Acca, and which is called *Mukatta* by the natives (see *Rob.* iii. pp. 472 sqq., and *v. Raumer*, pp. 39, 50), but the valley on both sides of the brook, *i.e.* the plain of Jezreel (see at Josh. xvii. 16), where the greatest battles have been fought for the possession of Palestine from time immemorial down to the most recent times (see *v. Raumer*, pp. 40 sqq.).—Vers. 8 sqq. Barak replied that he would not go unless she would go with him—certainly not for the reason suggested by *Bertheau*, viz. that he distrusted the divine promise given to him by Deborah, but because his mistrust of his own strength was such that he felt too weak to carry out the command of God. He wanted divine enthusiasm for the conflict, and this the presence of the prophetess was to infuse into both Barak and the army that was to be gathered round him. Deborah promised to accompany him, but announced to him as the punishment for this want of confidence in the success of his undertaking, that the prize of victory—namely, the defeat of the hostile general—should be taken out of his hand; for Jchovah would sell (*i.e.* deliver up) Sisera into the hand of a woman, viz., according to vers. 17 sqq., into the hand of Jael. She then went with him to Kedesh, where Barak summoned together Zebulun and Naphtali, *i.e.* the fighting men of those tribes, and went up with 10,000 men in his train ("at his feet," *i.e.* after him, ver. 14; cf. Ex. xi. 8 and Deut. xi. 6) to Tabor ("went up:" the expression is used here to denote the advance of an army against a place). Kedesh, where the army assembled, was higher than Tabor. פָּלַל, *Hiphil* with acc., to call together (cf. 2 Sam. xx. 4, 5). Before the engagement with the foe is described, there follows in ver. 11 a statement that

Heber the Kenite had separated himself from his tribe, the children of Hobab, who led a nomad life in the desert of Judah (chap. i. 16), and had pitched his tents as far as the oak forest at Zaanannim (see at Josh. xix. 33) near Kedesh. This is introduced because of its importance in relation to the issue of the conflict which ensued (vers. 17 sqq.). נִפְרָד with *Kametz* is a participle, which is used in the place of the perfect, to indicate that the separation was a permanent one.

Vers. 12-16. As soon as Sisera received tidings of the march of Barak to Mount Tabor, he brought together all his chariots and all his men of war from Harosheth of the Goyim into the brook-valley of the Kishon. Then Deborah said to Barak, "*Up; for this is the day in which Jehovah hath given Sisera into thy hand. Yea* (נִלְאָה, *nonne*, as an expression indicating lively assurance), *the Lord goeth out before thee,*" sc. to the battle, to smite the foe; whereupon Barak went down from Tabor with his 10,000 men to attack the enemy, according to chap. v. 19, at Taanach by the water of Megiddo. —Ver. 15. "*And the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his army, with the edge of the sword before Barak.*" הִנָּחַם, as in Ex. xiv. 24 and Josh. x. 10, denotes the confounding of the hostile army by a miracle of God, mostly by some miraculous phenomenon of nature: see, besides Ex. xiv. 24, 2 Sam. xxii. 15, Ps. xviii. 15, and cxliv. 6. The expression הִנָּחַם places the defeat of Sisera and his army in the same category as the miraculous destruction of Pharaoh and of the Canaanites at Gibeon; and the combination of this verb with the expression "with the edge of the sword" is to be taken as *constructio prægans*, in this sense: Jehovah threw Sisera and his army into confusion, and, like a terrible champion fighting in front of Israel, smote him without quarter. Sisera sprang from his chariot to save himself, and fled on foot; but Barak pursued the routed foe to Harosheth, and completely destroyed them. "*All Sisera's army fell by the edge of the sword; there remained not even to one,*" i.e. not a single man.

Vers. 17-22. Sisera took refuge in the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, to escape the sword of the Israelites, as king Jabin lived at peace with the house of Heber, i.e. with this branch of the Kenites.—Ver. 18. Jael received the fugitive into her tent in the usual form of oriental hospitality (סָבַח, as in Gen. xix. 2, 3, to turn aside from the road and approach a person), and covered him with a covering (כִּיפָה, ἀπ ληγ., covering, or rug), that he might be able to sleep, as he was thoroughly exhausted with his

flight.—Ver. 19. On his asking for water to drink, as he was thirsty (צָמֵךְ, defective form for צָמָאֵךְ), she handed him milk from her bottle, and covered him up again. She gave him milk instead of water, as Deborah emphatically mentions in her song in chap. v. 25, no doubt merely for the purpose of giving to her guest a friendly and hospitable reception. When *Josephus* affirms, in his account of this event (Ant. v. 5, 4), that she gave him milk that was already spoiled (διεφθορὸς ἤδη), i.e. had turned sour, and *R. Tanchum* supposes that such milk intoxicated the weary man, these are merely later decorations of the simple fact, and have no historical worth whatever.—Ver. 20. In order to be quite sure, Sisera entreated his hostess to stand before the door and turn any one away who might come to her to seek for one of the fugitives. עֲמֹר is the imperative for עָמַר, as the syntax proves that the word cannot be an infinitive. The anomaly apparent in the use of the gender may be accounted for on the ground that the masculine was the more general form, and might therefore be used for the more definite feminine. There are not sufficient grounds for altering it into עֲמֹרָה, the *inf. abs.* Whether Jael complied with this wish is not stated; but in the place of anything further, the chief fact alone is given in ver. 21, namely, that Jael took a tent-plug, and went with a hammer in her hand to Sisera, who had fallen through exhaustion into a deep sleep, and drove the plug into his temples, so that it penetrated into the earth, or the floor. The words וְהָיָא נִרְדָּם וַיָּעַף are introduced as explanatory of the course of the events: “but he was fallen into a deep sleep, and exhausted,” i.e. had fallen fast asleep through exhaustion. “And so he died.” וַיָּכַח is attached as a consequence to וַיָּעַף . . . וַיָּחַצְנוּ, whereas וַיָּעַף belongs to the parenthetical clause וְהָיָא נִרְדָּם. This is the explanation adopted by *Rosenmüller*, and also in the remark of *Kimchi*: “the words וַיָּעַף וְהָיָא נִרְדָּם indicate the reason why Sisera neither heard Jael approach him, nor was conscious of the blow inflicted upon him.” For the combination of וַיָּעַף with וַיָּכַח, “then he became exhausted and died,” which *Stud.* and *Bertheau* support, does not give any intelligible thought at all. A man who has a tent-peg driven with a hammer into his temples, so that the peg passes through his head into the ground, does not become exhausted before he dies, but dies instantaneously. And וַיָּעַף, from עָפָה, equivalent to עָפָה (Jer. iv. 31), or יָעַף, and written with *Patach* in the last syllable, to distinguish it from עָף, *volare*, has no other meaning than to be exhausted, in any of the passages in which it occurs (see 1 Sam. xiv. 28, 31; 2 Sam. xxi. 15). The

rendering adopted by the LXX., ἐσκοτώθη, cannot be grammatically sustained.—Ver. 22. When Barak, who was in pursuit of Sisera, arrived at Jael's tent, she went to meet him, to show him the deed which she had performed. Thus was Deborah's prediction to Barak (ver. 9) fulfilled. The Lord had sold Sisera into the hand of a woman, and deprived Barak of the glory of the victory. Nevertheless the act itself was not morally justified, either by this prophetic announcement, or by the fact that it is commemorated in the song of Deborah in chap. v. 24 sqq. Even though there can be no doubt that Jael acted under the influence of religious enthusiasm for the cause of Israel and its God, and that she was prompted by religious motives to regard the connection of her tribe with Israel, the people of the Lord, as higher and more sacred, not only than the bond of peace, in which her tribe was living with Jabin the Canaanitish king, but even than the duties of hospitality, which are so universally sacred to an oriental mind, her heroic deed cannot be acquitted of the sins of lying, treachery, and assassination, which were associated with it, by assuming, as *Calovius*, *Buddeus*, and others have done, that when Jael invited Sisera into her tent, and promised him safety, and quenched his thirst with milk, she was acting with perfect sincerity, and without any thought of killing him, and that it was not till after he was fast asleep that she was instigated and impelled *instinctu Dei arcano* to perform the deed. For Jehovah, the God of Israel, not only abhors lying lips (Prov. xii. 22), but hates wickedness and deception of every kind. It is true, He punishes the ungodly at the hand of sinners; but the sinners whom He employs as the instruments of His penal justice in carrying out the plans of His kingdom, are not instigated to the performance of wicked deeds by an inward and secret impulse from Him. God had no doubt so ordered it, that Sisera should meet with his death in Jael's tent, where he had taken refuge; but this divine purpose did not justify Jael in giving to the enemy of Israel a hospitable reception into her tent, making him feel secure both by word and deed, and then murdering him secretly while he was asleep. Such conduct as that was not the operation of the Spirit of God, but the fruit of a heroism inspired by flesh and blood; and even in Deborah's song (chap. v. 24 sqq.) it is not lauded as a divine act.

Vers. 23, 24. "*So God subdued at that time Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel; and the hand of the Israelites became heavier and heavier in its pressure upon him, until they had*

destroyed him." הִלָּךְ וְקָשָׁה . . . וַתִּהְיֶה יָד, "the hand . . . increased more and more, becoming heavy." הִלָּךְ, used to denote the progress or continual increase of an affair, as in Gen. viii. 3, etc., is connected with the infinitive absolute, and with the participle of the action concerned. קָשָׁה is the feminine participle of קָשָׂה, like נָדָל in Gen. xxvi. 13 (see *Ges.* § 131, 3, Anm. 3). The overthrow of Jabin and his rule did not involve the extermination of the Canaanites generally.

Deborah's Song of Victory.—Chap. v.

This highly poetical song is so direct and lively an utterance of the mighty force of the enthusiasm awakened by the exaltation of Israel, and its victory over Sisera, that its genuineness is generally admitted now. After a general summons to praise the Lord for the courage with which the people rose up to fight against their foes (ver. 2), Deborah the singer dilates in the first section (vers. 3–11) upon the significance of the victory, picturing in lively colours (1) the glorious time when Israel was exalted to be the nation of the Lord (vers. 3–5); (2) the disgraceful decline of the nation in the more recent times (vers. 6–8); and (3) the joyful turn of affairs which followed her appearance (vers. 9–11). After a fresh summons to rejoice in their victory (ver. 12), there follows in the *second* section (vers. 13–21) a lively picture of the conflict and victory, in which there is a vivid description (a) of the mighty gathering of the brave to battle (vers. 13–15a); (b) of the cowardice of those who stayed away from the battle, and of the bravery with which the braver warriors risked their lives in the battle (vers. 15b–18); and (c) of the successful result of the conflict (vers. 19–21). To this there is appended in the *third* section (vers. 22–31) an account of the glorious issue of the battle and the victory: first of all, a brief notice of the flight and pursuit of the foe (vers. 22–24); secondly, a commemoration of the slaying of Sisera by Jael (vers. 24–27); and thirdly, a scornful description of the disappointment of Sisera's mother, who was counting upon a large arrival of booty (vers. 28–30). The song then closes with the hope, founded upon this victory, that all the enemies of the Lord might perish, and Israel increase in strength (ver. 31a). The whole song, therefore, is divided into three leading sections, each of which again is arranged in three somewhat unequal strophes, the first and second sections being introduced by a summons to the praise of God (vers. 2, 12), whilst the third closes with an expression of hope, drawn

from the contents of the whole, with regard to the future prospects of the kingdom of God (ver. 31a).

Ver. 1. The historical introduction ("Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying") takes the place of a heading, and does not mean that the song of Deborah and Barak which follows was composed by them jointly, but simply that it was sung by them together, in commemoration of the victory. The poetess or writer of the song, according to vers. 3, 7, and 12, was Deborah. The song itself opens with a summons to praise the Lord for the willing and joyful rising up of His people.

Ver. 2. *That the strong in Israel showed themselves strong,
That the people willingly offered themselves,
Praise ye the Lord!*

The meaning of פָּרַע and פָּרַעוֹת is a subject of dispute. According to the Septuagint rendering, and that of *Theodot.*, ἐν τῷ ἄρξασθαι ἀρχηγούς ἐν Ἰσραήλ, many give it the meaning to begin or to lead, and endeavour to establish this meaning from an Arabic word signifying to find one's self at the head of an affair. But this meaning cannot be established in Hebrew. פָּרַע has no other meaning than to let loose from something, to let a person loose or free (see at Lev. x. 6); and in the only other passage where פָּרַעוֹת occurs (Deut. xxxii. 42), it does not refer to a leader, but to the luxuriant growth of the hair as the sign of great strength. Hence in this passage also פָּרַעוֹת literally means *comati*, the hairy ones, i.e. those who possessed strength; and פָּרַע, to manifest or put forth strength. The persons referred to are the champions in the fight, who went before the nation with strength and bravery. The preposition בְּפָרַע indicates the reason for praising God, or rather the object with which the praise of the Lord was connected. בְּפָרַעוֹ, literally "in the showing themselves strong." The meaning is, "for the fact that the strong in Israel put forth strength." הִתְנַחֵב, to prove one's self willing, here to go into the battle of their own free will, without any outward and authoritative command. This introduction transports us in the most striking manner into the time of the judges, when Israel had no king who could summon the nation to war, but everything depended upon the voluntary rising of the strong and the will of the nation at large. The manifestation of this strength and willingness Deborah praises as a gracious gift of the Lord. After this summons to praise the Lord, the first part of the song opens with an appeal to the kings and princes of the earth to hear what Deborah has to proclaim to the praise of God.

- Ver. 3. Hear, ye kings ; give ear, ye princes !
 I, to the Lord will I sing,
 Will sing praise to the Lord, the God of Israel.
4. Lord, when Thou wentest out from Seir,
 When Thou marchedst out of the fields of Edom,
 The earth trembled, and the heavens also dropped ;
 The clouds also dropped water.
5. The mountains shook before the Lord,
 Sinai there before the Lord, the God of Israel.

The "kings and princes" are not the rulers in Israel, for Israel had no kings at that time, but the kings and princes of the heathen nations, as in Ps. ii. 2. These were to discern the mighty acts of Jehovah in Israel, and learn to fear Jehovah as the almighty God. For the song to be sung applies to Him, the God of Israel. *וְיָרֵא*, *ψάλλειν*, is the technical expression for singing with an instrumental accompaniment (see at Ex. xv. 2).—Vers. 4, 5. To give the Lord the glory for the victory which had been gained through His omnipotent help over the powerful army of Sisera, and to fill the heathen with fear of Jehovah, and the Israelites with love and confidence towards Him, the singer reverts to the terribly glorious manifestation of Jehovah in the olden time, when Israel was accepted as the nation of God (Ex. xix.). Just as Moses in his blessing (Deut. xxxiii. 2) referred the tribes of Israel to this mighty act, as the source of all salvation and blessing for Israel, so the prophetess Deborah makes the praise of this glorious manifestation of God the starting-point of her praise of the great grace, which Jehovah as the faithful covenant God had displayed to His people in her own days. The tacit allusion to Moses' blessing is very unmistakeable. But whereas Moses describes the descent of the Lord upon Sinai (Ex. xix.), according to its gracious significance in relation to the tribes of Israel, as an objective fact (Jehovah came from Sinai, Deut. xxxiii. 2), Deborah clothes the remembrance of it in the form of an address to God, to bring out the thought that the help which Israel had just experienced was a renewal of the coming of the Lord to His people. Jehovah's going out of Seir, and marching out of the fields of Edom, is to be interpreted in the same sense as His rising up from Seir (Deut. xxxiii. 2). As the descent of the Lord upon Sinai is depicted there as a rising of the sun from the east, so the same descent in a black cloud amidst thunder, lightning, fire, and vapour of smoke (Ex. xix. 16, 18), is represented here with direct allusion to these phenomena as a storm rising up from Seir in the east, in which the Lord

advanced to meet His people as they came from the west to Sinai. Before the Lord, who came down upon Sinai in the storm and darkness of the cloud, the earth shook and the heaven dropped, or, as it is afterwards more definitely explained, the clouds dropped with water, emptied themselves of their abundance of water as they do in the case of a storm. The mountains shook (נָלַל, *Niphal* of לָלַל, dropping the reduplication of the ל = נָלַל, Isa. lxiii. 19, lxiv. 2), even the strong rocky mountain of Sinai, which stood out so distinctly before the eyes of the singer, that she speaks of it as "this Sinai," pointing to it as though it were locally near. David's description of the miraculous guidance of Israel through the desert in Ps. lxxviii. 8, 9, is evidently founded upon this passage, though it by no means follows from this that the passage before us also treats of the journey through the desert, as *Clericus* supposes, or even of the presence of the Lord in the battle with Sisera, and the victory which it secured. But greatly as Israel had been exalted at Sinai by the Lord its God, it had fallen just as deeply into bondage to its oppressors through its own sins, until Deborah arose to help it (vers. 6-8).

- Ver. 6. In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath,
 In the days of Jael, the paths kept holiday,
 And the wanderers of the paths went crooked ways.
 7. The towns in Israel kept holiday, they kept holiday,
 Until that I, Deborah, arose,
 That I arose a mother in Israel.
 8. They chose new gods;
 Then was war at the gates:
 Was there a shield seen and a spear
 Among forty thousand in Israel?

The deep degradation and disgrace into which Israel had sunk before the appearance of Deborah, through its falling away from the Lord into idolatry, forms the dark reverse of that glorification at Sinai. Although, after Ehud, Shamgar had also brought help to the people against their enemies by a victory over the Philistines (chap. iii. 31), and although Jael, who proved herself a heroine by slaying the fugitive Sisera, was then alive, things had got to such a pitch with Israel, that no one would venture upon the public high roads. There are no good grounds for the conjecture that Jael was a different person from the Jael mentioned in chap. iv. 17 sqq., whether a judge who is not further known, as *Ewald* supposes, or a female judge who stood at the head of the nation in these unhappy times (*Bertheau*). חָדְלוּ אֶרְחוֹת, *lit.* "the paths ceased," *sc.*

to be paths, or to be trodden by men. הֹלְכֵי נְתִיבוֹת, "*those who went upon paths*," or beaten ways, i.e. those who were obliged to undertake journeys for the purpose of friendly intercourse or trade, notwithstanding the burden of foreign rule which pressed upon the land; such persons went by "*twisted paths*," i.e. by roads and circuitous routes which turned away from the high roads. And the פְּרָזוֹן, i.e. the *cultivated land*, with its open towns and villages, and with their inhabitants, was as forsaken and desolate as the public highways. The word *perazon* has been rendered judge or guidance by modern expositors, after the example of *Teller* and *Gesenius*; and in ver. 11 decision or guidance. But this meaning, which has been adopted into all the more recent lexicons, has nothing really to support it, and does not even suit our verse, into which it would introduce the strange contradiction, that at the time when Shamgar and Jael were judges, there were no judges in Israel. In addition to the Septuagint version, which renders the word *δυνατοί* in this verse (i.e. according to the *Cod. Vat.*, for the *Cod. Al.* has *φράζων*), and then in the most unmeaning way adopts the rendering *αὐξήσον* in ver. 11, from which we may clearly see that the translators did not know the meaning of the word, it is common to adduce an Arabic word which signifies *segregavit, discrevit rem ab aliis*, though it is impossible to prove that the Arabic word ever had the meaning to judge or to lead. All the old translators, as well as the Rabbins, have based their rendering of the word upon פְּרָז, inhabitant of the flat country (Deut. iii. 5, and 1 Sam. vi. 18), and פְּרָזוֹת, the open flat country, as distinguished from the towns surrounded by walls (Ezek. xxxviii. 11; Zech. ii. 8), according to which פְּרָזוֹן, as the place of meeting, would denote both the cultivated land with its unenclosed towns and villages, and also the population that was settled in the open country in unfortified places,—a meaning which also lies at the foundation of the word in Hab. iii. 14. Accordingly, *Luther* has rendered the word *Bauern* (peasants). עַר אֲשֶׁר קָמְתִי עַר שֶׁקָּמְתִי. The contraction of אֲשֶׁר into שׁ, with *Dagesh* following, and generally pointed with *Seghol*, but here with *Patach* on account of the *p*, which is closely related to the gutturals, belongs to the popular character of the song, and is therefore also found in the Song of Solomon (chap. i. 12, ii. 7, 17, iv. 6). It is also met with here and there in simple prose (Judg. vi. 17, vii. 12, viii. 26); but it was only in the literature of the time of the captivity and a still later date, that it found its way more and more from the language of ordinary conversation into

that of the Scriptures. Deborah describes herself as "a mother in Israel," on account of her having watched over her people with maternal care, just as Job calls himself a father to the poor who had been supported by him (Job xxix. 16; cf. Isa. xxii. 21).—Ver. 8 describes the cause of the misery into which Israel had fallen. **אֱלֹהִים חֲדָשִׁים** is the object to **יָבֹרֵךְ**, and the subject is to be found in the previous term *Israel*. Israel forsook its God and Creator, and chose new gods, *i.e.* gods not worshipped by its fathers (*vid.* Deut. xxxii. 17). Then there was war (**לָחָם**, the construct state of **לָחַם**, a verbal noun formed from the *Piel*, and signifying conflict or war) at the gates; *i.e.* the enemy pressed up to the very gates of the Israelitish towns, and besieged them, and there was not seen a shield or spear among forty thousand in Israel, *i.e.* there were no warriors found in Israel who ventured to defend the land against the foe. **מָה** indicates a question with a negative reply assumed, as in 1 Kings i. 27, etc. Shield and spear (or lance) are mentioned particularly as arms of offence and defence, to signify arms of all kinds. The words are not to be explained from 1 Sam. xiii. 22, as signifying that there were no longer any weapons to be found among the Israelites, because the enemy had taken them away ("not seen" is not equivalent to "not found" in 1 Sam. xiii. 22); they simply affirm that there were no longer any weapons to be seen, because not one of the 40,000 men in Israel took a weapon in his hand. The number 40,000 is not the number of the men who offered themselves willingly for battle, according to ver. 2 (*Bertheau*); for apart from the fact that they did not go unarmed into the battle, it is at variance with the statement in chap. iv. 6, 10, that Barak went into the war and smote the enemy with only 10,000 men. It is a round number, *i.e.* an approximative statement of the number of the warriors who might have smitten the enemy and delivered Israel from bondage, and was probably chosen with a reference to the 40,000 fighting men of the tribes on the east of the Jordan, who went with Joshua to Canaan and helped their brethren to conquer the land (Josh. iv. 13). Most of the more recent expositors have given a different rendering of ver. 8. Many of them render the first clause according to the *Peshito* and *Vulgate*, "*God chose something new*," taking *Elohim* as the subject, and *chadashim* (new) as the object. But to this it has very properly been objected, that, according to the terms of the song, it was not *Elohim* but *Jehovah* who effected the deliverance of Israel, and that the Hebrew for new things is not **חֲדָשִׁים**, but **חֲדָשִׁוֹת** (Isa. xlii.

9, xlvi. 6), or הַרְשָׁה (Isa. xliii. 19; Jer. xxxi. 22). On these grounds *Ewald* and *Bertheau* render *Elohim* "judges" (they chose new judges), and appeal to Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 7, 8, where the authorities who administered justice in the name of God are called *Elohim*. But these passages are not sufficient by themselves to establish the meaning "judges," and still less to establish the rendering "new judges" for *Elohim chadashim*. Moreover, according to both these explanations, the next clause must be understood as relating to the specially courageous conflict which the Israelites in their enthusiasm carried on with Sisera; whereas the further statement, that among 40,000 warriors who offered themselves willingly for battle there was not a shield or a lance to be seen, is irreconcilably at variance with this. For the explanation suggested, namely, that these warriors did not possess the ordinary weapons for a well-conducted engagement, but had nothing but bows and swords, or instead of weapons of any kind had only the staffs and tools of shepherds and husbandmen, is proved to be untenable by the simple fact that there is nothing at all to indicate any contrast between ordinary and extraordinary weapons, and that such a contrast is altogether foreign to the context. Moreover, the fact appealed to, that לָּ points to a victorious conflict in vers. 13, 19, 22, as well as in ver. 11, is not strong enough to support the view in question, as לָּ is employed in ver. 19 in connection with the battle of the kings of Canaan, which was not a successful one, but terminated in a defeat.

The singer now turns from the contemplation of the deep degradation of Israel to the glorious change which took place as soon as she appeared:—

- Ver. 9. My heart inclines to the leaders of Israel;
 To those who offered themselves willingly in the nation. Praise ye the Lord!
10. Ye that ride upon white asses;
 Ye that sit upon coverings,
 And that walk in the way, reflect!
11. With the voice of the archers among drawers (of water),
 There praise ye the righteous acts of the Lord,
 The righteous acts in His villages in Israel.
 Then the people of the Lord went down to the gates!

We must supply the *subst. verb* in connection with לָּ, "My heart is (*sc.* inclined) towards the leaders of Israel," *i.e.* feels itself drawn towards them. מְחַיֶּה for מְחַיֶּה (ver. 14), the determining one, *i.e.* the commander or leader in war: as in Deut. xxxiii. 21. The

leaders and willing ones are first of all to praise the Lord for having crowned their willingness with victory.—Ver. 10. And all classes of the people, both high and low, have reason to join in the praise. Those who ride upon white, *i.e.* white-spotted asses, are the upper classes generally, and not merely the leaders (cf. chap. x. 4, xii. 14). לָבָן, *lit.* dazzling white; but since there are no asses that are perfectly white, and white was a colour that was highly valued both by Hebrews and Arabs, they applied the term white to those that were only spotted with white. Those who sit upon coverings (מִנִּי from מָנָה, a covering or carpet, with the plural termination ן, which is to be regarded as a poetical Chaldaism) are the rich and prosperous; and those who walk on the way, *i.e.* travellers on foot, represent the middle and lower classes, who have to go about and attend to their affairs. Considered logically, this triple division of the nation is not a very exact one, as the first two do not form a true antithesis. But the want of exactness does not warrant our fusing together the middle term and the first, and understanding by *middin* either saddles or saddle-cloths, as *Ewald* and *Bertheau* have done; for saddle-cloths are still further from forming an antithesis to asses, so that those who ride upon white asses could be distinguished, as the upper classes and leaders, from those who sit upon saddles, or are “somewhat richer.” Moreover, there is no reason for regarding these three classes as referring simply to the long line of warriors hastening from the victory to the triumphal fête. On the contrary, all classes of the people are addressed, as enjoying the fruits of the victory that had been obtained: the upper classes, who ride upon their costly animals; the rich resting at home upon their splendid carpets; and the poor travellers, who can now go quietly along the high-road again without fear of interruption from the foe (ver. 6). שִׁיר is rendered “sing” by many; but this rendering cannot be sustained from Ps. cv. 2 and cxlv. 5, and it is not necessary in the verse before us, since the well-established meaning of the word “ponder,” reflect, *sc.* upon the acts of the Lord, is a perfectly suitable one.—Ver. 11. The whole nation had good reason to make this reflection, as the warriors, having returned home, were now relating the mighty acts of the Lord among the women who were watering their flocks, and the people had returned to their towns once more. This is in all probability the idea of the obscure verse before us, which has been interpreted in such very different ways. The first clause, which has no verb, and cannot constitute a sentence by itself, must be connected with the following clause, and taken as an *anakolouthon*,

as **שָׁמַע יְהוָה** does not form a direct continuation of the clause commencing with **מִקוֹל**. After the words "*from the voice of the archers,*" we should expect the continuation "*there is heard,*" or "*there sounds forth the praise of the acts of the Lord.*" Instead of that, the construction that was commenced is relinquished at **שָׁמַע יְהוָה**, and a different turn is given to the thought. This not only seems to offer the simplest explanation, but the only possible solution of the difficulty. For the explanation that **מִן** is to be taken as signifying "*away from,*" as in Num. xv. 24, etc., in the sense of "*far from the voice of the archers, among the watering women,*" does not suit the following word **שָׁמַע**, "*there,*" at all. It would be necessary to attribute to **מִן** the meaning "*no more disquieted by,*" a meaning which the preposition could not possibly have in this clause. **מְחַצֵּצִים** are not sharers in the booty, for **חָצַץ** simply means to cut, to cut in pieces, to divide, and is never applied to the sharing of booty, for which **חָלַץ** is the word used (*vid.* ver. 30; Ps. lxxviii. 13; Isa. ix. 2). **מִחֹצֵץ** is to be regarded, as the Rabbins maintain, as a *denom.* from **חָצַץ**, to hold an arrow, signifying therefore the shooter of an arrow. It was probably a natural thing for Deborah, who dwelt in Benjamin, to mention the archers as representatives of warriors generally, since this was the principal weapon employed by the Benjaminites (see 1 Chron. viii. 40, xii. 2; 2 Chron. xiv. 7, xvii. 17). The tarrying of the warriors among the drawers of water, where the flocks and herds were being watered, points to the time of peace, when the warriors were again occupied with their civil and domestic affairs. **יָהִי** is a simple aorist. **וְהִנֵּה**, *lit.* to repeat, then to relate, or praise. "*The righteousness of Jehovah,*" i.e. the marvellous acts of the Lord in and upon Israel for the accomplishing of His purposes of salvation, in which the righteousness of His work upon earth was manifested (cf. 1 Sam. xii. 7, Micah vi. 5). **מִצְדֹּת מִשְׁפָּטָיו** has been rendered by modern expositors, either "*the righteous acts of His guidance or of His decision*" (*Ewald* and *Bertheau*), or "*the righteous acts of His commanders,*" or "*the benefits towards His princes (leaders) in Israel*" (*Ros.* and others). But neither of these can be sustained. We must take **מִצְדֹּת** here in just the same sense as in ver. 7; the country covered with open towns and villages, together with their inhabitants, whom Jehovah had delivered from the hostile oppression that had rested upon them, by means of the victory obtained over Sisera. After that victory the people of the Lord went down again to their gates, from the mountains and hiding-places in which they had taken refuge from their foes (vers. 6, 7),

returning again to the plains of the land, and the towns that were now delivered from the foe.

Ver. 12 forms the introduction to the second part, viz. the description of the conflict and the victory. Throwing herself into the great event which she is about to commemorate, Deborah calls upon herself to strike up a song, and upon Barak to lead off his prisoners :

Ver. 12. Awake, awake, Deborah !

Awake, awake, utter a song !

Rise up, Barak, and lead captive thy captives, O son of Abinoam !

עָרִי has the tone upon the last syllable on the first two occasions, to answer to the rapid summoning burst of the Lord in the opening address (*Bertheau*). שָׁבָה שְׁבִי, to lead away captives, as the fruit of the victory ; not merely to lead in triumph. On the form שָׁבָה with *Chateph-patach*, see *Ewald*, § 90, *b*. In the next three strophes of this part (vers. 13–21) the progress of the conflict is described ; and in the first two the part taken in the battle by the different tribes (vers. 13–15*a*, and 15*b*–18).

Ver. 13. Then came down a remnant of nobles of the nation ;
Jehovah came down to me among the heroes.

14. Of Ephraim, whose root in Amalek ;
Behind thee Benjamin among thy peoples.
From Machir came down leaders,
And from Zebulun marchers with the staff of the conductor.

15*a*. And princes in Issachar with Deborah,
And Issachar as well as Barak,
Driven into the valley through his feet.

Looking back to the commencement of the battle, the poetess describes the streaming of the brave men of the nation down from the mountains, to fight the enemy with Barak and Deborah in the valley of Jezreel ; though the whole nation did not rise as one man against its oppressors, but only a remnant of the noble and brave in the nation, with whom Jehovah went into the battle. In ver. 13 the Masoretic pointing of יָרִי is connected with the rabbinical idea of the word as the *fut. apoc.* of יָרֶה : “ *then (now) will the remnant rule over the glorious,*” i.e. the remnant left in Israel over the stately foe ; “ *Jehovah rules for me (or through me) over the heroes in Sisera’s army,*” which *Luther* has also adopted. But, as *Schnurr.* has maintained, this view is decidedly erroneous, inasmuch as it is altogether irreconcilable with the description which follows of the marching of the tribes of Israel into the battle. יָרִי is to be understood in the

same sense as יָרַד in ver. 14, and to be pointed as a perfect יָרַד.¹ “*There came down*,” *sc.* from the mountains of the land into the plain of Jezreel, a remnant of nobles. לְאֶרְיִים is used instead of a closer subordination through the construct state, to bring out the idea of שָׁרִיר into greater prominence (see *Ewald*, § 292). עַם is in apposition to לְאֶרְיִים, and not to be connected with the following word יְהוָה, as it is by some, in opposition to the accents. The thought is rather this: with the nobles or among the brave Jehoiah himself went against the foe. לִי is a *dat. commodi*, equivalent to “for my joy.”—Ver. 14. “*From* (מִן, poetical for מִן) *Ephraim*,” *sc.* there came fighting men; not the whole tribe, but only nobles or brave men, and indeed those whose roots were in Amalek, *i.e.* those who were rooted or had taken root, *i.e.* had settled and spread themselves out upon the tribe-territory of Ephraim, which had formerly been inhabited by Amalekites, the mount of the Amalekites, mentioned in chap. xii. 15 (for the figure itself, see Isa. xxvii. 6, Ps. lxxx. 10, and Job v. 3). “*Behind thee*,” *i.e.* behind Ephraim, there followed Benjamin among thy (Ephraim’s) people (עַמִּים, a poetical form for עַמִּים, in the sense of hosts). Benjamin lived farther south than Ephraim, and therefore, when looked at from the stand-point of the plain of Jezreel, behind Ephraim; “but he came upon the scene of battle, either in subordination to the more powerful Ephraimites, or rushing on with the Ephraimitish hosts” (*Bertheau*). “*From Machir*,” *i.e.* from western Manasseh, there came down leaders (see at ver. 9), *sc.* with warriors in their train. *Machir* cannot refer to the Manassite family of Machir, to which Moses gave the northern part of Gilead, and Bashan, for an inheritance (comp. Josh. xvii. 1 with xiii. 29-31), but it stands poetically for Manasseh generally, as Machir was the only son of Manasseh, from whom all the Manassites were descended (Gen. i. 23; Num. xxvi. 29 sqq., xxvii. 1). The reference here, however, is simply to that portion of the tribe of Manasseh which had received its inheritance by the side of Ephraim, in the land to the west of the Jordan. This explanation of the word is required, not only by the fact that Machir is mentioned after Ephraim and Benjamin, and

¹ The *Cod. Al.* of the LXX. contains the correct rendering, τότε κατέβη κατάλιμμα. In the Targum also יר is correctly translated ירד; descendit, although the germs of the rabbinical interpretation are contained in the paraphrase of the whole verse: tunc descendit unus ex exercitu Israel et fregit fortitudinem fortium gentium. Ecce non ex fortitudine manus eorum fuit hoc; sed Dominus fregit ante populum suum fortitudinem virorum osorum eorum.

before Zebulun and Issachar, but still more decidedly by the introduction of Gilead beyond Jordan in connection with Reuben, in ver. 17, which can only signify Gad and eastern Manasseh. Hence the two names *Machir* and *Gilead*, the names of Manasseh's son and grandson, are poetically employed to denote the two halves of the tribe of Manasseh; Machir signifying the western Manassites, and Gilead the eastern. "*From Zebulun marchers* (מַשְׁעֵה, to approach in long processions, as in chap. iv. 6) *with the staff of the conductor.*" מַשְׁעֵה, writer or numberer, was the technical name given to the musterer-general, whose duty it was to levy and muster the troops (2 Kings xxv. 19; cf. 2 Chron. xxvi. 11); here it denotes the military leader generally.—Ver. 15a. מַשְׁעֵה, "*my princes*," does not furnish any appropriate meaning, as neither Deborah nor Barak was of the tribe of Issachar, and it is not stated anywhere that the Issacharites gathered round Deborah as their leader. The reading מַשְׁעֵה (*stat. constr.*), adopted by the old versions, must be taken as the correct one, and the introduction of the preposition בְּ does not preclude this (compare בְּנִיבֵעַ, 2 Sam. i. 21, and *Ewald*, § 289, b.). עַם, which is used to denote an outward equality, as in 1 Sam. xvii. 42, and is substantially the same as the עַם which follows ("*just as*"), is construed without בְּ in the first clause, as in Ps. xlviii. 6. מַשְׁעֵה בְּנִיבֵעַ: into the valley of Jezreel, the plain of Kishon. מַשְׁעֵה בְּנִיבֵעַ, as in Job xviii. 8, to be sent off, i.e. incessantly impelled, through his feet; here it is applied to an irresistible force of enthusiasm for the battle. The nominative to מַשְׁעֵה is Issachar and Barak.

Ver. 15b. At the brooks of Reuben were great resolutions of heart.

16. Why remainest thou between the hurdles,
To hear the piping of the flocks?
At the brooks of Reuben were great projects of heart.
17. Gilead rests on the other side of the Jordan;
And Dan . . . why tarries he by ships?
Asher sits on the shore of the sea,
And by his bays he reposes.
18. Zebulun, a people that despises its soul even to death,
And Naphtali upon the heights of the field.

In this strophe Deborah first of all mentions the tribes which took no part in the conflict (vers. 15b–17), and then returns in ver. 18 to the Zebulunites, who staked their life along with Naphtali for the deliverance of Israel from the yoke of the enemy. The enumeration of the tribes who remained at a distance from the conflict commences with Reuben (vers. 15b and 16). In this tribe there did arise a lively sympathy with the national elevation. They held

meetings, passed great resolutions, but it led to no practical result; and at length they preferred to remain quietly at home in their own comfortable pastoral life. The meaning brooks for נָחַל is well established by Job xx. 17, and there is no reason whatever for explaining the word as equivalent to מַלְכוּת, מַלְכוּת, divisions (2 Chron. xxxv. 5, 12; Ezra vi. 18). The territory of Reuben, which was celebrated for its splendid pastures, must have abounded in brooks. The question, Why satest thou, or remainedst thou sitting between the hurdles? *i.e.* in the comfortable repose of a shepherd's life, is an utterance of amazement; and the irony is very apparent in the next clause, to hear the bleating of the flocks, *i.e.* the piping of the shepherds, instead of the blast of the war-trumpets.—Ver. 17. Gilead, Dan, and Asher took no part at all. By *Gilead*, the tribes of Gad and half Manasseh are intended. The use of the term הַיַּרְדֵּן to denote the whole of the territory of the Israelites on the east of the Jordan probably gave occasion to this, although יַרְדֵּן (without the article) does not refer to the land even here, but refers primarily to the grandson of Manasseh, as the representative of his family which dwelt in Gilead. (For further remarks, see at ver. 14.) Dan also did not let the national movement disturb it in its earthly trade and commerce. נָגַד, to keep one's self in a place, is construed here with the accusative of the place, as in Ps. cxx. 5. The territory of Dan included the port of Joppa (see at Josh. xix. 46), where the Danites probably carried on a trade with the Phœnicians. Asher also in his land upon the coast did not allow himself to be disturbed from his rest, to join in the common war of its nation. חוֹף יָם is used, as in Gen. xlix. 13, for the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. מַפְרָצִים, ἀπ. λεγ., literally a rent, and hence applied to a bay, as an incision made in the sea-shore.—Ver. 18. Zebulun and Naphtali acted quite differently. Zebulun showed itself as a people that despised its life even to death, *i.e.* that sacrificed its life for the deliverance of its fatherland. Naphtali did the same in its mountain home. The two tribes had raised 10,000 fighting men at Barak's call (chap. iv. 10), who constituted at any rate the kernel of the Israelitish army.

If we run over the tribes enumerated, it seems strange that the tribes of Judah and Simeon are not mentioned either among those who joined in the battle, or among those who stayed away. The only way in which this can be explained is on the supposition that these two tribes were never summoned by Barak, either because they were so involved in conflict with the Philistines, that they

were unable to render any assistance to the northern tribes against their Canaanitish oppressors, as we might infer from chap. iii. 31, or because of some inward disagreement between these tribes and the rest. But even apart from Judah and Simeon, the want of sympathy on the part of the tribes that are reproved is a sufficient proof that the enthusiasm for the cause of the Lord had greatly diminished in the nation, and that the internal unity of the congregation was considerably loosened.

In the next strophe the battle and the victory are described :—

- Ver. 19. Kings came, . . . they fought;
 The kings of Canaan fought
 At Taanach, at the waters of Megiddo.
 A piece of silver they did not take.
20. From heaven they fought,
 The stars from their courses fought against Sisera.
21. The brook of Kishon swept them away,
 The brook of the olden time, the brook Kishon.
 Go on, my soul, in strength!

The advance of the foe is described in few words. Kings came on and fought. They were the kings of Canaan, since Jabin, like his ancestor (Josh. xi. 1 sqq.), had formed an alliance with other kings of northern Canaan, who went to the battle under the command of Sisera. The battle took place at Taanach (see at Josh. xii. 21), by the water of Megiddo, the present Lejun (see at Josh. xii. 21), *i.e.* by the brook Kishon (cf. chap. iv. 7). Taanach and Megiddo were not quite five miles apart, and beside and between them there were several brooks which ran into the southern arm of the Kishon, that flowed through the plain to the north of both these towns. The hostile kings went into the battle with the hope of slaying the Israelites and making a rich capture of booty. But their hopes were disappointed. They could not take with them a piece of silver as booty. כֶּסֶף, which generally signifies booty or gain, is probably to be taken here in its primary sense of *frustum*, from כָּטַעַ, to cut off or cut in pieces, a "piece of silver," equivalent to a single piece of valuable booty.—Ver. 20. For not only did the Israelites fight against them, but the powers of heaven also. "*From heaven*" is more minutely defined by "*the stars from their courses.*" These words explain the statement in chap. iv. 15, "the Lord discomfited Sisera;" though in our opinion not so clearly as to enable us to define more precisely the natural phenomenon by which God threw the enemy into confusion. In all probability we have to think of a terrible storm, with thunder and lightning and hail, or

the sudden bursting of a cloud, which is poetically described as though the stars of heaven had left their courses to fight for the Lord and His kingdom upon earth.—Ver. 21. The kings of Canaan could do nothing against these powers. They were smitten; the brook Kishon washed them (*i.e.* their corpses) away. The meaning “to wash away” is well established by the dialects and the context, though the verb itself only occurs here. As the battle was fought between Taanach and Megiddo, *i.e.* to the south of the brook Kishon, and the smitten foe fled towards the north, many of them met with their death in the waves of the brook, which was flowing over its banks at the time. The brook is called נַחַל קִישׁוֹן, *i.e.* the brook of the old world or the olden time (according to the LXX. *Cod. Vat.* χειμάρρουν ἀρχαίων), as the stream that had been flowing from time immemorial, and not, as the Chaldee interprets it, the stream that had been celebrated from olden time on account of the mighty acts that had been performed there. The meaning suggested by *Ewald* and others, “brook of attacks, or slaughters,” is not well sustained, although קָדַם is sometimes used to denote a hostile encounter. The last clause interrupts the description of the slaughter and the victory. Borne away by the might of the acts to be commemorated, Deborah stimulates her soul, *i.e.* herself, to a vigorous continuation of her song. הִתְרַדִּי is jussive, and וְעַן an accusative governed by the verb, in strength, vigorously; for she had still to celebrate the glorious results of the victory. This is done in the third part of the song (vers. 22-31), the first strophe of which (vers. 22-24) describes in brief drastic traits the flight of the foe, and the treatment of the fugitives by the people of the land.

Ver. 22. Then did the hoofs of the horses stamp

With the hunting, the hunting of his strong ones.

23. Curse ye Meroz, saith the angel of the Lord;

Curse ye, curse ye the inhabitants thereof!

Because they came not to the help of Jehovah,

To the help of Jehovah among the mighty.

24. Blessed before women be Jael,

The wife of Heber the Kenite,

Blessed before women in the tent!

The war-chariots of the enemy hunted away in the wildest flight (ver. 22). The horses stamped the ground with the continuous hunting or galloping away of the warriors. הִתְרַדִּי, the hunting (cf. הִתְרַדִּי, Nah. iii. 2). The repetition of the word expresses the continuance or incessant duration of the same thing (see *Ewald*, § 313, *a.*). אַבִּירִים, strong ones, are not the horses, but the warriors

in the war-chariots. The suffix refers to **סִסְרָא**, which is used collectively. The mighty ones on horses are not, however, merely the Canaanitish princes, such as Sisera, as *Ewald* maintains, but the warriors generally who hunted away upon their war-chariots.—Ver. 23. The enemy, or at all events Sisera, might have been destroyed in his flight by the inhabitants of Meroz; but they did not come to the help of the Israelites, and brought down the curse of God upon themselves in consequence. That this is the thought of ver. 23 is evident from the context, and more especially from the blessing pronounced upon Jael in ver. 24. The situation of Meroz, which is not mentioned again, cannot be determined with certainty. *Wilson* and *v. Raumer* imagine that it may be *Kefr Musr* on the south of Tabor, the situation of which at all events is more suitable than *Marussus*, which was an hour and a half to the north of Beisan, and which *Rabbi Schwarz* supposed to be Meroz (see *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 334). The curse upon the inhabitants of this place is described as a word or command of the angel of the Lord, inasmuch as it was the angel of the Lord who fought for Israel at Megiddo, as the revealer of the invisible God, and smote the Canaanites. Deborah heard from him the words of the curse upon the inhabitants of Meroz, because they did not come to help Jehovah when He was fighting with and for the Israelites. “*Among the heroes*,” or mighty men, *i.e.* associating with the warriors of Israel.—Ver. 24. Jael behaved altogether differently, although she was not an Israelite, but a woman of the tribe of the Kenites, which was only allied with Israel (see chap. iv. 11, 17 sqq.). For her heroic deed she was to be blessed before women (**נָשִׁים** as in Gen. iii. 14, literally removed away from women). The “*women in the tent*” are dwellers in tents, or shepherdesses. This heroic act is poetically commemorated in the strophe which follows in vers. 25–27.

- Ver. 25. He asked water, she gave him milk ;
 She handed him cream in the dish of nobles.
 26. She stretched out her hand to the plug,
 And her right hand to the workmen's hammer,
 And hammered Sisera, broke his head,
 And dashed in pieces and pierced his temples.
 27. Between her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down :
 Between her feet he bowed, he fell :
 Where he bowed, there, he fell down dead.

Assuming that the fact itself is well known, Deborah does not think it necessary to mention Sisera's name in ver. 25. **סִסְרָא**,

which generally signifies thick curdled milk, is used here as synonymous with חֶלֶב, in the sense of good superior milk. כַּסֵּל is only used here and in chap. vi. 38, and signifies a bowl or vessel for holding liquids (see *Arab.*, *Chald.*, and *Talm.*; also *Bochart*, *Hieroz.* i. pp. 625 sqq., ed. *Ros.*). The dish of nobles is a fine costly bowl, such as they are accustomed to hand to noble guests. The whole verse is simply intended to express the thought, that Jael had given to her guest Sisera a friendly reception, and treated him honourably and hospitably, simply in order to make him feel secure.—Ver. 26. “*Her hand*,” i.e. the left hand, as is shown by the antithesis, “her right hand,” which follows. On the form הַשְׁלֵחָה, the third pers. fem. sing. with הָ attached, to distinguish it the more clearly from the second pers., see the remarks on Ex. i. 10. הַלֵּמֶת עֲמָלִים, *hammer* or *mallet of the hard workers*, is a large heavy hammer. For the purpose of depicting the boldness and greatness of the deed, the words are crowded together in the second hemistich : הֵלֵם, to hammer, or smite with the hammer ; כָּרַץ, ἀπ. λεγ., to smite in pieces, smite through ; כָּרַץ, to smite or dash in pieces ; חָלַה, to pierce or bore through. The heaping up of the words in ver. 27 answers the same purpose. They do not “express the delight of a satisfied thirst for revenge,” but simply bring out the thought that Sisera, who was for years the terror of Israel, was now struck dead with a single blow. בְּאֵשֶׁר כָּרַע, at the place where he bowed, there he fell שָׁדָה, overpowered and destroyed. In conclusion, the singer refers once more in the last strophe (vers. 28-30) to the mother of Sisera, as she waited impatiently for the return of her son, and foreboded his death, whilst the prudent princesses who surrounded her sought to cheer her with the prospect of a rich arrival of booty.

Ver. 28. Through the window there looks out and cries aloud

The mother of Sisera, through the lattice work,

Why does his chariot delay its coming ?

Why tarry the steps of his team ?

29. The wise of her princesses reply :

—But she repeats her words to herself—

30. Surely they are finding and sharing booty :

A maiden, two maidens to the head of a man,

Booty of variegated cloths for Sisera ;

Booty of variegated cloths, garments worked in divers colours,

A variegated cloth, two garments worked in divers colours for his neck
as booty.

Sisera's mother looks out with impatience for the return of her son, and cries aloud out of the window, Why is he never coming ?—

foreboding the disastrous result of the war. *חָנֵב*, *ἀπ. ληγ.*, signifies to cry; in Aramæan it is used for *הָרִיעַ* and *רָנָן*, to denote a loud joyful cry; here it evidently signifies a loud cry of anxiety. For the repeated question, Why does his chariot delay its coming? is evidently expressive of anxiety and alarm. The form *אָחָרִי*, *perf. Piel* for *אָחָרִי*, may be attributed to the influence of the aleph, which favours the seghol sound, like *יָחֵמִי* in Gen. xxx. 39. The combination of *מִרְקָבוֹתָיו*, *פְּעָמֵי*, "steps of his chariots," cannot be explained, as it is by *Bertheau*, on the ground that the word *פְּעָמִי*, as a general expression for intermittent movement, might also be applied to the jerking of the wheels in rolling, but simply on the supposition that *מִרְקָבוֹת*, as a synonym for *רָכֶב*, is used for the horses yoked to the chariot in the sense of team, like *רָכֶב* in 2 Sam. viii. 4, x. 18, etc.—Ver. 29. The princesses in attendance upon Sisera's mother sought to console her with the remark, that Sisera would have to gather together rich booty, and that his return was delayed in consequence. In the expression "the wisest of her princesses" (see *Ges.* § 119, 2), the irony is very obvious, as the reality put all their wise conjectures to shame. *תַּעֲנִינָהּ*, third pers. plur. fem. for *תַּעֲנִינָה*. The second hemistich of ver. 29 contains a clause inserted as a parenthesis. *אֲדִיהִיא* is adversative: "but she;" *וְאִי* is only an emphatic copula; the antithesis lies in the emphatic change of subject indicated by *הִיא* *הַיָּשִׁיב אַמְרֶיהָ*, *lit.* to bring back her words, *i.e.* to repeat. *לָהּ* is used in a reflective sense, "to herself." The meaning is: But Sisera's mother did not allow herself to be quieted by the words of her wise princesses; on the contrary, she kept repeating the anxious question, Why does Sisera delay his coming? In ver. 30 there follows the answer of the wise princesses. They imagine that Sisera has been detained by the large amount of booty which has to be divided. *הֲלֹא*, *nonne*, is he not, in the sense of lively certainty. They will certainly discover rich booty, and divide it. *רַחֵם*, *uterus*, for *puella*. "A girl (or indeed probably) two girls to the head of the man," *i.e.* for each man. *צִבְעִים*, *coloured things*, cloths or clothes. *רִקְמָה*, *worked stuff*, or garments worked in divers colours (see the remarks on Ex. xxvi. 36), is attached without the *vav cop.* to *צִבְעִים*, and is also dependent upon *שָׁלַל*. The closing words, *לְצַוְאֵי שָׁלַל*, "for the necks," or (as the plural is also frequently used to signify a single neck, *e.g.* Gen. xxvii. 16, xlv. 14) "for the neck of the booty," do not give any appropriate sense, as *שָׁלַל* neither signifies animals taken as booty nor the taker of booty. The idea, however, that *שָׁלַל* is used for *שָׁלַח*, like *הִלָּךְ* in 2 Sam. xii. 4

for *שִׂשְׁמִית*, *viator*, and *הַתָּה* in Prov. xxiii. 28 for *הַתָּה*, seems inadmissible, since *שִׂשְׁמִית* has just before been used three times in its literal sense. There is just the same objection to the application of *שִׂשְׁמִית* to animals taken as booty, not to mention the fact that they would hardly have thought of having valuable cloths upon the necks of animals taken as booty. Consequently the only explanation that remains, is either to alter *שִׂשְׁמִית* into *שִׂשְׁמִית* or *שִׂשְׁמִית*, or else to change *שִׂשְׁמִית* into *שִׂשְׁמִית*, the royal spouse. In the former case, *שִׂשְׁמִית* would have to be taken as in apposition to *שִׂשְׁמִית*: a variegated cloth, two worked in divers colours for his (Sisera's) neck as booty, as the LXX. have rendered it (*τῷ τραχήλῳ αὐτοῦ σκύλα*). *Ewald* and *Bertheau* decide in favour of the second alteration, and defend it on the ground that *שִׂשְׁמִית* might easily find its way into the text as a copyist's error for *שִׂשְׁמִית*, on account of *שִׂשְׁמִית* having been already written three times before, and that we cannot dispense with some such word as *שִׂשְׁמִית* here, since the repetition of *שִׂשְׁמִית* three times, and the threefold use of *שִׂשְׁמִית*, evidently show that there were three different kinds of people among whom the booty was to be distributed; and also that it was only a fitting thing that Sisera should set apart one portion of the booty to adorn the neck of his wife, and that the wisest of the noble ladies, when mentioning the booty, should not forget themselves.

Ver. 31a. So shall all Thine enemies perish, O Jehovah!

But let those who love Him be like the rising of the sun in its strength.

This forms the conclusion of the song. *וְשִׁשְׁמִית*, so, refers to the whole of the song: just in the same manner as Sisera and his warriors. The rising of the sun in its strength is a striking image of the exaltation of Israel to a more and more glorious unfolding of its destiny, which Deborah anticipated as the result of this victory. With the last clause, "*And the land had rest forty years*" (cf. chap. iii. 11, 30, viii. 28), the account of this event is brought to a close.

II. THE TIMES OF GIDEON AND HIS FAMILY, AND OF THE JUDGES TOLA AND JAIR.—CHAP. VI.—X. 5.

In this second stage of the period of the judges, which did not extend over an entire century (only ninety-five years), Israel was only punished for its apostasy from the Lord, it is true, with a seven years' oppression by the Midianites; but the misery which these enemies, who allied themselves with Amalekites and other Arabian

hordes, brought upon both land and people, so far surpassed the pressure of the previous chastisements, that the Israelites were obliged to take refuge from the foe in ravines, caves, and strongholds of the mountains. But the more heavily the Lord punished His rebellious nation, the more gloriously did He set forth His nearness to help, and also the way which would lead to a lasting peace, and to true deliverance out of every trouble, in the manner in which He called and fitted Gideon to be its deliverer, and gave him the victory over the innumerable army of the hostile hordes, with only 300 chosen warriors. But the tendency to idolatry and to the worship of Baal had already become so strong in Israel, that even Gideon, that distinguished hero of God, who had been so marvellously called, and who refused the title of king when offered to him from genuine fidelity to the Lord, yielded to the temptation to establish for himself an unlawful worship, in a high-priestly ephod which had been prepared for his use, and thus gave the people an occasion for idolatry. For this reason his house was visited with severe judgments, which burst upon it after his death, under the three years' reign of his son Abimelech; although, notwithstanding the deep religious and moral depravity which was manifested in the doings of Abimelech, the Lord gave His people rest for forty-five years longer after the death of Abimelech under two judges, before He punished their apostasy with fresh hostile oppressions.

The history of Gideon and his family is related very fully, because the working of the grace and righteousness of the faithful covenant God was so obviously displayed therein, that it contained a rich treasure of instruction and warning for the church of the Lord in all ages. The account contains such an abundance of special notices of separate events and persons, as can only be explained on the supposition that the author made use of copious records which had been made by contemporaries and eye-witnesses of the events. At the same time, the separate details do not contain any such characteristic marks as will enable us to discover clearly, or determine with any certainty, the nature of the source or sources which the author employed. The only things peculiar to this narrative are the use of the prefix *ו* for *וְאֵשֶׁר*, not only in reports of the sayings of the persons engaged (chap. vi. 17), but also in the direct narrative of facts (chap. vii. 12, viii. 26), and the formula *וַיְהִי יְהוָה לְבָשָׁה* (chap. vi. 34), which only occurs again in 1 Chron. xii. 18, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20. On the other hand, neither

the interchange of *ha-Elohim* (chap. vi. 36, 39, vii. 14) and *Elohim* (chap. vi. 40, viii. 3, ix. 7, 9, 13, 23, 56, 57) with *Jehovah*, nor the use of the name *Jerubbaal* for *Gideon* (chap. vi. 32, vii. 1, viii. 29, ix. 1, 2, 5, 16, 19, 24, 28), nor lastly the absence of the "theocratical pragmatism" in chap. ix., contains any proof of the nature of the source employed, or even of the employment of two different sources, as these peculiarities are founded upon the contents and materials of the narrative itself.¹

Oppression of Israel by the Midianites, and call of Gideon to be their Deliverer.—Chap. vi. 1-32.

Vers. 1-10. *Renewed Apostasy of the Nation, and its Punishment.*—Ver. 1. As the Israelites forsook *Jehovah* their God again, the Lord delivered them up for seven years into the hands of the Midianites. The *Midianites*, who were descendants of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. xxv. 2), and had penetrated into the grassy steppes on the eastern side of the country of the Moabites and

¹ Even *Bertheau*, who infers from these data that two different sources were employed, admits that *ha-Elohim* in the mouth of the Midianites (chap. vii. 14) and *Elohim* in Jotham's fable, where it is put into the mouth of the trees, prove nothing at all, because here, from the different meanings of the divine names, the author could not have used anything but *Elohim*. But the same difference is quite as unmistakeable in chap. viii. 3, ix. 7, 23, 56, 57, since in these passages, either the antithesis of man and God, or the idea of supernatural causality, made it most natural for the author to use the general name of God even if it did not render it absolutely necessary. There remain, therefore, only chap. vi. 20, 36, 39, 40, where the use of *ha-Elohim* and *Elohim* instead of *Jehovah* may possibly have originated with the source made use of by the author. On the other hand, the name *Jerubbaal*, which Gideon received in consequence of the destruction of the altar of Baal (chap. vi. 32), is employed with conscious reference to its origin and meaning, not only in chap. vii. 1, viii. 29, 35, but also throughout chap. ix., as we may see more especially in chap. ix. 16, 19, 28. And lastly, even the peculiarities of chap. ix.—namely, that the names *Jehovah* and *Gideon* do not occur there at all, and that many historical circumstances are related apparently without any link of connection, and torn away from some wider context, which might have rendered them intelligible, and without which very much remains obscure—do not prove that the author drew these incidents from a different source from the rest of the history of Gideon,—such, for example, as a more complete history of the town of Shechem and its rulers in the time of the judges, as *Bertheau* imagines. For these peculiarities may be explained satisfactorily enough from the intention so clearly expressed in chap. viii. 34, 35, and ix. 57, of showing how the ingratitude of the Israelites towards Gideon, especially the wickedness of the Shechemites, who helped to murder Gideon's sons to gratify Abimelech, was punished by God. And no other peculiarities can be discovered that could possibly establish a diversity of sources.

Ammonites (see at Num. xxii. 4), had shown hostility to Israel even in the time of Moses, and had been defeated in a war of retaliation on the part of the Israelites (Num. xxxi.). But they had afterwards recovered their strength, so that now, after an interval of 200 years, the Lord used them as a rod of chastisement for His rebellious people. In vers. 1, 2, 6, they alone are mentioned as oppressors of Israel; but in vers. 3, 33, and chap. vii. 12, the Amalekites and children of the east are mentioned in connection with them, from which we may see that the Midianites were the principal enemies, but had allied themselves with other predatory Bedouin tribes, to make war upon the Israelites and devastate their land. On the *Amalekites*, those leading enemies of the people of God who had sprung from Esau, see the notes on Gen. xxxvi. 12 and Ex. xvii. 8. "*Children of the east*" (see Job i. 3) is the general name for the tribes that lived in the desert on the east of Palestine, "like the name of *Arabs* in the time of *Josephus* (in Ant. v. 6, 1, he calls the children of the east mentioned here by the name of *Arabs*), or in later times the names of the Nabatæans and Kedarenes" (*Bertheau*). Hence we find in chap. viii. 10, that all the enemies who oppressed the Israelites are called "children of the east."—Vers. 2-5. *The oppression of Israel by Midian and its allies*. Their power pressed so severely upon the Israelites, that before (or because of) them the latter "*made them the ravines which are in the mountains, and the caves, and the strongholds,*" *sc.* which were to be met with all over the land in after times (*viz.* at the time when our book was written), and were safe places of refuge in time of war. This is implied in the definite article before מְהָרוֹת and the following substantives. The words "*they made them*" are not at variance with the fact that there are many natural caves to be found in the limestone mountains of Palestine. For, on the one hand, they do not affirm that all the caves to be found in the land were made by the Israelites at that time; and, on the other hand, עֲשָׂה does not preclude the use of natural caves as places of refuge, since it not only denotes the digging and making of caves, but also the adaptation of natural caves to the purpose referred to, *i.e.* the enlargement of them, or whatever was required to make them habitable. The ἀπ. λεγ. מְהָרוֹת does not mean "light holes" (*Bertheau*), or "holes with openings to the light," from נָהַר, in the sense of to stream, to enlighten (*Rashi, Kimchi, etc.*), but is to be taken in the sense of "*mountain ravines,*" hollowed out by torrents (from נָהַר, to pour), which the Israelites made into hiding-

places. *מְצֻדֹת*, *fortresses*, mountain strongholds. These ravines, caves, and fortresses were not merely to serve as hiding-places for the Israelitish fugitives, but much more as places of concealment for their possessions and necessary supplies. For the Midianites, like genuine Bedouins, thought far more of robbing and plundering and laying waste the land of the Israelites, than of exterminating the people themselves. *Herodotus* (i. 17) says just the same respecting the war of the Lydian king Alyattes with the Milesians. —Vers. 3, 4. When the Israelites had sown, the Midianites and their allies came upon them, encamped against them, and destroyed the produce of the land (the fruits of the field and soil) as far as Gaza, in the extreme south-west of the land (“till thou come,” as in Gen. x. 19, etc.). As the enemy invaded the land with their camels and flocks, and on repeated occasions encamped in the valley of Jezreel (ver. 33), they must have entered the land on the west of the Jordan by the main road which connects the countries on the east with Palestine on the west, crossing the Jordan near Beisan, and passing through the plain of Jezreel; and from this point they spread over Palestine to the sea-coast of Gaza. “*They left no sustenance* (in the shape of produce of the field and soil) *in Israel, and neither sheep, nor oxen, nor asses. For they came on with their flocks, and their tents came like grasshoppers in multitude.*” The *Chethibh* *בָּאֵי* is not to be altered into *יָבֵאִי*, according to the *Keri* and certain *Codd.* If we connect *וְאֹהֲלֵיהֶם* with the previous words, according to the Masoretic pointing, we have a simple asyndeton. It is more probable, however, that *וְאֹהֲלֵיהֶם* belongs to what follows: “*And their tents came in such numbers as grasshoppers.*” *כְּבָרִי*, *lit.* like a multitude of grasshoppers, in such abundance. “*Thus they came into the land to devastate it.*”—Ver. 6. The Israelites were greatly weakened in consequence (*יָדָל*, the imperf. *Niphal* of *דָּלַל*), so that in their distress they cried to the Lord for help.—Vers. 7-10. But before helping them, the Lord sent a prophet to reprove the people for not hearkening to the voice of their God, in order that they might reflect, and might recognise in the oppression which crushed them the chastisement of God for their apostasy, and so be brought to sincere repentance and conversion by their remembrance of the former miraculous displays of the grace of God. The Lord God, said the prophet to the people, brought you out of Egypt, the house of bondage, and delivered you out of the hand of Egypt (Ex. xviii. 9), and out of the hand of all your oppressors (see chap. ii. 18, iv. 3, x. 12),

whom He drove before you (the reference is to the Amorites and Canaanites who were conquered by Moses and Joshua); but ye have not followed His commandment, that ye should not worship the gods of the Amorites. The Amorites stand here for the Canaanites, as in Gen. xv. 16 and Josh. xxiv. 15

Vers. 11-32. *Call of Gideon to be the Deliverer of Israel.*—As the reproof of the prophet was intended to turn the hearts of the people once more to the Lord their God and deliverer, so the manner in which God called Gideon to be their deliverer, and rescued Israel from its oppressors through his instrumentality, was intended to furnish the most evident proof that the help and salvation of Israel were not to be found in man, but solely in their God. God had also sent their former judges. The Spirit of Jehovah had come upon Othniel, so that he smote the enemy in the power of God (chap. iii. 10). Ehud had put to death the hostile king by stratagem, and then destroyed his army; and Barak had received the command of the Lord, through the prophetess Deborah, to deliver His people from the dominion of their foes, and had carried out the command with her assistance. But Gideon was called to be the deliverer of Israel through an appearance of the angel of the Lord, to show to him and to all Israel, that Jehovah, the God of the fathers, was still near at hand to His people, and could work miracles as in the days of old, if Israel would only adhere to Him and keep His covenant. The call of Gideon took place in two revelations from God. First of all the Lord appeared to him in the visible form of an angel, in which He had already made himself known to the patriarchs, and summoned him in the strength of God to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Midianites (vers. 11-24). He then commanded him, in a dream of the night, to throw down his father's altar of Baal, and to offer a burnt-offering to Jehovah his God upon an altar erected for the purpose (vers. 25-32). In the first revelation the Lord acknowledged Gideon; in the second He summoned Gideon to acknowledge Him as his God.

Vers. 11-24. *Appearance of the Angel of the Lord.*—Ver. 11. The angel of the Lord, i.e. Jehovah, in a visible self-revelation in human form (see vol. i. pp. 185 sqq.), appeared this time in the form of a traveller with a staff in his hand (ver. 21), and sat down "*under the terebinth which (was) in Ophrah, that (belonged) to Joash the Abi-ezrite.*" It was not the oak, but Ophrah, that belonged to Joash, as we may see from ver. 24, where the expression "Ophrah of the Abi-ezrite" occurs. According to Josh. xvii. 2 and

1 Chron. vii. 18, *Abiezer* was a family in the tribe of Manasseh, and according to ver. 15 it was a small family of that tribe. *Joash* was probably the head of the family at that time, and as such was the lord or owner of *Ophrah*, a town (chap. viii. 27; cf. ix. 5) which was called "Ophrah of the Abi-ezrite," to distinguish it from Ophrah in the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 23). The situation of the town has not yet been determined with certainty. *Josephus* (Ant. v. 6, 5) calls it *Ephran*. *Van de Velde* conjectures that it is to be found in the ruins of *Erfai*, opposite to Akraheh, towards the s.e., near the Mohammedan Wely of Abu Kharib, on the s.w. of Janun (Mem. pp. 337-8), close to the northern boundary of the tribe-territory of Ephraim, if not actually within it. By this terebinth tree was Gideon the son of Joash "*knocking out wheat in the wine-press.*" תַּבַּת does not mean to thresh, but to knock with a stick. The wheat was threshed upon open floors, or in places in the open field that were rolled hard for the purpose, with threshing carriages or threshing shoes, or else with oxen, which they drove about over the scattered sheaves to tread out the grains with their hoofs. Only poor people knocked out the little corn that they had gleaned with a stick (Ruth ii. 17), and Gideon did it in the existing times of distress, namely in the pressing-tub, which, like all wine-presses, was sunk in the ground, in a hole that had been dug out or hewn in the rock (for a description of cisterns of this kind, see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 135-6), "*to make the wheat fly*" (i.e. to make it safe) "*from the Midianites*" (תַּבַּת as in Ex. ix. 20).—Ver. 12. While he was thus engaged the angel of the Lord appeared to him, and addressed him in these words: "*Jehovah (is) with thee, thou brave hero.*" This address contained the promise that the Lord would be with Gideon, and that he would prove himself a mighty hero through the strength of the Lord. This promise was to be a guarantee to him of strength and victory in his conflict with the Midianites.—Ver. 13. But Gideon, who did not recognise the angel of the Lord in the man who was sitting before him, replied doubtingly, "*Pray, sir, if Jehovah is with us, why has all this befallen us?*"—words which naturally recall to mind the words of Deut. xxxi. 17, "Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?" "*And where,*" continued Gideon, "*are all His miracles, of which our fathers have told us? . . . But now Jehovah hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.*" Gideon may have been reflecting, while knocking the wheat, upon the misery of his people, and the best means of delivering them from the

oppression of the enemy, but without being able to think of any possibility of rescuing them. For this reason he could not understand the address of the unknown traveller, and met his promise with the actual state of things with which it was so directly at variance, namely, the crushing oppression of his people by their enemies, from which he concluded that the Lord had forsaken them and given them up to their foes.—Ver. 14. “*Then Jehovah turned to him and said, Go in this thy strength, and deliver Israel from the hand of Midiau. Have not I sent thee?*” The writer very appropriately uses the name Jehovah here, instead of the angel of Jehovah; for by his reply the angel distinctly manifested himself as Jehovah, more especially in the closing words, “*Have not I sent thee?*” (אֵלֶּיךָ, in the sense of lively assurance), which are so suggestive of the call of Moses to be the deliverer of Israel (Ex. iii. 12). “*In this thy strength,*” i.e. the strength which thou now hast, since Jehovah is with thee—Jehovah, who can still perform miracles as in the days of the fathers. The demonstrative “*this*” points to the strength which had just been given to him through the promise of God.—Ver. 15. Gideon perceived from these words that it was not a mere man who was speaking to him. He therefore said in reply, not “*pray sir*” (אֵלֶּיךָ), but “*pray, Lord*” (אֵלֶּיךָ, i.e. Lord God), and no longer speaks of deliverance as impossible, but simply inquires, with a consciousness of his own personal weakness and the weakness of his family, “*Whereby (with what) shall I save Israel? Behold, my family (lit. ‘thousand,’ equivalent to mishpachah: see at Num. i. 16) is the humblest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house (my family).*”—Ver. 16. To this difficulty the Lord replies, “*I will be with thee* (see Ex. iii. 12, Josh. i. 5), *and thou wilt smite the Midianites as one man,*” i.e. at one blow, as they slay a single man (see Num. xiv. 15).—Vers. 17 sqq. As Gideon could no longer have any doubt after this promise that the person who had appeared to him was speaking in the name of God, he entreated him to assure him by a sign (אֵימָה, a miraculous sign) of the certainty of his appearance. “*Do a sign that thou art speaking with me,*” i.e. that thou art really God, as thou affirmest. אֵימָה, for אֵימָה, is taken from the language of ordinary life. At the same time he presents this request: “*Depart not hence till I (go and) come to thee, and bring out my offering and set it before thee;*” and the angel at once assents. *Minchah* does not mean a sacrifice in the strict sense (θυσία, sacrificium), nor merely a “gift of food,” but a sacrificial gift in the

sense of a gift presented to God, on the acceptance of which he hoped to receive the sign, which would show whether the person who had appeared to him was really God. This sacrificial gift consisted of such food as they were accustomed to set before a guest whom they wished especially to honour. Gideon prepared a kid of the goats (קֶזַי is used to denote the preparation of food, as in Gen. xviii. 7, 8, etc.), and unleavened cakes of an ephah (about 22½ lbs.) of meal, and brought the flesh in a basket and the broth in a pot out to the terebinth tree, and placed it before him.—Vers. 20, 21. The angel of the Lord then commanded him to lay the flesh and the cakes upon a rock close by, and to pour the broth upon it; that is to say, to make use of the rock as an altar for the offering to be presented to the Lord. When he had done this, the angel touched the food with the end of his staff, and fire came out of the rock and consumed the food, and the angel of the Lord vanished out of Gideon's sight. "*This rock,*" i.e. a rocky stone that was lying near. The departure of the angel from his eyes is to be regarded as a sudden disappearance; but the expression does not warrant the assumption that the angel ascended to heaven in this instance, as in chap. xiii. 19, 20, in the flame of the sacrifice.—Ver. 22. In this miracle Gideon received the desired sign, that the person who had appeared to him was God. But the miracle filled his soul with fear, so that he exclaimed, "*Alas, Lord Jehovah! for to this end have I seen the angel of the Lord face to face.*" אָהֳרָה אֵלַי הָיָה is an exclamation, sometimes of grief on account of a calamity that has occurred (Josh vii. 7), and sometimes of alarm caused by the foreboding of some anticipated calamity (Jer. i. 6, iv. 10, xxxii. 17; Ezek. iv. 14, etc.). Here it is an expression of alarm, viz. fear of the death which might be the necessary consequence of his seeing God (see Ex. xx. 16 (19), and the remarks on Gen. xvi. 13). The expression which follows, "*for to this end,*" serves to account for the exclamation, without there being any necessity to assume an ellipsis, and supply "*that I may die.*" כִּי-יָמוּתִי is always used in this sense (see Gen. xviii. 5, xix. 8, xxxiii. 10, etc.).—Vers. 23, 24. But the Lord comforted him with the words, "*Peace to thee; fear not: thou wilt not die.*" These words were not spoken by the angel as he vanished away, but were addressed by God to Gideon, after the disappearance of the angel, by an inward voice. In gratitude for this comforting assurance, Gideon built an altar to the Lord, which he called *Jehovah-shalom*, "*the Lord is peace.*" The intention of this altar, which was preserved "*unto this day,*" i.e. till the

time when the book of Judges was composed, is indicated in the name that was given to it. It was not to serve as a place of sacrifice, but to be a memorial and a witness of the revelation of God which had been made to Gideon, and of the proof which he had received that Jehovah was peace, *i.e.* would not destroy Israel in wrath, but cherished thoughts of peace. For the assurance of peace which He had given to Gideon, was also a confirmation of His announcement that Gideon would conquer the Midianites in the strength of God, and deliver Israel from its oppressors.

The theophany here described resembles so far the appearance of the angel of the Lord to Abram in the grove of Mamre (Gen. xviii.), that he appears in perfect human form, comes as a traveller, and allows food to be set before him; but there is this essential difference between the two, that whereas the three men who came to Abraham took the food that was set before them and ate thereof,—that is to say, allowed themselves to be hospitably entertained by Abraham,—the angel of the Lord in the case before us did indeed accept the *minchah* that had been made ready for him, but only as a sacrifice of Jehovah which he caused to ascend in fire. The reason for this essential difference is to be found in the different purpose of the two theophanies. To Abraham the Lord came to seal that fellowship of grace into which He had entered with him through the covenant that He had made; but in the case of Gideon His purpose was simply to confirm the truth of His promise, that Jehovah would be with him and would send deliverance through him to His people, or to show that the person who had appeared to him was the God of the fathers, who could still deliver His people out of the power of their enemies by working such miracles as the fathers had seen. But the acceptance of the *minchah* prepared for Him, as a sacrifice which the Lord himself caused to be miraculously consumed by fire, showed that the Lord would still graciously accept the prayers and sacrifices of Israel, if they would but forsake the worship of the dead idols of the heathen, and return to Him in sincerity. (Compare with this the similar theophany in chap. xiii.)

Vers. 25–32. *Gideon set apart as the Deliverer of his People.*—In order to be able to carry out the work entrusted to him of setting Israel free, it was necessary that Gideon should first of all purify his father's house from idolatry, and sanctify his own life and labour to Jehovah by sacrificing a burnt-offering.—Ver. 25. "*In that night,*" *i.e.* the night following the day on which the Lord

appeared to him, God commanded him to destroy his father's Baal's altar, with the *asherah-idol* upon it, and to build an altar to Jehovah, and offer a bullock of his father's upon the altar. "Take the ox-bullock which belongs to thy father, and indeed the second bullock of seven years, and destroy the altar of Baal, which belongs to thy father, and throw down the asherah upon it." According to the general explanation of the first clauses, there are two oxen referred to: viz. *first*, his father's young bullock; and *secondly*, an ox of seven years old, the latter of which Gideon was to sacrifice (according to ver. 26) upon the altar to be built to Jehovah, and actually did sacrifice, according to vers. 27, 28. But in what follows there is no further allusion to the young bullock, or the first ox of his father; so that there is a difficulty in comprehending for what purpose Gideon was to take it, or what use he was to make of it. Most commentators suppose that Gideon sacrificed both of the oxen,—the young bullock as an expiatory offering for himself, his father, and all his family, and the second ox of seven years old for the deliverance of the whole nation (see *Seb. Schmidt*). *Bertheau* supposes, on the other hand, that Gideon was to make use of both oxen, or of the strength they possessed for throwing down or destroying the altar, and (according to ver. 26) for removing the *מַעֲבָדֵי* and the *אֲשֵׁרָה* to the place of the new altar that was to be built, but that he was only to offer the second in sacrifice to Jehovah, because the first was probably dedicated to Baal, and therefore could not be offered to Jehovah. But these assumptions are both of them equally arbitrary, and have no support whatever from the text. If God had commanded Gideon to take two oxen, He would certainly have told him what he was to do with them both. But as there is only one bullock mentioned in vers. 26-28, we must follow *Tremell.* and others, who understand ver. 25 as meaning that Gideon was to take only one bullock, namely the young bullock of his father, and therefore regard *וְיִפְרֹחַ הַזֶּה שֶׁ'שׁ' ש'* as a more precise definition of that one bullock (*vav* being used in an explanatory sense, "and indeed," as in Josh. ix. 27, x. 7, etc.). This bullock is called "the second bullock," as being the second in age among the bullocks of Joash. The reason for choosing this second of the bullocks of Joash for a burnt-offering is to be found no doubt in its age (seven years), which is mentioned here simply on account of its significance as a number, as there was no particular age prescribed in the law for a burnt-offering, that is to say, because the seven years which constituted the age of the bullock contained an

inward allusion to the seven years of the Midianitish oppression. For *seven* years had God given Israel into the hands of the Midianites on account of their apostasy; and now, to wipe away this sin, Gideon was to take his father's bullock of *seven* years old, and offer it as a burnt-offering to the Lord. To this end Gideon was first of all to destroy the altar of Baal and of the *asherah* which his father possessed, and which, to judge from vers. 28, 29, was the common altar of the whole family of Abiezer in Ophrah. This altar was dedicated to Baal, but there was also upon it an *asherah*, an idol representing the goddess of nature, which the Canaanites worshipped; not indeed a *statue* of the goddess, but, as we may learn from the word *בָּרָת*, to *hew down*, simply a wooden pillar (see at Deut. xvi. 21). The altar therefore served for the two principal deities of the Canaanites (see *Movers*, *Phönizier*, i. pp. 566 sqq.). Jehovah could not be worshipped along with Baal. Whoever would serve the Lord must abolish the worship of Baal. The altar of Baal must be destroyed before the altar of Jehovah could be built. Gideon was to build this altar "*upon the top of this stronghold*," possibly upon the top of the mountain, upon which the fortress belonging to Ophrah was situated. *בְּמַעְרְכָהּ*, "*with the preparation*;" the meaning of this word is a subject of dispute. As *בָּנָה* occurs in 1 Kings xv. 22 with *בָּ*, to denote the materials out of which (*i.e.* with which) a thing is built, *Stud.* and *Berth.* suppose that *maaracah* refers to the materials of the altar of Baal that had been destroyed, with which Gideon was to build the altar of Jehovah. *Stud.* refers it to the stone foundation of the altar of Baal; *Bertheau* to the materials that were lying ready upon the altar of Baal for the presentation of sacrifices, more especially the pieces of wood. But this is certainly incorrect, because *maaracah* does not signify either building materials or pieces of wood, and the definite article attached to the word does not refer to the altar of Baal at all. The verb *עָרַךְ* is not only very frequently used to denote the preparation of the wood upon the altar (Gen. xxii. 9; Lev. i. 7, etc.), but is also used for the preparation of an altar for the presentation of sacrifice (Num. xxiii. 4). Consequently *maaracah* can hardly be understood in any other way than as signifying the preparation of the altar to be built for the sacrificial act, in the sense of build the altar with the preparation required for the sacrifice. This preparation was to consist, according to what follows, in taking the wood of the *asherah*, that had been hewn down, as the wood for the burnt-offering to be offered to the Lord by Gideon. *עֵצֵי הָאֲשֵׁרָה* are not

trees, but pieces of wood from the *asherah* (that was hewn down).—Ver. 27. Gideon executed this command of God with ten men of his servants during the night, no doubt the following night, because he was afraid to do it by day, on account of his family (his father's house), and the people of the town.—Vers. 28, 29. But on the following morning, when the people of the town found the altar of Baal destroyed and the *asherah* upon it hewn down, and the bullock sacrificed upon the (newly) erected altar (the bullock would not be entirely consumed), they asked who had done it, and soon learned that Gideon had done it all. The accusative אֵת הַפֶּהרִי הַזֶּה is governed by the *Hophal* הִעָלָה (for הִעָלָה, see *Ges.* s. 63, Anm. 4), according to a construction that was by no means rare, especially in the earlier Hebrew, viz. of the passive with אֵת (see at Gen. iv. 18). “*They asked and sought,*” sc. for the person who had done it; “*and they said,*” either those who were making the inquiry, according to a tolerably safe conjecture, or the persons who were asked, and who were aware of what Gideon had done.—Vers. 30, 31. But when they demanded of Joash, “*Bring out (give ont) thy son, that he may die,*” he said to all who stood round, “*Will ye, ye, fight for Baal, or will ye save him?*” (‘ye’ is repeated with special emphasis). *Whoever shall fight for him (Baal), shall be put to death till the morning.*” עַד-הַבֹּקֶר, till the (next) morning, is not to be joined to יָמָת, in the sense of “very speedily, before the dawning day shall break” (*Bertheau*),—a sense which is not to be found in the words: it rather belongs to the subject of the clause, or to the whole clause in the sense of, *Whoever shall fight for Baal, and seek to avenge the destruction of his altar by putting the author of it to death, shall be put to death himself; let us wait till to-morrow, and give Baal time to avenge the insult which he has received. “If he be God, let him fight for himself; for they have destroyed his altar,”* and have thereby challenged his revenge. Gideon’s daring act of faith had inspired his father Joash with believing courage, so that he took the part of his son, and left the whole matter to the deity to decide. If Baal were really God, he might be expected to avenge the crime that had been committed against this altar.—Ver. 32. From this fact Gideon received the name of *Jerubbaal*, i.e. “*let Baal fight (or decide),*” since they said, “*Let Baal fight against him, for he has destroyed his altar.*” יִרְבֵּעַל is formed from יָרַב = יָרַב or יָרִיב and בָּעַל. This surname very soon became an honourable title for Gideon. When, for example, it became apparent to the people that Baal could not do him any

harm, *Jerubbaal* became a Baal-fighter, one who had fought against Baal. In 2 Sam. xi. 21, instead of *Jerubbaal* we find the name *Jerubbesheth*, in which *Besheth* = *Bosheth* is a nickname of Baal, which also occurs in other Israelitish names, e.g. in *Ishbosheth* (2 Sam. ii. 8 sqq.) for *Eshbaal* (1 Chron. viii. 33, ix. 39). The name *Jerubbaal* is written *Ἰεροβάαλ* by the LXX., from which in all probability *Philo* of Byblus, in his revision of Sanchuniathon, has formed his *Ἰερόμβαλος*, a priest of the god *Ἰεῦω*.

Gideon's Victory over the Midianites.—Chap. vi. 33–viii. 3.

Chap. vi. 33–40. EQUIPMENT OF GIDEON FOR THE BATTLE.—When the Midianites and their allies once more invaded the land of Israel, Gideon was seized by the Spirit of God, so that he gathered together an army from the northern tribes of Israel (vers. 33–35), and entreated God to assure him by a sign of gaining the victory over the enemy (vers. 36–40).—Vers. 33 sqq. The enemy gathered together again, went over (viz. across) the Jordan in the neighbourhood of Beisan (see at chap. vii. 24 and viii. 4), and encamped in the valley of Jezreel (see at Josh. xvii. 16). “*And the Spirit of Jehovah came upon Gideon*” (נִשְׁפָּח, clothed, i.e. descended upon him, and laid itself around him as it were like a coat of mail, or a strong equipment, so that he became invulnerable and invincible in its might: see 1 Chron. xii. 18, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, and Luke xxiv. 49). Gideon then blew the trumpet, to call Israel to battle against the foe (see chap. iii. 27); “*and Abiezer let itself be summoned after him.*” His own family, which had recognised the deliverer of Israel in the fighter of Baal, who was safe from Baal’s revenge, was the first to gather round him. Their example was followed by all Manasseh, i.e. the Manassites on the west of the Jordan (for the tribes on the east of the Jordan took no part in the war), and the neighbouring tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali on the north, which had been summoned by heralds to the battle. “*They advanced to meet them:*” i.e. to meet the Manassites, who were coming from the south to the battle, to make war upon the enemy in concert with them and under the guidance of Gideon. נִשְׁפָּח is used to denote their advance against the enemy (see at Josh. viii. 2), and not in the sense of going up, since the Asherites and Naphtalites would not go up from their mountains into the plain of Jezreel, but could only go down.—Vers. 36 sqq. But before Gideon went into the battle with the assembled army, he asked for a sign from God of the success of his under-

taking. "If Thou," he said to God, "art saving Israel through my hand, as Thou hast said, behold, I lay this fleece of wool upon the floor; if there shall be dew upon the fleece only, and dryness upon all the earth (round about), I know (by this) that Thou wilt save," etc. *וְזֹאת הָעֶשֶׂה*, the shorn of the wool; i.e. the fleece, the wool that had been shorn off a sheep, and still adhered together as one whole fleece. The sign which Gideon asked for, therefore, was that God would cause the dew to fall only upon a shorn fleece, which he would spread the previous night upon the floor, that is to say, upon some open ground, and that the ground all round might not be moistened by the dew.—Ver. 38. God granted the sign. "And so it came to pass; the next morning, Gideon pressed the fleece together (*וַיִּרְ* from *וָרָ*), and squeezed (*וַיִּצֵּץ* from *צָצָה*) dew out of the fleece a vessel full of water" (*מִלֵּא* as in Num. xxii. 18, and *סֵלַל* as in chap. v. 25). So copiously had the dew fallen in the night upon the fleece that was exposed; whereas, as we may supply from the context, the earth all round had remained dry.—Vers. 39, 40. But as this sign was not quite a certain one, since wool generally attracts the dew, even when other objects remain dry, Gideon ventured to solicit the grace of God to grant him another sign with the fleece,—namely, that the fleece might remain dry, and the ground all round be wet with dew. And God granted him this request also. Gideon's prayer for a sign did not arise from want of faith in the divine assurance of a victory, but sprang from the weakness of the flesh, which crippled the strength of the spirit's faith, and often made the servants of God so anxious and despondent, that God had to come to the relief of their weakness by the manifestation of His miraculous power. Gideon knew himself and his own strength, and was well aware that his human strength was not sufficient for the conquest of the foe. But as the Lord had promised him His aid, he wished to make sure of that aid through the desired sign.¹ And "the simple fact that such a man could obtain the most daring victory was to be a special glorification of God" (*O. v. Gerlach*). The sign itself was to manifest the strength of the divine assistance to his weakness of faith. Dew in the Scriptures is a symbol of the

¹ "From all these things, the fact that he had seen and heard the angel of Jehovah, and that he had been taught by fire out of the rock, by the disappearance of the angel, by the vision of the night, and by the words addressed to him there, Gideon did indeed believe that God both could and would deliver Israel through his instrumentality; but this faith was not placed above or away from the conflict of the flesh by which it was tested. And it is not strange that

beneficent power of God, which quickens, revives, and invigorates the objects of nature, when they have been parched by the burning heat of the sun's rays. The first sign was to be a pledge to him of the visible and tangible blessing of the Lord upon His people, the proof that He would grant them power over their mighty foes by whom Israel was then oppressed. The woollen fleece represented the nation of Israel in its condition at that time, when God had given power to the foe that was devastating its land, and had withdrawn His blessing from Israel. The moistening of the fleece with the dew of heaven whilst the land all round continued dry, was a sign that the Lord God would once more give strength to His people from on high, and withdraw it from the nations of the earth. Hence the second sign acquires the more general signification, "that the Lord manifested himself even in the weakness and forsaken condition of His people, while the nations were flourishing all around" (*O. v. Gerl.*); and when so explained, it served to confirm and strengthen the first, inasmuch as it contained the comforting assurance for all times, that the Lord has not forsaken His church, even when it cannot discern and trace His beneficent influence, but rules over it and over the nations with His almighty power.

Chap. vii. 1-8. MUSTERING OF THE ARMY THAT GIDEON HAD COLLECTED.—Ver. 1. When Gideon had been assured of the help of God by this double sign, he went to the battle early the next morning with the people that he had gathered around him. The Israelites encamped above the fountain of *Harod*, i.e. upon a height at the foot of which this fountain sprang; but the camp of Midian was to him (Gideon) to the north of the hill *Moreh* in the valley (of Jezreel: see chap. vi. 33). The geographical situation of these two places cannot be determined with certainty. The fountain of *Harod* is never mentioned again, though there is a place of that name referred to in 2 Sam. xxiii. 25 as the home of two of David's heroes; and it was from this, no doubt, that the fountain was named. The hill *Moreh* is also unknown. As it was by the valley (of Jezreel), we cannot possibly think of the grove of *Moreh* at Shechem

it rose to its greatest height when the work of deliverance was about to be performed. Wherefore Gideon with his faith sought for a sign from God against the more vehement struggle of the flesh, in order that his faith might be the more confirmed, and might resist the opposing flesh with the greater force. And this petition for a sign was combined with prayers for the strengthening of his faith."—*Seb. Schmidt.*

(Gen. xii. 6; Deut. xi. 30).¹—Vers. 2, 3. The army of the Israelites amounted to 32,000 men (ver. 4), but that of the Midianites and their allies was about 135,000 (chap. viii. 10), so that they were greatly superior to the Israelites in numbers. Nevertheless the Lord said to Gideon, “*The people that are with thee are too many for me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, My hand hath helped me.*” כִּי followed by מִן is to be understood as a comparative. Gideon was therefore to have a proclamation made before all the people: “*Whosoever is fearful and despondent, let him turn and go back from Mount Gilead.*” The ἀπ. λεγ. מִן, judging from the Arabic, which signifies to plait, viz. hair, ropes, etc., and the noun מִן, a circle or circuitous orbit, probably signifies to twist one’s self round; hence in this instance to return in windings, to slink away in bypaths. The expression “*from Mount Gilead,*” however, is very obscure. The mountain (or the mountains) of Gilead was on the eastern side of the Jordan; but the Israelitish army was encamped in or near the plain of Jezreel, in the country to the west of the Jordan, and had been gathered from the western tribes alone; so that even the inadmissible rendering, Let him turn and go home to the mountains of Gilead, would not give any appropriate sense. The only course left therefore is either to pronounce it an error of the text, as Clericus and Bertheau have done, and to regard “Gilead” as a mistake for “Gilboa,” or to conclude that there was also a mountain or mountain range named Gilead by the plain of Jezreel in western Palestine, just as, according to Josh. xv. 10, there was a mountain, or range of mountains, called Seir, in the territory of Judah, of which nothing further is known. The appeal which Gideon is here directed to make to the army was prescribed in the law (Deut. xx. 8) for every war

¹ Bertheau endeavours to settle the position of the place from our knowledge of the country, which is for the most part definite enough. Starting with the assumption that the fountain of Harod cannot be any other than the “fountain in Jezreel” mentioned in 1 Sam. xxix. 1, where Saul and the Israelites encamped at Gilboa (1 Sam. xxviii. 4) to fight against the Philistines who were posted at Shunem, a place on the western slope of the so-called Little Hermon, he concludes that the fountain of Harod must be the present Ain Jalud, and the hill of Moreh the Little Hermon itself. These combinations are certainly possible, for we have nothing definite to oppose to them; still they are very uncertain, as they simply rest upon the very doubtful assumption that the only fountain in the plain of Jezreel was the celebrated fountain called Ain Jalud, and are hardly reconcilable with the account given of the route which was taken by the defeated Midianites (vers. 25 sqq. and chap. viii. 4).

in which the Israelites should be engaged, and its general object was to fortify the spirit of the army by removing the cowardly and desponding. But in the case before us the intention of the Lord was to deprive His people of all ground for self-glorification. Hence the result of the appeal was one which Gideon himself certainly did not expect,—namely, that more than two-thirds of the soldiers gathered round him—22,000 men of the people—turned back, and only 10,000 remained.—Ver. 4. But even this number was regarded by the Lord as still too great, so that He gave to Gideon the still further command, “*Bring them (the 10,000 men) down to the water,*” i.e. the waters formed from the fountain of Harod, “*and I will purify them for thee there* (חָלַף, separate those appointed for the battle from the rest of the army; the singular suffix refers to אַתָּה), *and say to thee, This shall go with thee, and that,*” i.e. show thee each individual who is to go with thee to the battle, and who not.—Vers. 5, 6. Gideon was to divide the people by putting all those who should lick the water with their tongue as a dog licketh into one class, and all those who knelt down to drink into another, and so separating the latter from the former. The number of those who licked the water into their mouth with their hand amounted to 300, and all the rest knelt down to drink. “*To lick with their hand to their mouth,*” i.e. to take the water from the brook with the hollow of their hand, and lap it into the mouth with their tongue as a dog does, is only a more distinct expression for “licking with the tongue.” The 300 men who quenched their thirst in this manner were certainly not the cowardly or indolent who did not kneel down to drink in the ordinary way, either from indolence or fear, as *Josephus*, *Theodoret*, and others supposed, but rather the bravest,—namely those who, when they reached a brook before the battle, did not allow themselves time to kneel down and satisfy their thirst in the most convenient manner, but simply took up some water with their hands as they stood in their military accoutrements, to strengthen themselves for the battle, and then proceeded without delay against the foe. By such a sign as this, *Bertheau* supposes that even an ordinary general might have been able to recognise the bravest of his army. No doubt: but if this account had not been handed down, it is certain that it would never have occurred to an ordinary or even a distinguished general to adopt such a method of putting the bravery of his troops to the test; and even Gideon, the hero of God, would never have thought of diminishing still further through such a trial an army which had already become so small,

or of attempting to defeat an army of more than 100,000 men by a few hundred of the bravest men, if the Lord himself had not commanded it.

Whilst the Lord was willing to strengthen the feeble faith of Gideon by the sign with the fleece of wool, and thus to raise him up to full confidence in the divine omnipotence, He also required of him, when thus strengthened, an attestation of his faith, by the purification of his army, that he might give the whole glory to Him, and accept the victory over that great multitude from His hand alone.—Ver. 7. After his fighting men had been divided into a small handful of 300 men on the one hand, and the large host of 9700 on the other, by the fulfilment of the command of God, the Lord required of him that he should send away the latter, “every man to his place,” *i.e.* to his own home, promising that He would save Israel by the 300 men, and deliver the Midianites into their hand. The promise preceded the command, to render it easier to Gideon to obey it. “*All the people,*” after taking out the 300 men, that is to say, the 9700 that remained.—Ver. 8. “*So they* (the 300 picked men) *took the provision of the people in their hand, and their* (the people’s) *trumpets* (the suffix points back to *הָעָם*, the people); *and all the men of Israel* (the 9700) *he had sent away every one to his tents,* *i.e.* to his home (see at Deut. xvi. 7), *and the three hundred men he had kept by himself; but the camp of the Midianites was below to him in the valley.*” These words bring the preparations for the battle to a close, and the last clause introduces the ensuing conflict and victory. In the first clause *הָעָם* (the people) cannot be the subject, partly because of the actual sense, since the 300 warriors, who are no doubt the persons intended (cf. ver. 16), cannot be called “the people,” in distinction from “all the men of Israel,” and partly also because of the expression *אֶת־צִדָּה*, which would be construed in that case without any article in violation of the ordinary rule. We must rather read *אֶת־צִדָּת הָעָם*, as the LXX. and the Chaldee have done. The 300 men took the provision of the people, *i.e.* provision for the war, from the people who had been sent away, and the war-trumpets; so that every one of the 300 had a trumpet now, and as the provision of the people was also probably kept in vessels or pitchers (*caddim*: ver. 16), a jug as well. The subject to *יָקַח* is to be taken from the first clause of the seventh verse. The sentences which follow from *וַיֵּאָמֶר כָּל־אִישׁ* are circumstantial clauses, introduced to bring out distinctly the situation in which Gideon was now placed. *וַיִּשְׁלַח*, the opposite of *שָׁלַח*, to send

away, signifies to hold fast, to keep back or by himself, as in Ex. ix. 2. לָ, to him, Gideon, who was standing by the fountain of Harod with his 300 men, the situation of Midian was underneath in the valley (see ver. 1, and chap. vi. 33).

Vers. 9-22. GIDEON'S BATTLE AND VICTORY.—Vers. 9-11a. The following night the Lord commanded Gideon to go down to the camp of the enemy, as He had given it into his hand (the perfect is used to denote the purpose of God which had already been formed, as in chap. iv. 14). But in order to fill him with confidence for such an enterprise, which to all human appearance was a very rash one, God added, "*If thou art afraid to go down, go thou with thine attendant Purah down to the camp, and thou wilt hear what they say, and thy hands will thereby become strong.*" The meaning of the protasis is not, If thou art afraid to go down into the camp of the enemy alone, or to visit the enemy unarmed, take Purah thine armour-bearer with thee, to make sure that thou hast weapons to use (*Bertheau*); for, apart from the fact that the addition "unarmed" is perfectly arbitrary, the apodosis "thou wilt see," etc., by no means agrees with this explanation. The meaning is rather this: Go with thy 300 men into (בְּ) the hostile camp to smite it, for I have given it into thy hand; but if thou art afraid to do this, go down with thine attendant to (אֶל) the camp, to ascertain the state and feeling of the foe, and thou wilt hear what they say, i.e., as we gather from what follows, how they are discouraged, have lost all hope of defeating you, and from that thou wilt gather courage and strength for the battle. On the expression "*thine hands shall be strengthened*," see 2 Sam. ii. 7. The expression which follows, וַיֵּרֶד בְּפִתְחָהּ, is not a mere repetition of the command to go down with his attendant to the hostile camp, but describes the result of the stimulus given to his courage: And then thou wilt go fearlessly into the hostile camp to attack the foe. יֵרֶד בְּפִתְחָהּ (vers. 9, 11) is to be distinguished from וַיֵּרֶד אֶל־הַפִּתְחָהּ in ver. 10. The former signifies to go down into the camp to smite the foe; the latter, to go down to the camp to reconnoitre it, and is equivalent to the following clause: "he went to the outside of the camp."—Vers. 11b-14. But when Gideon came with his attendant to the end of the armed men (*chamushim*, as in Josh. i. 14, Ex. xiii. 18) in the hostile camp, and the enemy were lying spread out with their camels in the valley, an innumerable multitude, he heard one (of the fighting men) relate to his fellow (i.e. to another) a dream which he

had had: "*Behold a cake of barley bread was rolling into the camp of Midian, and it came to the tent and smote it, so that it fell and turned upwards, and the tent lay along.*" Then the other replied, "*This is nothing else than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash the Israelite: God hath given Midian and all the camp into his hand.*" "The end of fighting men" signifies the outermost or foremost of the outposts in the enemy's camp, which contained not only fighting men, but the whole of the baggage of the enemy, who had invaded the land as nomads, with their wives, their children, and their flocks. In ver. 12, the innumerable multitude of the enemy is described once more in the form of a circumstantial clause, as in chap. vi. 5, not so much to distinguish the fighting men from the camp generally, as to bring out more vividly the contents and meaning of the following dream. The comparison of the enemy to the sand by the sea-side recalls Josh. xi. 4, and is frequently met with (see Gen. xxii. 17, xxxii. 13; 1 Sam. xiii. 5). With the word חֲבִית in ver. 13, the thread of the narrative, which was broken off by the circumstantial clause in ver. 12, is resumed and carried further. The ἀπ. λεγ. כֶּרִי (Keri, כֶּרִי) is rendered *cake, placenta*, by the early translators: see Ges. Thes. p. 1170. The derivation of the word has been disputed, and is by no means certain, as כֶּרִי does not give any suitable meaning, either in the sense of to ring or to be overshadowed, and the meaning to roll (Ges. l.c.) cannot be philologically sustained; whilst כָּרַךְ, to roast, can hardly be thought of, since this is merely used to denote the roasting of flesh, and כָּרַךְ was the word commonly applied to the roasting of grains, and even "the roasted of barley bread" would hardly be equivalent to *subcinericeus panis ex hordeo* (Vulgate). "The tent," with the definite article, is probably the principal tent in the camp, i.e. the tent of the general. הֶעָלָה, upwards, so that the bottom came to the top. "The tent lay along," or the tent fell, lay in ruins, is added to give emphasis to the words. "This is nothing if not," i.e. nothing but. The cake of bread which had rolled into the Midianitish camp and overturned the tent, signifies nothing else than the sword of Gideon, i.e. Gideon, who is bursting into the camp with his sword, and utterly destroying it.

This interpretation of the dream was certainly a natural one under the circumstances. Gideon is especially mentioned simply as the leader of the Israelites; whilst the loaf of barley bread, which was the food of the poorer classes, is to be regarded as strictly speaking the symbol of Israel, which was so despised among the nations. The rising of the Israelites under Gideon had

not remained a secret to the Midianites, and no doubt filled them with fear; so that in a dream this fear might easily assume the form of the defeat or desolation and destruction of their camp by Gideon. And the peculiar form of the dream is also psychologically conceivable. As the tent is everything to a nomad, he might very naturally picture the cultivator of the soil as a man whose life is all spent in cultivating and baking bread. In this way bread would become almost involuntarily a symbol of the cultivator of the soil, whilst in his own tent he would see a symbol not only of his mode of life, but of his freedom, greatness, and power. If we add to this, that the free pastoral tribes, particularly the Bedouins of Arabia, look down with pride not only upon the poor tillers of the soil, but even upon the inhabitants of towns, and that in Palestine, the land of wheat, none but the poorer classes feed upon barley bread, we have here all the elements out of which the dream of the Midianitish warrior was formed. The Israelites had really been crushed by the Midianites into a poor nation of slaves. But whilst the dream itself admits of being explained in this manner in a perfectly natural way, it acquires the higher supernatural character of a divine inspiration, from the fact that God not only foreknew it, but really caused the Midianite to dream, and to relate the dream to his comrade, just at the time when Gideon had secretly entered the camp, so that he should hear it, and discover therefrom, as God had foretold him, the despondency of the foe. Under these circumstances, Gideon could not fail to regard the dream as a divine inspiration, and to draw the assurance from it, that God had certainly given the Midianites into his hands.—Vers. 15-18. When therefore he had heard the dream related and interpreted, he worshipped, praising the Lord with joy, and returned to the camp to attack the enemy without delay. He then divided the 300 men into three companies, *i.e.* three attacking columns, and gave them all trumpets and empty pitchers, with torches in the pitchers in their hands. The pitchers were taken that they might hide the burning torches in them during their advance to surround the enemy's camp, and then increase the noise at the time of the attack, by dashing the pitchers to pieces (ver. 20), and thus through the noise, as well as the sudden lighting up of the burning torches, deceive the enemy as to the strength of the army. At the same time he commanded them, "*See from me, and do likewise,*"—a short expression for, *As ye see me do, so do ye also* (12, without the previous 2, or 212, as in chap. v. 15; see *Ewald*, § 260, *a.*),—"I blow the trumpet, I and

all who are with me; ye also blow the trumpets round about the entire camp," which the 300 men divided into three companies were to surround, "and say, *To the Lord and Gideon.*" According to ver. 20, this war-cry ran fully thus: "*Sword to (for) the Lord and Gideon.*" This addition in ver. 20, however, does not warrant us in inserting "*chereb*" (sword) in the text here, as some of the early translators and mss. have done.¹—Ver. 19. Gideon then proceeded with the 100 who were with him, *i.e.* the company which was led by himself personally, to the end of the hostile camp, at the beginning of the middle watch, *i.e.* at midnight. שָׁמַר is an accusative defining the time: see *Ges.* § 118, 2, and *Ewald*, § 204, a. The only other watch that is mentioned in the Old Testament beside the middle night-watch, is the morning night-watch (*Ex.* xiv. 24; *1 Sam.* xi. 11), from which it has been correctly inferred, that the Israelites divided the night into three night-watches. The division into four watches (*Matt.* xiv. 25; *Mark* vi. 48) was first adopted by the Jews from the Romans. "*They (the Midianites) had only (just) posted the watchmen (of the middle watch),*"—a circumstantial clause, introduced to give greater distinctness to the situation. When the first sentries were relieved, and the second posted, so that they thought they might make quite sure of their night's rest once more, Gideon and his host arrived at the end of the camp, and, as we must supply from the context, the other two hosts at two other ends of the camp, who all blew their trumpets, breaking the pitchers in their hands at the same time. The *inf. abs.* שָׁמַר, as a continuation of the finite verb שָׁמַר, indicates that the fact was contemporaneous with the previous one (see *Ewald*, § 351, c.).—Ver. 20. According to the command which they had received (ver. 17), the other two tribes followed his example. "*Then the three companies*

¹ Similar stratagems to the one adopted by Gideon here are recorded by *Polyænus* (*Strateg.* ii. c. 37) of *Dicetas*, at the taking of *Heræa*, and by *Plutarch* (*Fabius Max.* c. 6) of *Hannibal*, when he was surrounded and completely shut in by *Fabius Maximus*. An example from modern history is given by *Niebuhr* (*Beschr. von Arabien*, p. 304). About the middle of the eighteenth century two Arabian chiefs were fighting for the *Imamate of Oman*. One of them, *Bel-Arab*, besieged the other, *Achmed ben Said*, with four or five thousand men, in a small castle on the mountain. But the latter slipped out of the castle, collected together several hundred men, gave every soldier a sign upon his head, that they might be able to distinguish friends from foes, and sent small companies to all the passes. Every one had a trumpet to blow at a given signal, and thus create a noise at the same time on every side. The whole of the opposing army was thrown in this way into disorder, since they found all the passes occupied, and imagined the hostile army to be as great as the noise.

blew the trumpets, broke the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right to blow, and cried, *Sword to the Lord and Gideon!* And they stood every one in his place round about the camp," *sc.* without moving, so that the Midianites necessarily thought that there must be a numerous army advancing behind the torch-bearers. וַיָּרָץ וְגו', "*and the whole army ran,*" *i.e.* there began a running hither and thither in the camp of the enemy, who had been frightened out of their night's rest by the unexpected blast of the trumpets, the noise, and the war-cry of the Israelitish warriors; "*and they (the enemy) lifted up a cry (of anguish and alarm), and caused to fly*" (carried off), *sc.* their tents (*i.e.* their families) and their herds, or all their possessions (cf. chap. vi. 11, Ex. ix. 20). The *Chethibh* כִּי־יָרָץ is the original reading, and the *Keri* כִּי־יָרָץ a bad emendation.—Ver. 22. Whilst the 300 men blew their trumpets, "*Jehovah set the sword of one against the other, and against the whole camp,*" *i.e.* caused one to turn his sword against the other and against all the camp, that is to say, not merely man against man, but against every one in the camp, so that there arose a terrible slaughter throughout the whole camp. The first clause, "*and the three hundred blew the trumpets,*" simply resumes the statement in ver. 20, "the three companies blew the trumpets," for the purpose of appending to it the further progress of the attack, and the result of the battle. Bertheau inserts in a very arbitrary manner the words, "the second time." His explanation of the next clause ("then the 300 fighting men of Gideon drew the sword at Jehovah's command, every man against his man") is still more erroneous, since it does violence to the constant usage of the expression אִישׁ בְּרֵעֵהוּ (see 1 Sam. xiv. 20, 2 Chron. xx. 23, Isa. iii. 5, Zech. viii. 10). "*And all the camp of the Midianites fled to Beth-shittah to Zeredah, to the shore of Abel-meholah, over Tabbath.*" The situation of these places, which are only mentioned here, with the exception of Abel-meholah, the home of Elisha (1 Kings xix. 16, iv. 12), has not yet been determined. According to the Syriac, the Arabic, and some of the MSS., we should read *Zeredathah* instead of *Zerethathah*, and *Zeredathah* is only another form for *Zarthan* (comp. 1 Kings vii. 46 with 2 Chron. iv. 17). This is favoured by the situation of *Zarthan* in the valley of the Jordan, probably near the modern *Kurn Sartabeh* (see p. 46), inasmuch as in all probability Beth-shittah and Abel-meholah are to be sought for in the valley of the Jordan; and according to ver. 24, the enemy fled to the Jordan. *Beth-shittah*, *i.e.* acacia-house, is not the same place

as the village of *Shutta* mentioned by *Robinson* (iii. p. 219), since this village, according to *Van de Velde's* map, was to the north of Gilboa. For although *Shutta* is favoured by the circumstance, that from a very ancient time there was a road running from Jezreel along the valley, between the so-called Little Hermon (*Duhy*) and the mountains of Gilboa, and past Beisan to the Jordan; and the valley of Jalud, on the northern side of which *Shutta* was situated, may be regarded as the opening of the plain of Jezreel into the valley of the Jordan (see *v. Raumer*, Pal. p. 41, and *Rob.* iii. p. 176); and *v. Raumer* conjectures from this, that "the flight of the Midianites was apparently directed to Bethsean, on account of the nature of the ground,"—this assumption is rendered very questionable by the fact that the flying foe did not cross the Jordan in the neighbourhood of Beisan, but much farther to the south, viz., according to chap. viii. 4, in the neighbourhood of *Succoth*, which was on the south side of the *Nahr Zerka* (*Jabbok*). From this we are led to conjecture, that they were not encamped in the north-eastern part of the plain of Jezreel, in the neighbourhood of Jezreel (*Zerin*) and *Shunem* (*Solam*), but in the south-eastern part of this plain, and that after they had been beaten there they fled southwards from Gilboa, say from the district of *Ginæa* (*Jenin*) to the Jordan. In this case we have to seek for *Abel-shittah* on the south-east of the mountains of Gilboa, to the north of *Zeredathah* (*Zarthan*). From this point they fled on still farther to the "*shore of Abel-meholah*." שֵׁפֶת does not mean boundary, but brink; here the bank of the Jordan, like שֵׁפֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן in 2 Kings ii. 13. The bank or strand of *Abel-meholah* is that portion of the western bank of the Jordan or of the Ghor, above which *Abel-meholah* was situated. According to the *Onom.* (s. v. Ἀβελμαυλά, *Abelmaula*), this place was in the *Aulon* (or Ghor), ten Roman miles to the south of *Scythopolis* (*Beisan*), and was called at that time *Βηθμαυλά* or *Bethaula*. According to this statement, *Abel-meholah* would have to be sought for near *Churbet es Shuk*, in the neighbourhood of the *Wady Maleh* (see *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 280). And lastly, *Tabbath* must have been situated somewhere to the south of *Abel-meholah*.

Ver. 23—chap. viii. 3. *Pursuit of the Enemy as far as the Jordan.*

—Ver. 23. As soon as the Midianites had been put to flight, the Israelitish men of *Naphtali*, *Asher*, and *Manasseh*, let themselves be convened for the purpose of pursuing them: i.e. the men of these tribes, whom *Gideon* had sent away before the battle, and who were on their way home, could be summoned back again in

a very short time to join in the pursuit of the flying foe. The omission of Zebulun (chap. vi. 35) is, in all probability, simply to be attributed to the brevity of the account.—Vers. 24, 25. In order to cut off the retreat of the enemy who was flying to the Jordan, Gideon sent messengers into the whole of the mountains of Ephraim with this appeal to the Ephraimites, “*Come down (from your mountains into the lowlands of the Jordan) to meet Midian, and take the waters from them to Bethbarah and the Jordan,*” *sc.* by taking possession of this district (see chap. iii. 28). “*The waters,*” mentioned before the Jordan and distinguished from it, must have been streams across which the flying foe would have to cross to reach the Jordan, namely, the different brooks and rivers, such as *Wady Maleh, Fyadh, Jamel, Tubás*, etc., which flowed down from the eastern side of the mountains of Ephraim into the Jordan, and ran through the Ghor to Bethbarah. The situation of *Bethbarah* is unknown. Even *Eusebius* could say nothing definite concerning the place; and the conjecture that it is the same as Bethabara, which has been regarded ever since the time of Origen as the place mentioned in John i. 28 where John baptized, throws no light upon the subject, as the situation of Bethabara is also unknown, to say nothing of the fact that the identity of the two names is very questionable. The Ephraimites responded to this appeal and took possession of the waters mentioned, before the Midianites, who could only move slowly with their flocks and herds, were able to reach the Jordan. They then captured two of the princes of the Midianites and put them to death: one of them, *Oreb*, *i.e.* the raven, at the rock *Oreb*; the other, *Zeeb*, *i.e.* the wolf, at the wine-press of *Zeeb*. Nothing further is known about these two places. The rock of *Oreb* is only mentioned again in Isa. x. 26, when the prophet alludes to this celebrated victory. So much, however, is evident from the verse before us, *viz.* that the Midianites were beaten by the Ephraimites at both places, and that the two princes fell there, and the places received their names from that circumstance. They were not situated in the land to the east of the Jordan, as *Gesenius* (on Isa. x. 26), *Rosenmüller*, and others infer from the fact that the Ephraimites brought the heads of *Oreb* and *Zeeb* to Gideon מַעְבַּר לַיַּרְדֵּן (ver. 25), but on the western side of the Jordan, where the Ephraimites had taken possession of the waters and the Jordan in front of the Midianites. מַעְבַּר לַיַּרְדֵּן does not mean “from the other side of the Jordan,” but simply “on the other side of (beyond) the Jordan,” as in Josh. xiii. 32, xviii. 7, 1

Kings xiv. 15; and the statement here is not that the Ephraimites brought the heads from the other side to Gideon on the west of the river, but that they brought them to Gideon when he was in the land to the east of the Jordan. This explanation of the words is required by the context, as well as by the foregoing remark, "they pursued Midian," according to which the Ephraimites continued the pursuit of the Midianites after slaying these princes, and also by the complaint brought against Gideon by the Ephraimites, which is not mentioned till afterwards (chap. viii. 1 sqq.), that he had not summoned them to the war. It is true, this is given before the account of Gideon's crossing over the Jordan (chap. viii. 4), but in order of time it did not take place till afterwards, and, as *Bertheau* has correctly shown, the historical sequence is somewhat anticipated.

Chap. viii. 1-3. When the Ephraimites met with Gideon, after they had smitten the Midianites at Oreb and Zeeb, and were pursuing them farther, they said to him, "*What is the thing that thou hast done to us (i.e. what is the reason for your having done this to us), not to call us when thou wentest forth to make war upon Midian? And they did chide with him sharply,*" less from any dissatisfied longing for booty, than from injured pride or jealousy, because Gideon had made war upon the enemy and defeated them without the co-operation of this tribe, which was striving for the leadership. Gideon's reply especially suggests the idea of injured ambition: "*What have I now done like you?*" i.e. as if I had done as great things as you. "*Is not the gleanings of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?*" The gleanings of Ephraim is the victory gained over the flying Midianites. Gideon declares this to be better than the vintage of Abiezer, i.e. the victory obtained by him the Abiezrite with his 300 men, because the Ephraimites had slain two Midianitish princes. The victory gained by the Ephraimites must indeed have been a very important one, as it is mentioned by Isaiah (x. 26) as a great blow of the Lord upon Midian. "*And what could I do like you?*" i.e. could I accomplish such great deeds as you? "*Then their anger turned away from him.*" מַחֲ, the breathing of the nose, snorting, hence "*anger,*" as in Isa. xxv. 4, etc.

Pursuit of the Midianites. Other Acts of Gideon; his Appointment as Judge.—Chap. viii. 4-35.

Vers. 4-12. PURSUIT AND COMPLETE OVERTHROW OF THE MIDIANITES.—That the Midianites whom God had delivered into

his hand might be utterly destroyed, Gideon pursued those who had escaped across the Jordan, till he overtook them on the eastern boundary of Gilead and smote them there.—Vers. 4, 5. When he came to the Jordan with his three hundred men, who were exhausted with the pursuit, he asked the inhabitants of Succoth for loaves of bread for the people in his train. So far as the construction is concerned, the words from עָכָר to וַיִּרְדְּפִים form a circumstantial clause inserted as a parenthesis into the principal sentence, and subordinate to it: “*When Gideon came to the Jordan, passing over he and the three hundred men . . . then he said to the men of Succoth.*” “*Exhausted and pursuing,*” i.e. exhausted with pursuing. The *vav* is explanatory, lit. “and indeed pursuing,” for “because he pursued.” The rendering *πεινῶντες* adopted by the LXX. in the *Cod. Alex.* is merely an arbitrary rendering of the word וַיִּרְדְּפִים, and without any critical worth. Gideon had crossed the Jordan, therefore, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Succoth. Succoth was upon the eastern side of the valley of the Jordan (Josh. xiii. 27), not opposite to Bethshean, but, according to Gen. xxxiii. 17, on the south side of the Jabbok (Zerka).—Ver. 6. The princes of Succoth, however, showed so little sympathy and nationality of feeling, that instead of taking part in the attack upon the enemies of Israel, they even refused to supply bread to refresh their brethren of the western tribes who were exhausted with the pursuit of the foe. They said (the sing. וַיֹּאמֶר may be explained on the ground that one spoke in the name of all: see *Ewald*, § 319, a.), “*Is the fist of Zebah and Zalmunna already in thy hand (power), that we should give thine army bread?*” In these words there is not only an expression of cowardice, or fear of the vengeance which the Midianites might take when they returned upon those who had supported Gideon and his host, but contempt of the small force which Gideon had, as if it were impossible for him to accomplish anything at all against the foe; and in this contempt they manifested their utter want of confidence in God.—Ver. 7. Gideon threatened them, therefore, with severe chastisement in the event of a victorious return. “*If Jehovah give Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, I will thresh your flesh (your body) with desert thorns and thistles.*” The verb וַיִּשֶׁה, constructed with a double accusative (see *Ewald*, § 283, a.), is used in a figurative sense: “to thresh,” in other words, to punish severely. “Thorns of the desert” are strong thorns, as the desert is the natural soil for thorn-bushes. The *ἀπ. λεγ.* וַיִּקְצֵם also signifies prickly plants, according to the

early versions and the Rabbins, probably "such as grow upon stony ground" (*Bertheau*). The explanation "threshing machines with stones or flints underneath them," which was suggested by *J. D. Michaelis* and *Celsius*, and adopted by *Gesenius*, cannot be sustained.—Vers. 8, 9. The inhabitants of Pnuel on the north bank of the Jabbok (see at Gen. xxxii. 24 sqq.) behaved in the same churlish manner to Gideon, and for this he also threatened them: "If I return in peace," i.e. unhurt, "I will destroy this tower" (probably the castle of Pnuel).—Vers. 10-12. The Midianitish kings were at *Karkor* with all the remnant of their army, about fifteen thousand men, a hundred and twenty thousand having already fallen. Gideon followed them thither by the road of the dwellers in tents on the east of *Nobah* and *Jogbeha*; and falling upon them unawares, smote the whole camp, which thought itself quite secure, and took the two kings prisoners, after discomfiting all the camp. The situation of *Karkor*, which is only mentioned here, cannot be determined with certainty. The statement of *Eusebius* and *Jerome* (*Onom. s. v. Kapkā, Carcar*), that it was the castle of *Carcaria*, a day's journey from *Petra*, is decidedly wrong, since this castle is much too far to the south, as *Gesenius* (*Thes. p. 1210*) has shown. *Karkor* cannot have been very far from *Nobah* and *Jogbeha*. These two places are probably preserved in the ruins of *Nowakis* and *Jebeiha*, on the north-west of *Ammān* (*Rabbath-ammon*; see at Num. xxi. 31). Now, as *Burckhardt* (*Syr. p. 612*) also mentions a ruin in the neighbourhood, called *Karkagheisch*, on the left of the road from *Szalt* to *Ammān*, and at the most an hour and a half to the north-west of *Ammān*, *Knobel* (on Num. xxxii. 42) is inclined to regard this ruin as *Karkor*. If this supposition could be proved to be correct, Gideon would have fallen upon the camp of the enemy from the north-east. For "the way of the dwellers in tents on the east of *Nobah* and *Jogbeha*" cannot well be any other than the way which ran to the east of *Nobah* and *Jogbeha*, past the most easterly frontier city of the Gadites, to the nomads who dwelt in the desert. השכני באהלים has the article attached to the governing noun, which may easily be explained in this instance from the intervening preposition. The passive participle שכן has an intransitive force (see *Ewald*, § 149, a.). The verb התייר in the circumstantial clause acquires the force of the pluperfect from the context. When he had startled the camp out of its security, having alarmed it by his unexpected attack, he succeeded in taking the two kings prisoners.

Vers. 13-21. PUNISHMENT OF THE TOWNS OF SUCCOTH AND PNUEL, AND EXECUTION OF THE CAPTURED KINGS OF MIDIAN. —Vers. 13, 14. Gideon returned victorious from the war, מלמלחָה, "from by the ascent (or mountain road) of Hecheres," a place in front of the town of Succoth, with which we are not acquainted. This is the rendering adopted by the LXX., the Peshito, and the Arabic; but the rest of the early translators have merely guessed at the meaning. The *Chaldee*, which has been followed by the *Rabbins* and *Luther*, has rendered it "before sunset," in utter opposition to the rules of the language; for although *cheres* is a word used poetically to denote the sun, מלמלחָה cannot mean the setting of the sun. *Aquila* and *Symmachus*, on the other hand, confound חָרָם with הָרִים.—Gideon laid hold of a young man of the people of Succoth, and got him to write down for him the princes and elders (magistrates and rulers) of the city,—in all seventy-seven men. וַיִּשְׁאַלְהוּ חֲבֵתָהוּ is a short expression for "he asked him the names of the princes and elders of the city, and the boy wrote them down." וְאֵלָיו, *lit.* to him, *i.e.* for him.—Vers. 15, 16. Gideon then reproached the elders with the insult they had offered him (ver. 6), and had them punished with desert thorns and thistles. "*Men of Succoth*" (vers. 15a and 16b) is a general expression for "elders of Succoth" (ver. 16a); and elders a general term applied to all the representatives of the city, including the princes. וְאֵשֶׁר חֲרַפְתָּם אֵתִי, with regard to whom ye have despised me. אֵשֶׁר is the accusative of the more distant or second object, not the subject, as *Stud.* supposes. "And he taught the men of Succoth (*i.e.* caused them to know, made them feel, punished them) with them (the thorns)." There is no good ground for doubting the correctness of the reading וְיָדַעַת. The free renderings of the LXX., *Vulg.*, etc., are destitute of critical worth; and *Bertheau's* assertion, that if it were the *Hiphil* it would be written וְיָדַעַת, is proved to be unfounded by the defective writing in Num. xvi. 5, Job xxxii. 7.—Ver. 17. Gideon also inflicted upon Pnuel the punishment threatened in ver. 9. The punishment inflicted by Gideon upon both the cities was well deserved in all respects, and was righteously executed. The inhabitants of these cities had not only acted treacherously to Israel as far as they could, from the most selfish interests, in a holy conflict for the glory of the Lord and the freedom of His people, but in their contemptuous treatment of Gideon and his host they had poured contempt upon the Lord, who had shown them to be His own soldiers before the eyes of the whole nation by the victory which He had given them

over the innmerable army of the foe. Having been called by the Lord to be the deliverer and judge of Israel, it was Gideon's duty to punish the faithless cities.—Vers. 18-21. After punishing these cities, Gideon repaid the two kings of Midian, who had been taken prisoners, according to their doings. From the judicial proceedings instituted with regard to them (vers. 18, 19), we learn that these kings had put the brothers of Gideon to death, and apparently not in open fight; but they had murdered them in an unrighteous and cruel manner. And Gideon made them atone for this with their own lives, according to the strict *jus talionis*. אִיכָּן, in ver. 18, does not mean *where*? but “*in what condition, of what form, were the men whom ye slew at Tabor?*” i.e. either in the city of Tabor or at Mount Tabor (see chap. iv. 6, and Josh. xix. 22). The kings replied: “*As thou so they*” (those men), i.e. they were all as stately as thou art, “*every one like the form of kings' sons.*” אִיכָּן, one, for every one, like אִיכָּן אֶחָד in 2 Kings xv. 20, or more frequently אִיכָּן alone. As the men who had been slain were Gideon's own brothers, he swore to those who had done the deed, i.e. to the two kings, “*As truly as Jehovah liveth, if ye had let them live I should not have put you to death;*” and then commanded his first-born son Jether to slay them, for the purpose of adding the disgrace of falling by the hand of a boy. “*But the boy drew not his sword from fear, because he was yet a boy.*” And the kings then said to Gideon, “*Rise thou and stab us, for as the man so is his strength,*” i.e. such strength does not belong to a boy, but to a man. Thereupon Gideon slew them, and took the little moons upon the necks of their camels as booty. “*The little moons*” were crescent-shaped ornaments of silver or gold, such as men and women wore upon their necks (see ver. 26, and Isa. iii. 18), and which they also hung upon the necks of camels,—a custom still prevalent in Arabia (see Schröder, *de vestitu mul. hebr.* pp. 39, 40, and Wellsted, *Reisen in Arab.* i. p. 209).

Vers. 22-32. GIDEON'S REMAINING ACTS, AND DEATH.—Vers. 22, 23. As Gideon had so gloriously delivered Israel from the severe and long oppression on the part of the Midianites, the Israelites offered him an hereditary crown. “*The men of Israel*” were hardly all the twelve tribes, but probably only the northern tribes of the western part of the land already mentioned in chap. vi. 35, who had suffered the most severely from the Midianitish oppression, and had been the first to gather round Gideon to make an attack upon the foe. The temptation to accept the government of Israel was resisted

by this warrior of God. "*Neither I nor my son shall rule over you; Jehovah shall rule over you,*" was his reply to this offer, containing an evident allusion to the destination and constitution of the tribes of Israel as a nation which Jehovah had chosen to be His own possession, and to which He had just made himself known in so conspicuous a manner as their omnipotent Ruler and King. This refusal of the regal dignity on the part of Gideon is not at variance with the fact, that Moses had already foreseen the possibility that at some future time the desire for a king would arise in the nation, and had given them a law for the king expressly designed for such circumstances as these (Deut. xvii. 14 sqq.). For Gideon did not decline the honour because Jehovah was King in Israel, *i.e.* because he regarded an earthly monarchy in Israel as irreconcilable with the heavenly monarchy of Jehovah, but simply because he thought the government of Jehovah in Israel amply sufficient, and did not consider either himself or his sons called to found an earthly monarchy.—Vers. 24 sqq. Gideon resisted the temptation to put an earthly crown upon his head, from true fidelity to Jehovah; but he yielded to another temptation, which this appeal on the part of the people really involved, namely, the temptation to secure to himself for the future the position to which the Lord had called and exalted him. The Lord had called him to be the deliverer of Israel by visibly appearing in His angel, and had not only accepted the gift which he offered Him, as a well-pleasing sacrifice, but had also commanded him to build an altar, and by offering an atoning burnt-sacrifice to re-establish the worship of Jehovah in his family and tribe, and to restore the favour of God to His people once more. Lastly, the Lord had made His will known to him again and again; whilst by the glorious victory which He had given to him and to his small band over the powerful army of the foe, He had confirmed him as His chosen servant to be the deliverer and judge of Israel. The relation which Gideon thus sustained to the Lord he imagined that he ought to preserve; and therefore, after declining the royal dignity, he said to the people, "*I will request of you one request, that ye give me every one the ring that he has received as booty.*" This request the historian explains by adding the remark: "*for they (the enemy) had golden rings, for they were Ishmaelites,*" from whom therefore the Israelites were able to get an abundance of rings as booty. *Ishmaelites* is the general name for the nomad tribes of Arabia, to whom the Midianites also belonged (as in Gen. xxxvii. 25).—Vers. 25, 26. This request of Gideon's was cheer-

fully fulfilled: "*They spread out the cloth* (brought for collecting the rings), *and threw into it every one the ring that he had received as booty.*" *Simlah*, the upper garment, was for the most part only a large square piece of cloth. The weight of these golden rings amounted to 1700 shekels, *i.e.* about 50 lbs., (לִבְרָן) separate from, *i.e.* beside, the remaining booty, for which Gideon had not asked, and which the Israelites kept for themselves, *viz.* the little moons, the ear-pendants (*netiphoth*, *lit.* little drops, probably pearl-shaped ear-drops: see Isa. iii. 19), and the purple clothes which were worn by the kings of Midian (*i.e.* which they had on), and also apart from the neck-bands upon the necks of their camels. Instead of the *anakothe* or necklaces (ver. 26), the *saharonim*, or little moons upon the necks of the camels, are mentioned in ver. 21 as the more valuable portion of these necklaces. Even at the present day the Arabs are accustomed to ornament the necks of these animals "with a band of cloth or leather, upon which small shells called cowries are strung or sewed in the form of a crescent. The sheiks add silver ornaments to these, which make a rich booty in time of war" (*Wellsted*, *Reise*, i. p. 209). The Midianitish kings had their camels ornamented with golden crescents. This abundance of golden ornaments will not surprise us, when we consider that the Arabs still carry their luxurious tastes for such things to a very great excess. *Wellsted* (i. p. 224) states that "the women in Omân spend considerable amounts in the purchase of silver ornaments, and their children are literally laden with them. I have sometimes counted fifteen ear-rings upon each side; and the head, breast, arms, and ankles are adorned with the same profusion." As the Midianitish army consisted of 130,000 men, of whom 15,000 only remained at the commencement of the last engagement, the Israelites may easily have collected 5000 golden rings, or even more, which might weigh 1700 shekels.—Ver. 27. "*And Gideon made it into an ephod,*" *i.e.* used the gold of the rings obtained from the booty for making an ephod. There is no necessity, however, to understand this as signifying that 1700 shekels or 50 lbs. of gold had been used for the ephod itself, but simply that the making of the ephod was accomplished with this gold. The word *ephod* does not signify an image of Jehovah, or an idol, as *Gesenius* and others maintain, but the shoulder-dress of the high priest, no doubt including the *choshen* belonging to it, with the Urim and Thummim, as in 1 Sam. xiv. 3, xxi. 10, xxiii. 6, 9, etc. The material for this was worked throughout with gold threads; and in addition to that there were

precious stones set in gold braid upon the shoulder-pieces of the ephod and upon the choshen, and chains made of gold twist for fastening the choshen upon the ephod (see Ex. xxviii. 6-30). Now, if 50 lbs. of gold could not be used for these things, there were also fourteen precious stones to be procured, and the work itself to be paid for, so that 50 lbs. of gold might easily be devoted to the preparation of this state dress. The large quantity of gold, therefore, does not warrant us in introducing arbitrarily into the text the establishment of a formal sanctuary, and the preparation of a golden image of Jehovah in the form of a bull, as *Bertheau* has done, since there is no reference to בָּקָר or מִצְבֵּה, as in chap. xvii. xviii.; and even the other words of the text do not point to the founding of a sanctuary and the setting up of an image of Jehovah.¹ The expression which follows, וַיִּצַּב אֹתוֹ, does not affirm that "he set it up," but may also mean, "*he kept it in his city of Ophrah.*" וַיִּצַּב is never used to denote the setting up of an image or statue, and signifies not only to put up, but also to lay down (e.g. chap. vi. 37), and to let a thing stand, or leave behind (Gen. xxxiii. 15). The further remark of the historian, "*and all Israel went thither a whoring after it, and it became a snare to Gideon and his house,*" does not presuppose the founding of a sanctuary or temple in Ophrah, and the setting up of a golden calf there. In what the whoring of Israel after the ephod, i.e. the idolatry of the Israelites with Gideon's ephod which was kept in Ophrah, consisted, cannot be gathered or determined from the use of the ephod in the worship of Jehovah under the Mosaic law. "The breastplate upon the coat, and the holy lot, were no doubt used in connection with idolatry" (*Oehler*), and Gideon had an ephod made in his town of Ophrah, that he might thereby obtain revelations from the Lord. We certainly are not for a moment to think of an exposure of the holy coat for the people to worship. It is far more probable that Gideon put on the ephod and wore it as a priest, when he wished to inquire and learn the will of the Lord. It is possible that he also sacrificed to the Lord upon the altar that was built at Ophrah (chap. vi. 24). The motive by which he was led to do this was certainly not merely ambition,

¹ *Oehler* has correctly observed in *Herzog's Cyclopædia*, that *Bertheau* acts very arbitrarily when he represents Gideon as setting up the image of a bull, as Jeroboam did afterwards, since there is nothing to sustain it in the account itself. Why cannot Gideon have worshipped without any image of Jehovah, with the help of the altar mentioned in chap. vi. 24, which was a symbol of Jehovah's presence, and remained standing till the historian's own time?

as *Bertheau* supposes, impelling the man who, along with his followers, had maintained an independent attitude towards the tribe of Ephraim in the war itself (chap. viii. 1 sqq.), to act independently of the common sanctuary of the congregation which was within the territory of Ephraim, and also of the office of the high priest in the time of peace as well. For there is not the slightest trace to be found of such ambition as this in anything that he did during the conflict with the Midianites. The germs of Gideon's error, which became a snare to him and to his house, lie unquestionably deeper than this, namely, in the fact that the high-priesthood had probably lost its worth in the eyes of the people on account of the worthlessness of its representatives, so that they no longer regarded the high priest as the sole or principal medium of divine revelation; and therefore Gideon, to whom the Lord had manifested himself directly, as He had not to any judge or leader of the people since the time of Joshua, might suppose that he was not acting in violation of the law, when he had an ephod made, and thus provided himself with a substratum or vehicle for inquiring the will of the Lord. His sin therefore consisted chiefly in his invading the prerogative of the *Aaronic* priesthood, drawing away the people from the one legitimate sanctuary, and thereby not only undermining the theocratic unity of Israel, but also giving an impetus to the relapse of the nation into the worship of Baal after his death. This sin became a snare to him and to his house.

The history of Gideon is concluded in vers. 28-32.—Ver. 28. The Midianites had been so humiliated that they lifted up their head no more, and the land of Israel had rest forty years "*in the days of Gideon*," i.e. as long as Gideon lived.—Vers. 29 sqq. Before the account of his death, a few other notices respecting his family are introduced for the purpose of preparing the way for the following history of the doings of his sons, in which the sin of Gideon came to a head, and the judgment burst upon his house. "*And Jerubbaal, the son of Joash, went and dwelt in his house.*" Both the word *Jerubbaal*, which simply serves to bring out the fact more vividly (see the remarks on Ex. ii. 1), and also the choice of the name *Jerubbaal*, merely serve to give greater prominence to the change, from the heat of the war against the Midianites to the quiet retirement of domestic life. Instead of accepting the crown that was offered him and remaining at the head of the nation, the celebrated Baal-fighter retired into private life again. In addition to the seventy sons of his many wives, there was a son born to him by a

concubine, who lived at Shechem and is called his maid-servant in chap. ix. 18, and to this son he gave the name of *Abimelech*, i.e. king's father. *אֲבִימֶלֶךְ* is not the same as *קָרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ*, to give a person a name, but signifies to add a name, or give a surname (see Neh. ix. 7, and Dan. v. 12 in the Chaldee). It follows from this, that Abimelech received this name from Gideon as a cognomen answering to his character, and therefore not at the time of his birth, but when he grew up and manifested such qualities as led to the expectation that he would be a king's father.—Ver. 32. Gideon died at a good old age (see Gen. xv. 15, xxv. 8), and therefore also died a peaceful death (not so his sons; see chap. ix.), and was buried in his father's grave at Ophrah (chap. vi. 11).

Vers. 33–35 form the introduction to the history of Gideon's sons.—Ver. 33. After Gideon's death the Israelites fell once more into the Baal-worship which Gideon had rooted out of his father's city (chap. vi. 25 sqq.), and worshipped *Baal-berith* as their God. *Baal-berith*, the covenant Baal (equivalent to *El-berith*, the covenant god, chap. ix. 46), is not Baal as the god of covenants, but, according to Gen. xiv. 13, Baal as a god in covenant, i.e. Baal with whom they had made a covenant, just as the Israelites had their faithful covenant God in Jehovah (see *Movers*, Phöniz. i. p. 171). The worship of Baal-berith, as performed at Shechem according to chap. ix. 46, was an imitation of the worship of Jehovah, an adulteration of that worship, in which Baal was put in the place of Jehovah (see *Hengstenberg*, Dissertations on the Pentateuch, vol. ii. p. 81).—Vers. 34, 35. In this relapse into the worship of Baal they not only forgot Jehovah, their Deliverer from all their foes, but also the benefits which they owed to Gideon, and showed no kindness to his house in return for all the good which he had shown to Israel. The expression *Jerubbaal-Gideon* is chosen by the historian here, not for the purely outward purpose of laying express emphasis upon the identity of Gideon and Jerubbaal (*Bertheau*), but to point to what Gideon, the Baal-fighter, had justly deserved from the people of Israel.

Judgment upon the House of Gideon, or Abimelech's Sins and End.
—Chap. ix.

After the death of Gideon, Abimelech, his bastard son, opened a way for himself to reign as king over Israel, by murdering his brethren with the help of the Shechemites (vers. 1–6). For this grievous wrong Jotham, the only one of Gideon's seventy sons who

escaped the massacre, reproached the citizens of Shechem in a parable, in which he threatened them with punishment from God (vers. 7-21), which first of all fell upon Shechem within a very short time (vers. 22-49), and eventually reached Abimelech himself (vers. 50-57).

Vers. 1-6. Having gone to Shechem, the home of his mother (chap. viii. 31), Abimelech applied to his mother's brothers and the whole family (all the relations) of the father's house of his mother, and addressed them thus: "*Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the lords of Shechem,*" i.e. speak to them publicly and solemnly. אֲדָמָה, the lords, i.e. the possessors or citizens of Shechem (compare ver. 46 with ver. 49, where אֲדָמָה is interchangeable with אֲנָשֵׁי מְנָהֵל; also chap. xx. 5, and Josh. xxiv. 11): they are not merely Canaanitish citizens, of whom there were some still living in Shechem according to ver. 28, but all the citizens of the town; therefore chiefly Israelites. "*What is better for you, that seventy men rule over you, all the sons of Jerubbaal, or (only) one man (i.e. Abimelech)? and remember that I am your flesh and bone*" (blood relation, Gen. xxix. 14). The name "sons of Jerubbaal," i.e. of the man who had destroyed the altar of Baal, was just as little adapted to commend the sons of Gideon to the Shechemites, who were devoted to the worship of Baal, as the remark that seventy men were to rule over them. No such rule ever existed, or was even aspired to by the seventy sons of Gideon. But Abimelech assumed that his brothers possessed the same thirst for ruling as he did himself; and the citizens of Shechem might be all the more ready to put faith in his assertions, since the distinction which Gideon had enjoyed was thoroughly adapted to secure a prominent place in the nation for his sons.—Ver. 3. When his mother's brethren spake to the citizens of Shechem concerning him, i.e. respecting him and his proposal, their heart turned to Abimelech.—Ver. 4. They gave him seventy shekels of silver from the house of Baal-berith, i.e. from the treasury of the temple that was dedicated to the covenant Baal at Shechem, as temple treasures were frequently applied to political purposes (see 1 Kings xv. 18). With this money Abimelech easily hired light and desperate men, who followed him (attached themselves to him); and with their help he murdered his brethren at Ophrah, seventy men, with the exception of Jotham the youngest, who had hidden himself. The number seventy, the total number of his brethren, is reduced by the exception mentioned immediately afterwards to sixty-nine who were

really put to death. *פָּחַ*, empty, i.e. without moral restraint. *תַּחַל*, lit. gurgling up, boiling over; figuratively, hot, desperate men. "Upon (against) one stone," that is to say, by a formal execution: a bloody omen of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which was afterwards founded at Shechem by the Ephraimite Jeroboam, in which one dynasty overthrew another, and generally sought to establish its power by exterminating the whole family of the dynasty that had been overthrown (see 1 Kings xv. 27 sqq., 2 Kings x. 1 sqq.). Even in Judah, Athaliah the worshipper of Baal sought to usurp the government by exterminating the whole of the descendants of her son (2 Kings xi.). Such fratricides have also occurred in quite recent times in the Mohammedan countries of the East.—Ver. 6. "Then all the citizens of Shechem assembled together, and all the house of Millo, and made Abimelech king at the memorial terebinth at Shechem." *Millo* is unquestionably the name of the castle or citadel of the town of Shechem, which is called the tower of Shechem in vers. 46–49. The word *Millo* (Chaldee מִלּוֹ) signifies primarily a rampart, inasmuch as it consisted of two walls, with the space between them filled with rubbish. There was also a *Millo* at Jerusalem (2 Sam. v. 9; 1 Kings ix. 15). "All the house of *Millo*" are all the inhabitants of the castle, the same persons who are described in ver. 46 as "all the men (*baale*) of the tower." The meaning of מִלּוֹ is doubtful. מִצֵּב, the thing set up, is a military post in Isa. xxix. 3; but it may also mean a monument or memorial, and here it probably denotes the large stone set up as a memorial at Shechem under the oak or terebinth (see Gen. xxxv. 4). The inhabitants of Shechem, the worshippers of Baal-berith, carried out the election of Abimelech as king in the very same place in which Joshua had held the last national assembly, and had renewed the covenant of Israel with Jehovah the true covenant God (Josh. xxiv. 1, 25, 26). It was there in all probability that the temple of Baal-berith was to be found, namely, according to ver. 46, near the tower of Shechem or the citadel of Millo.

Vers. 7–21. When Jotham, who had escaped after the murder, was told of the election which had taken place, he went to the top of Mount Gerizim, which rises as a steep wall of rock to the height of about 800 feet above the valley of Shechem on the south side of the city (*Rob.* iii. p. 96), and cried with a loud voice, "Hearken to me, ye lords of Shechem, and God will also hearken to you." After this appeal, which calls to mind the language of the prophets, he uttered aloud a fable of the trees which wanted to anoint a king

ever them,—a fable of true prophetic significance, and the earliest with which we are acquainted (vers. 8-15). To the appeal which is made to them in succession to become king over the trees, the olive tree, the fig tree, and the vine all reply: Shall we give up our calling, to bear valuable fruits for the good and enjoyment of God and men, and soar above the other trees? The briar, however, to which the trees turn last of all, is delighted at the unexpected honour that is offered it, and says, "*Will ye in truth anoint me king over you? Then come and trust in my shadow; but if not, let fire go out of the briar and consume the cedars of Lebanon.*" The rare form *כֶּלֶחֶב* (*Chethib*, vers. 8, 12) also occurs in 1 Sam. xxviii. 8, Isa. xxxii. 11, Ps. xxvi. 2: see *Ewald*, § 228, *b.*). *מָלִי* (ver. 10) is also rare (see *Ewald*, § 226, *b.*). The form *הֶחָלִפִּי* (vers. 9, 11, 13), which is quite unique, is not "*Hophal* or *Hiphil*, compounded of *הֶחָחַר* or *הֶחָחֵר*" (*Ewald*, § 51, *c.*), for neither the *Hophal* nor the *Hiphil* of *חָלַל* occurs anywhere else; but it is a simple *Kal*, and the obscure *o* sound is chosen instead of the *a* sound for the sake of euphony, *i.e.* to assist the pronunciation of the guttural syllables which follow one after another. The meaning of the fable is very easy to understand. The olive tree, fig tree, and vine do not represent different historical persons, such as the judges Othniel, Deborah, and Gideon, as the Rabbins affirm, but in a perfectly general way the nobler families or persons who bring forth fruit and blessing in the calling appointed them by God, and promote the prosperity of the people and kingdom in a manner that is well-pleasing to God and men. Oil, figs, and wine were the most valuable productions of the land of Canaan, whereas the briar was good for nothing but to burn. The noble fruit-trees would not tear themselves from the soil in which they had been planted and had borne fruit, to soar (*נָא*, float about) above the trees, *i.e.* not merely to rule over the trees, but *obire et circumagi in rebus eorum curandis*. *נָא* includes the idea of restlessness and insecurity of existence. The explanation given in the *Berleb. Bible*, "We have here what it is to be a king, to reign or be lord over many others, namely, very frequently to do nothing else than float about in such restlessness and distraction of thoughts, feelings, and desires, that very little good or sweet fruit ever falls to the ground," if not a truth without exception so far as royalty is concerned, is at all events perfectly true in relation to what Abimelech aimed at and attained, to be a king by the will of the people and not by the grace of God. Wherever the Lord does not found the

monarchy, or the king himself does not lay the foundations of his government in God and the grace of God, he is never anything but a tree, moving about above other trees without a firm root in a fruitful soil, utterly unable to bear fruit to the glory of God and the good of men. The expression "*all the trees*" is to be carefully noticed in ver. 14. "*All the trees*" say to the briar, Be king over us, whereas in the previous verse only "*the trees*" are mentioned. This implies that of all the trees not one was willing to be king himself, but that they were unanimous in transferring the honour to the briar. The briar, which has nothing but thorns upon it, and does not even cast sufficient shadow for any one to lie down in its shadow and protect himself from the burning heat of the sun, is an admirable simile for a worthless man, who can do nothing but harm. The words of the briar, "*Trust in my shadow,*" seek refuge there, contain a deep irony, the truth of which the Shechemites were very soon to discover. "*And if not,*" i.e. if ye do not find the protection you expect, fire will go out of the briar and consume the cedars of Lebanon, the largest and noblest trees. Thorns easily catch fire (see Ex. xxii. 5). The most insignificant and most worthless man can be the cause of harm to the mightiest and most distinguished.

In vers. 16-20 Jotham gives the application of his fable, for there was no necessity for any special explanation of it, since it was perfectly clear and intelligible in itself. These verses form a long period, the first half of which is so extended by the insertion of parentheses introduced as explanations (vers. 17, 18), that the commencement of it (ver. 16) is taken up again in ver. 19a for the purpose of attaching the apodosis. "*If ye have acted in truth and sincerity, and (i.e. when ye) made Abimelech king; if ye have done well to Jerubbaal and his house, and if ye have done to him according to the doing of his hands . . . as my father fought for you . . . but ye have risen up to-day against my father's house, and have slain . . . if (I say) ye have acted in truth and sincerity to Jerubbaal and his house this day: then rejoice in Abimelech. . . .*" הִשְׁלִיךְ נַפְשׁוֹ, to throw away his life, i.e. expose to death. מִנֶּנּוּ, "from before him," serves to strengthen the הִשְׁלִיךְ. Jotham imputes the slaying of his brothers to the citizens of Shechem, as a crime which they themselves had committed (ver. 18), because they had given Abimelech money out of their temple of Baal to carry out his designs against the sons of Jerubbaal (ver. 4). In this reproach he had, strictly speaking, already pronounced sentence upon their doings. When, therefore,

he proceeds still further in ver. 19, "If ye have acted in truth towards Jerubbaal . . . then rejoice," etc., this turn contains the bitterest scorn at the faithlessness manifested towards Jerubbaal. In that case nothing could follow but the fulfilment of the threat and the bursting forth of the fire. In carrying out this point the application goes beyond the actual meaning of the parable itself. Not only will fire go forth from Abimelech and consume the lords of Shechem and the inhabitants of Millo, but fire will also go forth from them and devour Abimelech himself. The fulfilment of this threat was not long delayed, as the following history shows (vers. 23 sqq.).—Ver. 21. But Jotham fled to *Beer*, after charging the Shechemites with their iniquity, and dwelt there before his brother Abimelech ("before," *i.e.* "for fear of."—*Jerome*). *Beer* in all probability is not the same place as *Beeroth* in the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. ix. 17), but, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Βηρά*), a place eight Roman miles to the north of Eleutheropolis, situated in the plain; at present a desolate village called *el Bireh*, near the mouth of the Wady es Surâr, not far from the former Beth-shemesh (*Rob. Pal.* ii. p. 132).

Vers. 22-24. Abimelech's reign lasted three years. מֶלֶךְ, from מָלַךְ, to govern, is used intentionally, as it appears, in the place of מְלִיכָה, because Abimelech's government was not a monarchical reign, but simply a tyrannical despotism. "*Over Israel*," that is to say, not over the whole of the twelve tribes of Israel, but only over a portion of the nation, possibly the tribes of Ephraim and half Manasseh, which acknowledged his sway.—Vers. 23, 24. Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem, so that they became treacherous towards him. "*An evil spirit*" is not merely "an evil disposition," but an evil demon, which produced discord and strife, just as an evil spirit came upon Saul (1 Sam. xvi. 14, 15, xviii. 10); not Satan himself, but a supernatural spiritual power which was under his influence. This evil spirit God sent to punish the wickedness of Abimelech and the Shechemites. *Elohim*, not *Jehovah*, because the working of the divine justice is referred to here. "*That the wickedness to the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood* (the blood of these sons that had been shed), *to lay it upon Abimelech.*" "*And their blood*" is only a more precise definition of "the wickedness to the seventy sons;" and "*to lay it*" is an explanation of the expression "might come." The introduction of מִלֵּךְ, however, brings an *anakolouthon* into the construction, since the transitive מִלֵּךְ presupposes *Elohim* as the

subject and **לְבָא** as the object, whereas the parallel **לְבָא** is the subject to the intransitive **לְבָא**: that the wickedness might come, and that God might lay the blood not only upon Abimelech, the author of the crime, but also upon the lords of Shechem, who had strengthened his hands to slay his brethren; had supported him by money, that he might be able to hire worthless fellows to execute his crime (vers. 4, 5).

Vers. 25–29. The faithlessness of the Shechemites towards Abimelech commenced by their placing liars in wait for him (**לְבָא**, *dat. incomm.*, to his disadvantage) upon the tops of the mountains (Ebal and Gerizim, between which Shechem was situated), who plundered every one who passed by them on the road. In what way they did harm to Abimelech by sending out liars in wait to plunder the passers-by, is not very clear from the brevity of the narrative. The general effect may have been, that they brought his government into discredit with the people by organizing a system of robbery and plunder, and thus aroused a spirit of discontent and rebellion. Possibly, however, these highway robbers were to watch for Abimelech himself, if he should come to Shechem, not only to plunder him, but, if possible, to despatch him altogether. This was made known to Abimelech. But before he had put down the brigandage, the treachery broke out into open rebellion.—Ver. 26. Gaal, the son of Ebed, came to Shechem with his brethren. **עָבֵד** with **בְּ**, to pass over into a place. Who Gaal was, and whence he came, we are not informed. Many of the mss. and early editions, *e.g.* the Syriac and Arabic, read “son of Eber,” instead of “son of Ebed.” Judging from his appearance in Shechem, he was a knight-errant, who went about the country with his brethren, *i.e.* as captain of a company of freebooters, and was welcomed in Shechem, because the Shechemites, who were dissatisfied with the rule of Abimelech, hoped to find in him a man who would be able to render them good service in their revolt from Abimelech. This may be gathered from the words “*and the lords of Shechem trusted in him.*”—Ver. 27. At the vintage they prepared **הַלֵּלִים**, “praise-offerings,” with the grapes which they had gathered and pressed, eating and drinking in the house of their god, *i.e.* the temple of Baal-berith, and cursing Abimelech at these sacrificial meals, probably when they were excited with wine. **הַלֵּלִים** signifies, according to Lev. xix. 24, praise-offerings of the fruits which newly-planted orchards or vineyards bore in the fourth year. The presentation of these fruits, by which the vineyard or orchard was sanctified to

the Lord, was associated, as we may learn from the passage before us, with sacrificial meals. The Shechemites held a similar festival in the temple of their covenant Baal, and in his honour, to that which the law prescribes for the Israelites in Lev. xix. 23-25.—Vers. 28, 29. At this feast Gaal called upon the Shechemites to revolt from Abimelech. “*Who is Abimelech,*” he exclaimed, “*and who Shechem, that we serve him? Is he not the son of Jerubbaal, and Zebul his officer? Serve the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem! and why should we, we serve him (Abimelech)?*” The meaning of these words, which have been misinterpreted in several different ways, is very easily seen, if we bear in mind (1) that *וְ* (who is?) in this double question cannot possibly be used in two different and altogether opposite senses, such as “how insignificant or contemptible is Abimelech,” and “how great and mighty is Shechem,” but that in both instances it must be expressive of disparagement and contempt, as in 1 Sam. xxv. 10; and (2) that Gaal answers his own questions. Abimelech was regarded by him as contemptible, not because he was the son of a maid-servant or of very low birth, nor because he was ambitious and cruel, a parricide and the murderer of his brethren (*Rosenmüller*), but because he was a son of Jerubbaal, a son of the man who destroyed the altar of Baal at Shechem and restored the worship of Jehovah, for which the Shechemites themselves had endeavoured to slay him (chap. vi. 27 sqq.). So also the meaning of the question, Who is Shechem? may be gathered from the answer, “and Zebul his officer.” The use of the personal *וְ* (who) in relation to Shechem may be explained on the ground that Gaal is speaking not so much of the city as of its inhabitants. The might and greatness of Shechem did not consist in the might and authority of its prefect, Zebul, who had been appointed by Abimelech, and whom the Shechemites had no need to serve. Accordingly there is no necessity either for the arbitrary paraphrase of Shechem, given in the *Sept.*, viz. *υἱὸς Συχέμ* (son of Shechem); or for the perfectly arbitrary assumption of *Bertheau*, that Shechem is only a second name for Abimelech, who was a descendant of Shechem; or even for the solution proposed by *Rosenmüller*, that Zebul was “a man of low birth and obscure origin,” which is quite incapable of proof. To Zebul, that one man whom Abimelech had appointed prefect of the city, Gaal opposes “*the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem,*” as those whom the Shechemites should serve (i.e. whose followers they should be). *Hamor* was the name of the Hivite prince who had founded the city of

Shechem (Gen. xxxiii. 19, xxxiv. 2; compare Josh. xxiv. 32). The "men of Hamor" were the patricians of the city, who "derived their origin from the noblest and most ancient stock of Hamor" (*Rosenmüller*). Gaal opposes them to Abimelech and his representative Zebul.¹ In the last clause, "*why should we serve him*" (Abimelech or his officer Zebul)? Gaal identifies himself with the inhabitants of Shechem, that he may gain them fully over to his plans.—Ver. 29. "*O that this people,*" continued Gaal, "*were in my hand,*" i.e. could I but rule over the inhabitants of Shechem, "*then would I remove (drive away) Abimelech.*" He then exclaimed with regard to Abimelech (אֲמַר לְ, as in ver. 54b, Gen. xx. 13, etc.), "*Increase thine army and come out!*" Heated as he was with wine, Gaal was so certain of victory that he challenged Abimelech boldly to make war upon Shechem. רָבָה, imper. *Piel* with *Seghol*. צָאָה, imperative, with הֵאֵר of motion or emphasis.

Vers. 30–45. This rebellious speech of Gaal was reported to Abimelech by the town-prefect Zebul, who sent messengers to him בְּתַרְמָה, either with deceit (תַּרְמָה from רָמָה), i.e. employing deceit, inasmuch as he had listened to the speech quietly and with apparent assent, or "*in Tormah,*" the name of a place, תַּרְמָה being a misspelling for אֶרְמָה = אֶרְמָה (ver. 41). The *Sept.* and *Chaldee* take the word as an appellative = ἐν κρυφῇ, secretly; so also do *Rashi* and most of the earlier commentators, whilst *R. Kimchi* the elder has decided in favour of the second rendering as a proper name. As the word only occurs here, it is impossible to decide with certainty in favour of either view. הִנֵּם צָרִים, behold they stir up the city against thee (צָרִים from צָר in the sense of צָרָה).—Ver. 32. At the same time he called upon Abimelech to draw near, with the people that he had with him, during the night, and to lie in wait in the field (אָרַב, to place one's self in ambush), and the next morning to spread out with his army against the town; and when Gaal went out with his followers, he was to do to him "as his hand should find," i.e. to deal with him as he best could and would under the circumstances. (On this formula, see at 1 Sam. x. 7, xxv. 8).—

¹ *Bertheau* maintains, though quite erroneously, that serving the men of Hamor is synonymous with serving Abimelech. But the very opposite of this is so clearly implied in the words, that there cannot be any doubt on the question. All that can be gathered from the words is that there were remnants of the Hivite (or Canaanitish) population still living in Shechem, and therefore that the Canaanites had not been entirely exterminated,—a fact which would sufficiently explain the revival of the worship of Baal there.

Ver. 34. On receiving this intelligence, Abimelech rose up during the night with the people that were with him, *i.e.* with such troops as he had, and placed four companies ("heads" as in chap. vii. 16) in ambush against Shechem.—Vers. 35, 36. When Gaal went out in the morning with his retinue upon some enterprise, which is not more clearly defined, and stood before the city gate, Abimelech rose up with his army out of the ambush. On seeing this people, Gaal said to Zebul (who must therefore have come out of the city with him): "*Behold, people come down from the tops of the mountains.*" Zebul replied, for the purpose of deceiving him and making him feel quite secure, "*Thou lookest upon the shadow of the mountains as men.*"—Ver. 37. But Gaal said again, "*Behold, people come down from the navel of the land,*" *i.e.* from the highest point of the surrounding country, "*and a crowd comes by the way of the wizard's terebinths,*"—a place in the neighbourhood of Shechem that is not mentioned anywhere else, and therefore is not more precisely known.—Ver. 38. Then Zebul declared openly against Gaal, and reproached him with his foolhardy speech, whilst Abimelech was drawing nearer with his troops: "*Where is thy mouth now with which thou saidst, Who is Abimelech? Is not this the people that thou hast despised? Go out now and fight with him!*"—Vers. 39 sqq. Then Gaal went out "before the citizens of Shechem;" *i.e.* not at their head as their leader, which is the meaning of מִלְּפָנָיו in Gen. xxxiii. 3, Ex. xiii. 21, Num. x. 35, etc.,—for, according to vers. 33-35, Gaal had only gone out of the town with his own retinue, and, according to vers. 42, 43, the people of Shechem did not go out till the next day,—but "in the sight of the lords of Shechem," so that they looked upon the battle. But the battle ended unfortunately for him. Abimelech put him to flight (וַיִּנָּחֵם as in Lev. xxvi. 36), and there fell many slain up to the gate of the city, into which Gaal had fled with his followers.—Ver. 41. Abimelech did not force his way into the city, but remained (יָשָׁב, *lit.* sat down) with his army in *Arumah*, a place not mentioned again, which was situated, according to ver. 42, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Shechem. It cannot possibly have been the place called *Πομπή ἢ καὶ Ἀριμα* in the *Onom.* of Eusebius, which was named *Ῥέμφις* in his day, and was situated in the neighbourhood of Diospolis (or Lydda). Zebul, however, drove Gaal and his brethren (*i.e.* his retinue) out of Shechem.—Vers. 42-45. The next day the people of Shechem went into the field, apparently not to make war upon Abimelech, but to work in the field, possibly to continue the

vintage. But when Abimelech was informed of it, he divided the people, *i.e.* his own men, into three companies, which he placed in ambush in the field, and then fell upon the Shechemites when they had come out of the city, and slew them.—Ver. 44. That is to say, Abimelech and the companies with him spread themselves out and took their station by the city gate to cut off the retreat of the Shechemites into the city, whilst the other two companies fell upon all who were in the field, and slew them.—Ver. 45. Thus Abimelech fought all that day against the city and took it; and having slain all the people therein, he destroyed the city and strewed salt upon it. Strewing the ruined city with salt, which only occurs here, was a symbolical act, signifying that the city was to be turned for ever into a barren salt desert. Salt ground is a barren desert (see Job xxxix. 6, Ps. cvii. 34).

Vers. 46–49. When the inhabitants of the castle of Shechem (“lords of the tower of Shechem” = “all the house of Millo,” ver. 6) heard of the fate of the town of Shechem, they betook themselves to the hold of the house (temple) of the covenant god (Baal-berith), evidently not for the purpose of defending themselves there, but to seek safety at the sanctuary of their god from fear of the vengeance of Abimelech, towards whom they also had probably acted treacherously. The meaning of the word צִירָה, which answers to an Arabic word signifying *arx*, *palatium*, *omnis structura elatior*, cannot be exactly determined, as it only occurs again in 1 Sam. xiii. 6 in connection with caves and clefts of the rock. According to ver. 49, it had a roof which could be set on fire. The meaning “tower” is only a conjecture founded upon the context, and does not suit, as צִירָה is distinguished from מִגְדָּל.—Ver. 47. As soon as this was announced to Abimelech, he went with all his men to Mount Zalmon, took hatchets in his hand, cut down branches from the trees, and laid them upon his shoulders, and commanded his people to do the same. These branches they laid upon the hold, and set the hold on fire over them (the inhabitants of the tower who had taken refuge there), so that all the people of the tower of Shechem (about one thousand persons) perished, both men and women. Mount *Zalmon*, which is mentioned again in Ps. lxxviii. 15, was a dark, thickly-wooded mountain near Shechem,—a kind of “Black Forest,” as *Luther* has rendered the name. The plural *kardumoth*, “axes,” may be explained on the ground that Abimelech took axes not only for himself but for his people also. מַךְ in a relative sense, as in Num. xxiii. 3 (see *Ewald*, § 331, *b.*).

Vers. 50-57. At length the fate predicted by Jotham (ver. 20) overtook Abimelech.—Vers. 50, 51. He went from Shechem to Thebez, besieged the town, and took it. *Thebez*, according to the *Onom.* thirteen miles from Neapolis (Shechem) on the road to Scythopolis (Beisan), has been preserved in the large village of *Tubás* on the north of Shechem (see *Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 156, and *Bibl. Res.* p. 305). This town possessed a strong tower, in which men and women and all the inhabitants of the town took refuge and shut themselves in. But when Abimelech advanced to the tower and drew near to the door to set it on fire, a woman threw a millstone down upon him from the roof of the tower and smashed his skull, whereupon he called hastily to the attendant who carried his weapons to give him his death-blow with his sword, that men might not say of him “a woman slew him.” פָּלְחָה רָכָב, the upper millstone which was turned round, *lapis vector* (see *Deut.* xxiv. 6). וְתָרַן: from תָּרַן, with a toneless i, possibly to distinguish it from וְתָרַן (from תָּרַן). וְלִגְלִיתוֹ, an unusual form for וְלִגְלִיתוֹ, which is found in the edition of *Norzi* (Mantua, 1742).—Ver. 55. After the death of Abimelech his army was dissolved. אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל are the Israelites who formed Abimelech's army. In vers. 56, 57, the historian closes this account with the remark, that in this manner God recompensed Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem, who had supported him in the murder of his brothers (ver. 2), according to their doings. After the word “rendered” in ver. 56 we must supply “upon his head,” as in ver. 57. Thus Jotham's curse was fulfilled upon Abimelech and upon the Shechemites, who had made him king.

The Judges Tola and Jair.—Chap. x. 1-5.

Of these two judges no particular deeds are mentioned, no doubt because they performed none.—Vers. 1, 2. *Tola* arose after Abimelech's death to deliver Israel, and judged Israel twenty-three years until his death, though certainly not all the Israelites of the twelve tribes, but only the northern and possibly also the eastern tribes, to the exclusion of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, as these southern tribes neither took part in Gideon's war of freedom nor stood under Abimelech's rule. To explain the clause “*there arose to defend (or save) Israel,*” when nothing had been said about any fresh oppression on the part of the foe, we need not assume, as *Rosenmüller* does, “that the Israelites had been constantly harassed by their neighbours, who continued to suppress the liberty of the

Israelites, and from whose stratagems or power the Israelites were delivered by the acts of Tola ;” but Tola rose up as the deliverer of Israel, even supposing that he simply regulated the affairs of the tribes who acknowledged him as their supreme judge, and succeeded by his efforts in preventing the nation from falling back into idolatry, and thus guarded Israel from any fresh oppression on the part of hostile nations. *Tola* was the son of *Puah*, the son of *Dodo*, of the tribe of Issachar. The names *Tola* and *Puah* are already met with among the descendants of Issachar, as founders of families of the tribe of Issachar (see Gen. xli. 13, Num. xxvi. 23, where the latter name is written תולא), and they were afterwards repeated in the different households of these families. *Dodo* is not an appellative, as the *Sept.* translators supposed (υἱὸς πατραδελφου αὐτοῦ), but a proper name, as in 2 Sam. xxiii. 9 (*Keri*), 24, and 1 Chron. xi. 12. The town of *Shamir*, upon the mountains of Ephraim, where Tola judged Israel, and was afterwards buried, was a different place from the *Shamir* upon the mountains of Judah, mentioned in Josh xv. 48, and its situation (probably in the territory of Issachar) is still unknown.—Vers. 3 sqq. After him *Jair* the Gileadite (born in Gilead) judged Israel for twenty-two years. Nothing further is related of him than that he had thirty sons who rode upon thirty asses, which was a sign of distinguished rank in those times when the Israelites had no horses. They had thirty cities (the second עִירִים in ver. 4 is another form for עִיר, from a singular עִיר = עִיר, a city, and is chosen because of its similarity in sound to עִירִים, asses). These cities they were accustomed to call *Havvoth-jair* unto this day (the time when our book was written), in the land of Gilead. The לָהֶם before וְעָרָם is placed first for the sake of emphasis, “*even these they call*,” etc. This statement is not at variance with the fact, that in the time of Moses the Manassite *Jair* gave the name of *Havvoth-jair* to the towns of Bashan which had been conquered by him (Num. xxxii. 41 ; Deut. iii. 14) ; for it is not affirmed here, that the thirty cities which belonged to the sons of *Jair* received this name for the first time from the judge *Jair*, but simply that this name was brought into use again by the sons of *Jair*, and was applied to these cities in a peculiar sense. (For further remarks on the *Havvoth-jair*, see at Deut. iii. 14.) The situation of *Camon*, where *Jair* was buried, is altogether uncertain. *Josephus* (Ant. v. 6, 6) calls it a city of Gilead, though probably only on account of the assumption, that it would not be likely that *Jair* the Gileadite, who possessed so many cities in Gilead, should

be buried outside Gilead. But this assumption is a very questionable one. As Jair judged Israel after Tola the Issacharite, the assumption is a more natural one, that he lived in Canaan proper. Yet *Reland* (Pal. ill. p. 679) supports the opinion that it was in Gilead, and adduces the fact that *Polybius* (Hist. v. 70, 12) mentions a town called *Καμοῦν*, by the side of Pella and Gefrun, as having been taken by Antiochus. On the other hand, *Eusebius* and *Jerome* (in the *Onom.*) regard our *Camon* as being the same as the *κώμη Καμμωνά ἐν τῷ μεγάλῳ πεδίῳ*, six Roman miles to the north of *Legio* (*Lejun*), on the way to Ptolemais, which would be in the plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon. This is no doubt applicable to the *Κναμών* of Judith vii. 3; but whether it also applies to our *Camon* cannot be decided, as the town is not mentioned again.

III. PERIOD OF OPPRESSION BY THE AMMONITES AND PHILISTINES.

—CHAP. X. 6-XVI.

The third stage in the period of the judges, which extended from the death of Jair to the rise of Samuel as a prophet, was a time of deep humiliation for Israel, since the Lord gave up His people into the hands of two hostile nations at the same time, on account of their repeated return to idolatry; so that the Ammonites invaded the land from the east, and oppressed the Israelites severely for eighteen years, especially the tribes to the east of the Jordan; whilst the Philistines came from the west, and extended their dominion over the tribes on this side, and brought them more and more firmly under their yoke. It is true that Jephthah delivered his people from the oppression of the Ammonites, in the power of the Spirit of Jehovah, having first of all secured the help of God through a vow, and not only smote the Ammonites, but completely subdued them before the Israelites. But the Philistine oppression lasted forty years; for although Samson inflicted heavy blows upon the Philistines again and again, and made them feel the superior power of the God of Israel, he was nevertheless not in a condition to destroy their power and rule over Israel. This was left for Samuel to accomplish, after he had converted the people to the Lord their God.

Israel's renewed Apostasy and consequent Punishment.—

Chap. x. 6-18.

As the Israelites forsook the Lord their God again, and served the gods of the surrounding nations, the Lord gave them up to the

power of the Philistines and Ammonites, and left them to groan for eighteen years under the severe oppression of the Ammonites, till they cried to Him in their distress, and He sent them deliverance through Jephthah, though not till He had first of all charged them with their sins, and they had put away the strange gods. This section forms the introduction, not only to the history of Jephthah (chap. xi. 1-xii. 7) and the judges who followed him, viz. Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (chap. xii. 8-15), but also to the history of Samson, who began to deliver Israel out of the power of the Philistines (chap. xiii.-xvi.). After the fact has been mentioned in the introduction (in ver. 7), that Israel was given up into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites at the same time, the Ammonitish oppression, which lasted eighteen years, is more particularly described in vers. 8, 9. This is followed by the reproof of the idolatrous Israelites on the part of God (vers. 10-16); and lastly, the history of Jephthah is introduced in vers. 17, 18, the fuller account being given in chap. xi. Jephthah, who judged Israel for six years after the conquest and humiliation of the Ammonites (chap. xii. 7), was followed by the judges Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, who judged Israel for seven, ten, and eight years respectively, that is to say, for twenty-five years in all; so that Abdon died forty-nine years ($18+6+25$) after the commencement of the Ammonitish oppression, i.e. nine years after the termination of the forty years' rule of the Philistines over Israel, which is described more particularly in chap. xiii. 1, for the purpose of introducing the history of Samson, who judged Israel twenty years under that rule (chap. xv. 20, xvi. 31), without bringing it to a close, or even surviving it. It was only terminated by the victory which Israel achieved under Samuel at Ebenezer, as described in 1 Sam. vii.

Vers. 6-16. In the account of the renewed apostasy of the Israelites from the Lord contained in ver. 6, seven heathen deities are mentioned as being served by the Israelites: viz., in addition to the *Canaanitish Baals* and *Astartes* (see at chap. ii. 11, 13), the gods of *Aram*, i.e. *Syria*, who are never mentioned by name; of *Sidon*, i.e., according to 1 Kings xi. 5, principally the Sidonian or Phœnician Astarte; of the *Moabites*, i.e. Chemosh (1 Kings xi. 33), the principal deity of that people, which was related to Moloch (see at Num. xxi. 29); of the *Ammonites*, i.e. Milcom (1 Kings xi. 5, 33) or Moloch (see at Lev. xviii. 21); and of the *Philistines*, i.e. Dagon (see at chap. xvi. 23). If we compare the list of these seven deities with vers. 11 and 12, where we find seven nations mentioned out

of whose hands Jehovah had delivered Israel, the correspondence between the number seven in these two cases and the significant use of the number are unmistakeable. Israel had balanced the number of divine deliverances by a similar number of idols which it served, so that the measure of the nation's iniquity was filled up in the same proportion as the measure of the delivering grace of God. The number *seven* is employed in the Scriptures as the stamp of the works of God, or of the perfection created, or to be created, by God on the one hand, and of the actions of men in their relation to God on the other. The foundation for this was the creation of the world in seven days.—On ver. 7, see chap. ii. 13, 14. The Ammonites are mentioned after the Philistines, not because they did not oppress the Israelites till afterwards, but for purely formal reasons, viz. because the historian was about to describe the oppression of the Ammonites first. In ver. 8 the subject is the “children of Ammon,” as we may see very clearly from ver. 9. “*They (the Ammonites) ground and crushed the Israelites in the same year,*” i.e. the year in which God sold the Israelites into their hands, or in which they invaded the land of Israel. וַיִּצְרְפוּ and וַיִּדְרֹסוּ are synonymous, and are simply joined together for the sake of emphasis, whilst the latter calls to mind Deut. xxviii. 33. The duration of this oppression is then added: “*Eighteen years (they crushed) all the Israelites, who dwell on the other side of the Jordan in the land of the Amorites,*” i.e. of the two Amoritish kings Sihon and Og, who (dwelt) in Gilead. *Gilead*, being a more precise epithet for the land of the Amorites, is used here in a wider sense to denote the whole of the country on the east of the Jordan, so far as it had been taken from the Amorites and occupied by the Israelites (as in Num. xxxii. 29, Deut. xxxiv. 1: see at Josh. xxii. 9).—Ver. 9. They also crossed the Jordan, and made war even upon Judah, Benjamin, and the house of Ephraim (the families of the tribe of Ephraim), by which Israel was brought into great distress. וַיִּצְרְפוּ, as in chap. ii. 15.—Vers. 10-14. When the Israelites cried in their distress to the Lord, “*We have sinned against Thee, namely, that we have forsaken our God and served the Baals,*” the Lord first of all reminded them of the manifestations of His grace (vers. 11, 12), and then pointed out to them their faithless apostasy and the worthlessness of their idols (vers. 13, 14). וַיִּזְכֹּר, “*and indeed that,*” describes the sin more minutely, and there is no necessity to remove it from the text,—an act which is neither warranted by its absence from several MSS. nor by its omission from the Sept., the Syriac, and the Vulgate. *Baalim*

is a general term used to denote all the false gods, as in chap. ii. 11. This answer on the part of God to the prayer of the Israelites for help is not to be regarded as having been given through an extraordinary manifestation (theophany), or through the medium of a prophet, for that would certainly have been recorded; but it was evidently given in front of the tabernacle, where the people had called upon the Lord, and either came through the high priest, or else through an inward voice in which God spoke to the hearts of the people, *i.e.* through the voice of their own consciences, by which God recalled to their memories and impressed upon their hearts first of all His own gracious acts, and then their faithless apostasy. There is an *anakolouthon* in the words of God. The construction which is commenced with סִפְּעֵרִים is dropped at וְיִדְוֹנִים וְ in ver. 12; and the verb וְהִשְׁעֵתִי, which answers to the beginning of the clause, is brought up afterwards in the form of an apodosis with וְאִשְׁרָתָה אֶתְכֶם. “*Did I not deliver you* (1) *from the Egyptians* (cf. Ex. i.-xiv.); (2) *from the Amorites* (cf. Num. xxi. 3); (3) *from the Ammonites* (who oppressed Israel along with the Moabites in the time of Ehud, chap. iii. 12 sqq.); (4) *from the Philistines* (through Shamgar: see 1 Sam. xii. 9, where the Philistines are mentioned between Sisera and Moab); (5) *from the Sidonians* (among whom probably the northern Canaanites under Jabin are included, as Sidon, according to chap. xviii. 7, 28, appears to have exercised a kind of principality or protectorate over the northern tribes of Canaan); (6) *from the Amalekites* (who attacked the Israelites even at Horeb, Ex. xvii. 8 sqq., and afterwards invaded the land of Israel both with the Moabites, chap. iii. 13, and also with the Midianites, chap. vi. 3); and (7) *from the Midianites?*” (see chap. vi. vii.). The last is the reading of the LXX. in *Cod Al.* and *Vat.*, viz. *Maðlap*; whereas *Ald.* and *Compl.* read *Xavaán*, also the *Vulgate*. In the Masoretic text, on the other hand, we have *Maon*. Were this the original and true reading, we might perhaps think of the *Mehunim*, who are mentioned in 2 Chron. xxvi. 7 along with Philistines and Arabians (cf. 1 Chron. iv. 41), and are supposed to have been inhabitants of the city of *Maan* on the Syrian pilgrim road to the east of Petra (*Burckhardt*, *Syr.* pp. 734 and 1035: see *Ewald*, *Gesch.* i. pp. 321, 322). But there is very little probability in this supposition, as we cannot possibly see how so small a people could have oppressed Israel so grievously at that time, that the deliverance from their oppression could be mentioned here; whilst it would be very strange that nothing should be said

about the terrible oppression of the Midianites and the wonderful deliverance from that oppression effected by Gideon. Consequently the Septuagint (*Μαδιάμ*) appears to have preserved the original text.—Ver. 13. Instead of thanking the Lord, however, for these deliverances by manifesting true devotedness to Him, Israel had forsaken Him and served other gods (see chap. ii. 13).—Vers. 14 sqq. Therefore the Lord would not save them any more. They might get help from the gods whom they had chosen for themselves. The Israelites should now experience what Moses had foretold in his song (Deut. xxxii. 37, 38). This divine threat had its proper effect. The Israelites confessed their sins, submitted thoroughly to the chastisement of God, and simply prayed for salvation; nor did they content themselves with merely promising, they put away the strange gods and served Jehovah, *i.e.* they devoted themselves again with sincerity to His service, and so were seriously converted to the living God. “*Then was His (Jehovah's) soul impatient (פָּקַדְתָּ, as in Num. xxi. 4) because of the troubles of Israel;*” *i.e.* Jehovah could no longer look down upon the misery of Israel; He was obliged to help. The change in the purpose of God does not imply any changeableness in the divine nature; it simply concerns the attitude of God towards His people, or the manifestation of the divine love to man. In order to bend the sinner at all, the love of God must withdraw its helping hand and make men feel the consequences of their sin and rebelliousness, that they may forsake their evil ways and turn to the Lord their God. When this end has been attained, the same divine love manifests itself as pitying and helping grace. Punishments and benefits flow from the love of God, and have for their object the happiness and well-being of men.

Vers. 17, 18. These verses form the introduction to the account of the help and deliverance sent by God, and describe the preparation made by Israel to fight against its oppressors. The Ammonites “*let themselves be called together,*” *i.e.* assembled together (*קָרְאוּ*), as in chap. vii. 23), and encamped in Gilead, *i.e.* in that portion of Gilead of which they had taken possession. For the Israelites, *i.e.* the tribes to the east of the Jordan (according to ver. 18 and chap. xi. 29), also assembled together in Gilead and encamped at *Mizpeh*, *i.e.* Ramath-mizpeh or Ramoth in Gilead (Josh. xiii. 26, xx. 8), probably on the site of the present *Szalt* (see at Deut. iv. 43, and the remarks in the Commentary on the Pent. vol. i. p. 300), and resolved to look round for a man who could begin the war, and to make him the head over all the inhabitants of Gilead (the tribes of

Israel dwelling in Perea). The "*princes of Gilead*" are in apposition to "*the people*." "The people, namely, the princes of Gilead," i.e. the heads of tribes and families of the Israelites to the east of the Jordan. "*Head*" is still further defined in chap. xi. 6, 11, as "*captain*," or "*head and captain*."

*Jephthah elected as Prince; Negotiations with the Ammonites; Victory, Vow, and Office of Judge.*¹—Chap. xi.—xii. 7.

VERS. 1-11. ELECTION OF JEPHTHAH AS PRINCE AND JUDGE OF ISRAEL.—VERS. 1-3. The account begins with his descent and early mode of life. "*Jephthah* (LXX. Ἰεφθά) the Gileadite was a brave hero" (see chap. vi. 12, Josh. i. 14, etc.); but he was the son of a harlot, and was begotten by Gilead, in addition to other sons who were born of his wife. *Gilead* is not the name of the country, as *Bertheau* supposes, so that the land is mythically personified as the forefather of Jephthah. Nor is it the name of the son of Machir and grandson of Manasseh (Num. xxvi. 29), so that the celebrated ancestor of the Gileadites is mentioned here instead of the unknown father of Jephthah. It is really the proper name of the father himself; and just as in the case of Tola and Puah, in chap. x. 1, the name of the renowned ancestor was repeated in his descendant. We are forced to this conclusion by the fact that the wife of Gilead, and his other sons by that wife, are mentioned in ver. 2. These sons drove their half-brother Jephthah out

¹ On the nature of the sources from which the author drew this tolerably elaborate history of Jephthah, all that can be determined with certainty is, that they sprang from some contemporary of this judge, since they furnish so clear and striking a picture of his life and doings. *Bertheau's* hypothesis, that the section extending from chap. xi. 12 to ver. 28 is founded upon some historical work, which is also employed in Num. xxi., Deut. ii. iii., and here and there in the book of Joshua, has really no other foundation than the unproved assumption that the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua were written towards the close of the period of the kings. For the marked agreement between Jephthah's negotiations with the king of the Ammonites concerning the possession of the land to the east of the Jordan, and the account given in the Pentateuch, especially in Num. xx. xxi., may be explained very simply and very perfectly, on the supposition that the author possessed the Pentateuch itself. And the account which is wanting in the Pentateuch, namely, that Israel petitioned the king of Moab also for permission to go through his land (ver. 17), may have been added from oral tradition, as those glorious victories gained by Israel under Moses were celebrated in verse by contemporaneous poets (see Num. xxi. 14, 17, 27); and this certainly contributed not a little to keep alive the memory of those events in the nation for centuries long.

of the house because of his inferior birth, that he might not share with them in the paternal inheritance; just as Ishmael and the sons of Keturah were sent away by Abraham, that they might not inherit along with Isaac (Gen. xxi. 10 sqq., xxv. 6).—Ver. 3. Jephthah departed from his brothers into the land of *Tob*, i.e., according to 2 Sam. x. 6, 8, a district in the north-east of Perea, on the border of Syria, or between Syria and Ammonitis, called *Τῶβιον* in 1 Macc. v. 13, or more correctly *Τουβῶν*, according to 2 Macc. xii. 17, where loose men gathered round him (cf. chap. ix. 4), and “went out with him,” viz. upon warlike and predatory expeditions like the Bedouins.—Vers. 4-6. But when the Ammonites made war upon Israel some time afterwards, the elders of Gilead (= “the princes of Gilead,” chap. x. 18) went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob, to make this brave warrior their leader. In ver. 4 the account of the war between the Ammonites and Israel, which is mentioned in chap. x. 17, is resumed, and its progress under Jephthah is then more fully described. “*In process of time*” (בְּיָמָיו, *a diebus*, i.e. after the lapse of a long period, which cannot be more precisely defined), sc. after the expulsion of Jephthah from his home (see chap. xiv. 8, xv. 1, Josh. xxiii. 1). מֶלֶךְ signifies a leader in war (Josh. x. 24), and is therefore distinguished in ver. 11 from שָׂרָא, a chief in peace and war.—Ver. 7. Jephthah expressed to the elders his astonishment that they had formerly hated and expelled him, and now came to him in their distress, sc. to make him their leader in time of war. Thus he lays his expulsion upon the shoulders of the elders of Gilead, although it was only by his brethren that he had been driven away from his father’s house, inasmuch as they had either approved of it, or at all events had not interfered as magistrates to prevent it. We cannot indeed infer from this reproach, that the expulsion and disinheriting of Jephthah was a legal wrong; but so much at all events is implied, namely, that Jephthah looked upon the thing as a wrong that had been done to him, and found the reason in the hatred of his brethren. The Mosaic law contained no regulation upon this matter, since the rule laid down in Deut. xxi. 15-17 simply applied to the sons of different wives, and not to a son by a harlot.—Ver. 8. The elders replied, “*Therefore* (לָכֵן, because we have formerly done thee wrong) *we have now come to thee again to make thee our head, if thou comest with us and fightest against the Ammonites.*” The clauses וְנִלְחָמְךָ, וְנִלְחָמְךָ, and וְנִלְחָמְךָ, which are formally co-ordinate, are logically to be subordinated to one another, the first two expressing the condition, the third the

consequence, in this sense, "*If thou go with us and fight, . . . thou shalt be head to us, namely, to all the inhabitants of Gilead,*" i.e. to the two tribes and a half on the east of the Jordan.—Ver. 9. Jephthah assented to this: "*If ye will take me back to make war upon the Ammonites, and Jehovah shall give them up to me (lit. 'before me,' as in Josh. x. 12, Deut. ii. 31, etc.), I will be your head.*" "I" is emphatic as distinguished from *ye*; and there is no necessity to regard the sentence as a question, with which the expression in ver. 10, "*according to thy words,*" which presuppose an affirmative statement on the part of Jephthah, and not a question, would be altogether irreconcilable.—Ver. 10. The elders promised this on oath. "*Jehovah be hearing between us,*" i.e. be hearer and judge of the things concerning which we are negotiating; "*truly according to thy word so will we do*" (אֱמִן, a particle used in connection with an oath).—Ver. 11. Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, "*and the people (i.e. the inhabitants of Gilead) made him head and captain, and Jephthah spoke all his words before Jehovah at Mizpeh:*" i.e. he repeated in a solemn assembly of the people, before God at Mizpeh, the conditions and obligations under which he would accept the honour conferred upon him. "*Before Jehovah*" does not necessarily presuppose the presence of the ark at Mizpeh; nor can we possibly assume this, since the war was resolved upon primarily by the eastern tribes alone, and they had no ark at all. It merely affirms that Jephthah performed this act, looking up to God, the omnipresent head of Israel. Still less do the words warrant the assumption that there was an altar in Mizpeh, and that sacrifices were offered to confirm the treaty, of which there is not the slightest indication in the text. "'Before Jehovah' implies nothing more than that Jephthah confirmed all his words by an oath" (*Hengstenberg*, Diss. ii. pp. 35, 36).

VERS. 12–28. JEPHTHAH'S NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE KING OF THE AMMONITES.—Ver. 12. Before Jephthah took the sword, he sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites, to make complaints to him of his invasion of the land of the Israelites. "*What have we to do with one another ('what to me and thee?'* see Josh. xxii. 24, 2 Sam. xvi. 10), *that thou hast come to me to fight against my land?'*" Jephthah's ambassadors speak in the name of the nation; hence the singulars "*me*" and "*my land.*"—Ver. 13. The king of the Ammonites replied, that when Israel came up out of Egypt, they had taken away his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok (on

the north), and to the Jordan (on the west), and demanded that they should now restore these lands in peace. The plural נָאֲמָרָם (them) refers *ad sensum* to the cities and places in the land in question. The claim raised by the king of the Ammonites has one feature in it, which appears to have a certain colour of justice. The Israelites, it is true, had only made war upon the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og, and defeated them, and taken possession of their kingdoms and occupied them, without attacking the Ammonites and Moabites and Edomites, because God had forbidden their attacking these nations (Dent. ii. 5, 9, 19); but one portion of the territory of Sihon had formerly been Moabitish and Ammonitish property, and had been conquered by the Amorites and occupied by them. According to Num. xxi. 26, Sihon had made war upon the previous king of Moab, and taken away all his land as far as the Arnon (see the comm. on this passage). And although it is not expressly stated in the Pentateuch that Sihon had extended his conquests beyond Moabitis into the land of the Ammonites, which was situated to the east of Moab, and had taken a portion of it from them, this is pretty clearly indicated in Josh. xiii. 25, since, according to that passage, the tribe of Gad received in addition to Jazer and all the towns of Gilead, half the land of the children of Ammon, namely, the land to the east of Gilead, on the western side of the upper Jabbok (Nahr Ammân: see at Josh. xiii. 26).¹—Vers. 14, 15. Jephthah then sent ambassadors again to explain to him the true state of the case, namely, that Israel had neither taken away the land of Moab nor the land of the Ammonites. As a proof of this, Jephthah adduced the leading facts connected with the journey of the Israelites through the desert of Arabia to Canaan, by

¹ The explanation which Masius gives of this passage (*Eatenus moao sursum in Galaaditidem exporrectam jacuisse Gaditarum hæreditatem, quatenus dimidia Ammonitarum ditio Galaaditidem ab oriente ambebat*) is not sufficiently in keeping with the words, and too unnatural, to be regarded as correct, as it is by Reland (Pal. ill. p. 105) and Hengstenberg (Dissertations on the Pentateuch, ii. p. 29); and the reasons assigned by Masius, viz. "that the Israelites were prohibited from occupying the land of the Ammonites," and "the Ammonites are not mentioned in Num. xxi. 26," are too weak to establish anything. The latter is an *argumentum e silentio*, which loses all significance when we bear in mind, that even the allusion to the land of the Moabites in Num. xxi. 26 is only occasioned by the prominence given to Heshbon, and the poetical saying founded upon its fall. But the prohibition against taking the land of the Ammonites from them had just as much force in relation to the land of the Moabites, and simply referred to such land as these tribes still possessed in the time of Moses, and not to that which the Amorites had taken from them.

which this assertion was confirmed, in exact agreement with the accounts of the Pentateuch respecting the matter in dispute.—Vers. 16, 17. On leaving Egypt, Israel passed through the desert to the Red Sea, and came to Kadesh (Num. xx. 1). They then sent messengers to the king of Edom, to obtain permission to pass through his land; and this the king of Edom refused (Num. xx. 14–21). They also sent to the king of Moab, who sent back a similar refusal. The embassy to the king of Moab is not mentioned in the Pentateuch, as it had no direct bearing upon the further course of the Israelites (see Pentateuch, vol. iii. p. 132, note 2). “*And Israel abode in Kadesh*” (word for word, as in Num. xx. 16), and “*then passed through the desert,*” namely to Mount Hor, then down the Arabah to the Red Sea, and still farther past Oboth to Ijje-abarim in the desert (Num. xx. 22–xxi. 11). In this way they went round the land of Edom and the land of Moab (מֹאָב, like מִבְּב in Num. xxi. 4); and came from the east to the land of Moab (i.e. along the eastern boundary, for Ijje-abarim was situated there, according to Num. xxi. 11); and encamped on the other side of the Arnon (Num. xxi. 13), i.e. on the upper course of the Arnon where it still flows through the desert (see Pent. iii. p. 144). On this march, therefore, they did not enter the territory of Moab, as the Arnon formed the boundary of Moab, i.e. the boundary between Moab and the territory of the Amorites (Num. xxi. 13).—Vers. 19–22 are almost *verbatim* the same as Num. xxi. 21–25. Israel then sent messengers to Sihon the king of the Amorites at Heshbon, to ask permission to pass through his land. “*Into my place,*” i.e. into the land of Canaan, that Jehovah has appointed for me. But Sihon “*trusted not Israel to pass through his land,*” i.e. he did not trust to the assurance of Israel that they only wanted to pass peaceably through his land, but supposed the petition to cover an intention to take forcible possession of it. (In Num. xxi. 23 we have מִן הָאֲמֹרִי instead of מִן הָאֲמֹרִי.) He did not confine himself, therefore, to a refusal of the permission they asked for, but collected his men of war, and marched against the Israelites to the desert as far as Jahza, on the east of Medeba and Dibon (see at Num. xxi. 23), and fought with them. But he was defeated, and lost all his land, from the Arnon (Mojeb) on the south to the Jabbok (Zerka) on the north, and from the desert on the east to the Jordan on the west, of which the Israelites took possession.—Vers. 23, 24. From these facts Jephthah drew this simple but indisputable conclusion: “*Jehovah the God of Israel has rooted out the Amorites before His*

people Israel, and thou wilt take possession of it (viz. the land of the Amorites)." The suffix to *תִּירְשֵׁנִי* refers to *הָאֲמֹרִי*, the Amorites, i.e. their land. The construction of *יִרְשׁ* with the accusative of the people (as in Deut. ii. 12, 21, 22, ix. 1) may be explained on the simple ground, that in order to take possession of a country, it is necessary first of all to get the holders of it into your power. Jephthah then proved still further how unwarrantable the claim of the king of the Ammonites was, and said to him (ver. 24), "*Is it not the fact (הֲלֹא, nonne), that what thy god Chemosh gives thee for a possession, of that thou takest possession; and all that Jehovah makes ownerless before us, of that we take possession?*"—an appeal the validity of which could not be disputed. For *Chemosh*, see at Num. xxi. 29. The verb *תִּירְשֵׁנִי* combines the three meanings: to drive out of a possession, to deprive of a possessor, and to give for a possession; inasmuch as it is impossible to give a land for a possession without driving away or exterminating its former possessor.—Ver. 25. But not contenting himself with this conclusive deduction, Jephthah endeavoured to remove the lost appearance of right from the king's claim by a second and equally conclusive argument. "*And now art thou better than Balak son of Zippor, the king of Moab? Did he strive (רָוַב, inf. abs. of רָוַב or רָוַב) with Israel, or did he fight against them?*" By the repetition of *וַתִּתְּחַם* (ver. 25, cf. ver. 23), the new argument is attached to the previous one, as a second deduction from the facts already described. Balak, the king of the Moabites, had indeed bribed Balaam to destroy Israel by his curses; but he did so not so much with the intention of depriving them of the territory of the Amorites which they had conquered, as from the fear that the powerful Israelites might also conquer his still remaining kingdom. Balak had neither made war upon Israel on account of the territory which they had conquered from the Amorites, nor had he put forward any claim to it as his own property, which he certainly might have done with some appearance of justice, as a large portion of it had formerly belonged to the Moabites (see Num. xxi. 26 and the comm. on this passage). If therefore Balak the king of the Moabites never thought of looking upon this land as being still his property, or of asking it back from the Israelites, the king of the Ammonites had no right whatever to lay claim to the land of Gilead as belonging to him, or to take it away from the Israelites by force, especially after the lapse of 300 years. "*As Israel dwells in Heshbon, . . . and in all the cities by the side of the Arnon for three hundred years, why have ye*

not taken away (these towns and lands) *within that time*" (i.e. during these 300 years)? If the Ammonites had had any right to it, they ought to have asserted their claim in Moses' time. It was much too late now, after the expiration of 300 years. For "if no prescriptive right is to be admitted on account of length of time, and if long possession gives no title, nothing would ever be held in safety by any people, and there would be no end to wars and dissension" (*Clericus*). On Heshbon and its daughters, see at Num. xxi. 25. Aroër (אֲרֹעַר, another form for אֲרָר, or possibly only a copyist's error) is Aroër of Gad, before *Rabbah* (Josh. xiii. 25), and is to be sought for in the Wady Nahr Ammân, on the north-east of Ammân (see at Josh. l. c.), not Aroër of Reuben, on the border of the valley of Arnon (Num. xxxii. 34; Deut. ii. 36, iv. 48; Josh. xii. 2, xiii. 9). This is evident from the fact, that it is distinguished from "all the cities on the side (אֲרֹעַר, see at Num. xxxiv. 3) of the Arnon," which included Aroër of Reuben. Aroër of Gad, with its daughter towns, was probably Ammonitish territory before the time of Sihon. On the 300 years, a round number that comes very near the reality, see the *Chronol.* p. 285.—Ver. 27. After Jephthah had adduced all that could be said, to prove that the Israelites were the rightful possessors of the land of Gilead,¹ he closed with these words: "*I (i.e. Israel, whose cause Jephthah was pleading) have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong in that thou makest war against me. Let Jehovah the Judge be judge this day (now) between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.*" God should decide between the two nations, by giving the victory in war to the side whose cause was the just one.—Ver. 28. But the king of the Ammonites did not hearken to the words of Jephthah "which he had sent to him," i.e. had instructed his messengers to address to him; so that it was necessary that Jehovah should decide for Israel in battle.

Vers. 29-33. JEPHTHAH'S VICTORY OVER THE AMMONITES.

—As the negotiations with the king of the Ammonites were fruitless, Jephthah had no other course left than to appeal to the sword.—Ver. 29. In the power of the Spirit of Jehovah which came upon him (see chap. iii. 10), he passed through Gilead (the land of the tribes of Reuben and Gad between the Arnon and the Jabbok)

¹ "Jephthah urged everything that could be pleaded in support of their prescriptive right: possession, length of time, the right of conquest, and undisputed occupation."—*Rosenmüller*.

and Manasseh (northern Gilead and Bashan, which the half tribe of Manasseh had received for a possession), to gather together an army to battle, and then went with the assembled army to Mizpeh-Gilead, i.e. Ramoth-mizpeh, where the Israelites had already encamped before his call (chap. x. 17), that he might thence attack the Ammonites. עָבַר (to pass over) with an accusative signifies to come over a person in a hostile sense.—Vers. 30, 31. Before commencing the war, however, he vowed a vow to the Lord: “*If Thou givest the Ammonites into my hand, he who cometh to meet me out of the doors of my house, when I return safely (in peace, shalom) from the Ammonites, shall belong to the Lord, and I will offer him for a burnt-offering.*” By the words הַיֵּצֵא אִשָּׁר, “he that goeth out,” even if Jephthah did not think “only of a man, or even more definitely still of some one of his household,” he certainly could not think in any case of a head of cattle, or one of his flock. “Going out of the doors of his house to meet him” is an expression that does not apply to a herd or flock driven out of the stall just at the moment of his return, or to any animal that might possibly run out to meet him. For the phrase יָצָא לִקְרַאת is only applied to men in the other passages in which it occurs.¹ Moreover, Jephthah no doubt intended to impose a very difficult vow upon himself. And that would not have been the case if he had merely been thinking of a sacrificial animal. Even without any vow, he would have offered, not one, but many sacrifices after obtaining a victory.² If therefore he had had an animal sacrifice in his mind, he would certainly have vowed the best of his flocks. From all this there can be no doubt that Jephthah must have been thinking of some human being as at all events included in his vow; so that when he declared that he would dedicate that which came out of his house to meet him, the meaning of the vow cannot

¹ Augustine observes in his *Quest.* xlix. in *l. Jud.*: “He did not vow in these words that he would offer some *sheep*, which he might present as a holocaust, according to the law. For it is not, and was not, a customary thing for sheep to come out to meet a victorious general returning from the war. Nor did he say, I will offer as a holocaust *whatever* shall come out of the doors of my house to meet me; but he says, ‘*Whoever* comes out, I will offer *him*,’ so that there can be no doubt whatever that he had then a human being in his mind.”

² “What kind of vow would it be if some great prince or general should say, ‘O God, if Thou wilt give me this victory, the first calf that meets me shall be Thine!’ *Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus!*”—Pfeiffer, *dubia v.* p. 356.

have been any other than that he would leave the choice of the sacrifice to God himself. "In his eagerness to smite the foe, and to thank God for it, Jephthah could not think of any particular object to name, which he could regard as great enough to dedicate to God; he therefore left it to accident, i.e. to the guidance of God, to determine the sacrifice. He shrank from measuring what was dearest to God, and left this to God himself" (*P. Cassel in Herzog's Real-encycl.*). Whomsoever God should bring to meet him, he would dedicate to Jehovah, and indeed, as is added afterwards by way of defining it more precisely, he would offer him to the Lord as a burnt-offering. The ׀ before הָעֲלִיתִיָּהּ is to be taken as explanatory, and not as disjunctive in the sense of "or," which ׀ never has. But whether Jephthah really thought of his daughter at the time, cannot be determined either in the affirmative or negative. If he did, he no doubt hoped that the Lord would not demand this hardest of all sacrifices.—Vers. 32, 33. After seeking to ensure the help of the Lord by this vow, he went against the Ammonites to fight against them; and the Lord delivered them into his hand, so that Jephthah smote them in a very great slaughter "from Aroër (or Nahr Ammân; see ver. 26) to the neighbourhood of ('till thou come to;' see at Gen. x. 19) Minnith, (conquering and taking) twenty cities, and to Abel Keramim (of the vineyards)." Minnith, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. Mennith), was a place called Manith in the time of Eusebius, four Roman miles from Heshbon on the road to Philadelphia, with which the account given by Buckingham of the ruins of a large city a little to the east of Heshbon may be compared (see v. *Raum.* Pal. p. 265). The situation of Abel Keramim (plain of the vineyards: *Luther and Eng. Ver.*) cannot be determined with the same certainty. Eusebius and Jerome mention two places of this name (*Onom.* s. v. *Abel vinearum*), a villa Abela vinetis consita (κώμη ἀμπελοφόρος Ἀβελ) seven Roman miles from Philadelphia, and a civitas nomine Abela vini fertilis twelve Roman miles to the east of Gadara, and therefore in the neighbourhood of the Mandhur. Which of the two is referred to here remains uncertain, as we have no precise details concerning the battle. If the northern Abela should be meant, Jephthah would have pursued the foe first of all towards the south to the neighbourhood of Heshbon, and then to the north to the border of Bashan. Through this victory the Ammonites were completely subdued before the Israelites.

Vers. 34-40. JEPHTHAH'S VOW.—Vers. 34, 35. When the victorious hero returned to Mizpeh, his daughter came out to meet him “*with timbrels and in dances*,” i.e. at the head of a company of women, who received the conqueror with joyous music and dances (see at Ex. xv. 20): “*and she was the only one; he had neither son nor daughter beside her*.” בְּרֵאשִׁית cannot mean *ex se*, no other child of his own, though he may have had children that his wives had brought him by other husbands; but it stands, as the greater Masora has pointed it, for בְּרֵאשִׁית, “besides her,” the daughter just mentioned,—the masculine being used for the feminine as the nearest and more general gender, simply because the idea of “child” was floating before the author’s mind. At such a meeting Jephthah was violently agitated. Tearing his clothes (as a sign of his intense agony; see at Lev. x. 6), he exclaimed, “*O my daughter! thou hast brought me very low; it is thou who troublest me*” (lit. thou art among those who trouble me, thou belongest to their class, and indeed in the fullest sense of the word; this is the meaning of the so-called *essentia*: see *Ges. Lehrgeb.* p. 838, and such passages as 2 Sam. xv. 31, Ps. liv. 6, lv. 19, etc.): “*I have opened my mouth to the Lord* (i.e. have uttered a vow to Him: compare Ps. lxxvi. 14 with Num. xxx. 3 sqq., Dent. xxiii. 23, 24), *and cannot turn it*,” i.e. revoke it.—Ver. 36. The daughter, observing that the vow had reference to her (as her father in fact had, no doubt, distinctly told her, though the writer has passed this over because he had already given the vow itself in ver. 31), replied, “*Do to me as has gone out of thy mouth* (i.e. do to me what thou hast vowed), *since Jehovah has procured the vengeance upon thine enemies the Ammonites*.” She then added (ver. 37), “*Let this thing be done for me* (equivalent to, Let this only be granted me); *let me alone two months and I will go*,” i.e. only give me two months to go, “*that I may go down to the mountains* (i.e. from Mizpeh, which stood upon an eminence, to the surrounding mountains and their valleys) *and bewail my virginity, I and my friends*.” בְּתוּלִים does not mean “youth” (נְעָרִים), but the condition of virginity (see Lev. xxi. 13). The *Kethibh* רְעוּתִי is a less common form of רְעוּתִי (*Keri*).—Ver. 38. The father granted this request.—Ver. 39. At the end of two months she returned to her father again, “*and he did to her the vow that he had vowed, and she knew no man*.” In consequence of this act of Jephthah and his daughter, “*it became an ordinance* (a standing custom) *in Israel: from year to year* (see Ex. xiii. 10) *the daughters of Israel go to praise the daughter of Jephthah the*

Gileadite four days in the year." תָּנַח does not mean *θρηνηῖν*, to lament or bewail (LXX., Chald., etc.), but to praise, as *R. Tanchum* and others maintain.

With regard to *Jephthah's vow*, the view expressed so distinctly by *Josephus* and the Chaldee was the one which generally prevailed in the earlier times among both Rabbins and fathers of the church, viz. that Jephthah put his daughter to death and burned her upon the altar as a bleeding sacrifice to Jehovah. It was not till the middle ages that *Mos.* and *Dav. Kimchi* and certain other Rabbins endeavoured to establish the view, that Jephthah merely dedicated his daughter to the service of the sanctuary of Jehovah in a lifelong virginity. And lastly, *Ludov. Cappellus*, in his *Diatriba de voto Jephthæ*, Salm. 1683 (which has been reprinted in his *Notæ critic.* in Jud. xi., and the *Critici Sacri*, tom. i.), has expressed the opinion that Jephthah put his daughter to death in honour of the Lord according to the law of the ban, because human beings were not allowed to be offered up as burnt-sacrifices. Of these different opinions the third has no foundation in the text of the Bible. For supposing that Jephthah had simply vowed that on his return he would offer to the Lord whatever came to meet him out of his house, with such restrictions only as were involved in the very nature of the case,—viz. offering it as a burnt-offering if it were adapted for this according to the law; and if it were not, then proceeding with it according to the law of the ban,—the account of the fulfilment of this vow would certainly have defined with greater precision the manner in which he fulfilled the vow upon his daughter. The words "he did to her his vow which he had vowed," cannot be understood in any other way than that he offered her as *עֹלָה*, i.e. as a *burnt-offering*, to the Lord. Moreover, the law concerning the ban and a vow of the ban could not possibly give any individual Israelite the right to ban either his own child or one of his household to the Lord, without opening a very wide door to the crime of murder. The infliction of the ban upon any man presupposed notorious wickedness, so that burnt-offering and ban were diametrically opposed the one to the other. Consequently the other two views are the only ones which can be entertained, and it is not easy to decide between them. Although the words "and I offer him as a burnt-offering" appear to favour the actual sacrifice so strongly, that *Luther's* marginal note, "some affirm that he did not sacrifice her, but the text is clear enough," is perpetually repeated with peculiar emphasis; yet, on looking more closely into

the matter, we find insuperable difficulties in the way of the literal interpretation of the words. Since *הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יֵשֶׁר יָמָא* cannot be taken impersonally, and therefore when Jephthah uttered his vow, he must at any rate have had the possibility of some human being coming to meet him in his mind; and since the two clauses "*he shall be the Lord's*," and "*I will offer him up for a burnt-offering*," cannot be taken disjunctively in such a sense as this, it shall *either* be dedicated to the Lord, *or*, if it should be a sacrificial animal, I will offer it up as a burnt-offering, but the second clause simply contains a more precise definition of the first,—Jephthah must at the very outset have contemplated the possibility of a human sacrifice. Yet not only were human sacrifices prohibited in the law under pain of death as an abomination in the sight of Jehovah (Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 2-5; Deut. xii. 31, xviii. 10), but they were never heard of among the Israelites in the early times, and were only transplanted to Jerusalem by the godless kings Ahaz and Manasseh.¹ If Jephthah therefore vowed that he would offer a human sacrifice to Jehovah, he must either have uttered his vow without any reflection, or else have been thoroughly depraved in a moral and religious sense. But what we know of this brave hero by no means warrants any such assumptions. His acts do not show the slightest trace of impetuosity and rashness. He does not take to the sword at once, but waits till his negotiations with the king of the Ammonites have been without effect. Nor does he utter his vow in the midst of the confusion of battle, so that we might fancy he had made a vow in the heat of the conflict without fully weighing his words, but he uttered it before he set out against the Ammonites (see vers. 30 and 32). So far as the religious training of Jephthah was concerned, it is true that he had led the life of a freebooter during his exile from his country and home, and before his election as the leader of the Israelites; but the analogous circumstances connected with David's life preclude us from in-

¹ "Human sacrifices do not even belong to heathenism generally, but to the darkest night of heathenism. They only occur among those nations which are the most thoroughly depraved in a moral and religious sense." This remark of Hengstenberg (Diss. iii. p. 118) cannot be set aside by a reference to Euseb. *præp.* ev. iv. 16; Baur, *Symb.* ii. 2, pp. 293 sqq.; Lasaulx, *Sühnopfer der Griechen und Römer*, 1841, pp. 8-12; *Ghillany*, *die Menschenopfer der alten Hebräer*, 1842, pp. 107 sqq., as Kurtz supposes, since the uncritical character of the proofs collected together in these writings is very obvious on a closer inspection, and Eusebius has simply taken his examples from Porphyry, and other writings of a very recent date.

ferring either moral depravity or religious barbarism from this. When David was obliged to fly from his country to escape from Saul, he also led a life of the same kind, so that all sorts of people came to him, not pious and virtuous people, but all who were in distress and had creditors, or were embittered in spirit (1 Sam. xxii. 2); and yet, even under these circumstances, David lived in the law of the Lord. Moreover, Jephthah was not destitute of the fear of God. This is proved first of all by the fact, that when he had been recalled from his exile he looked to Jehovah to give him the victory over the Ammonites, and made a treaty with the elders of Gilead "before Jehovah" (vers. 9 and 10); and also by the fact, that he sought to ensure the help of God in war through the medium of a vow. And again, we have no right to attribute to him any ignorance of the law. Even if *Kurtz* is correct in his opinion, that the negotiations with the king of the Ammonites, which show the most accurate acquaintance with the Pentateuch, were not carried on independently and from his own knowledge of the law, and that the sending of messengers to the hostile king was resolved upon in the national assembly at Mizpeh, with the priests, Levites, and elders present, so that the Levites, who knew the law, may have supplied any defects in his own knowledge of the law and of the early history of his people; a private Israelite did not need to study the whole of the law of the Pentateuch, and to make himself master of the whole, in order to gain the knowledge and conviction that a human sacrifice was irreconcilable with the substance and spirit of the worship of Jehovah, and that Jehovah the God of Israel was not a Moloch. And again, even if we do not know to what extent the men and fathers of families in Israel were acquainted and familiar with the contents of the Mosaic law, the opinion is certainly an erroneous one, that the Israelites derived their knowledge of the law exclusively from the public reading of the law at the feast of tabernacles in the sabbatical year, as enjoined in Deut. xxxi. 10 sqq.; so that if this public reading, which was to take place only once in seven years, had been neglected, the whole nation would have been left without any instruction whatever in the law. The reason for this Mosaic precept was a totally different one from that of making the people acquainted with the contents of the law (see the commentary on this passage). And again, though we certainly do not find the law of the Lord so thoroughly pervading the religious consciousness of the people, received as it were *in succum et sanguinem*, in

the time of the judges, that they were able to resist the bewitching power of nature-worship, but, on the contrary, we find them repeatedly falling away into the worship of Baal; yet we discover no trace whatever of human sacrifices even in the case of those who went a whoring after Baalim. And although the theocratical knowledge of the law seems to have been somewhat corrupted even in the case of such men as Gideon, so that this judge had an unlawful ephod made for himself at Ophrah; the opinion that the Baal-worship, into which the Israelites repeatedly fell, was associated with human sacrifices, is one of the many erroneous ideas that have been entertained as to the development of the religious life not only among the Israelites, but among the Canaanites, and which cannot be supported by historical testimonies or facts. That the Canaanitish worship of Baal and Astarte, to which the Israelites were addicted, required no human sacrifices, is indisputably evident from the fact, that even in the time of Ahab and his idolatrous wife Jezebel, the daughter of the Sidonian king Ethbaal, who raised the worship of Baal into the national religion in the kingdom of the ten tribes, persecuting the prophets of Jehovah and putting them to death, there is not the slightest allusion to human sacrifices. Even at that time human sacrifices were regarded by the Israelites as so revolting an abomination, that the two kings of Israel who besieged the king of the Moabites—not only the godly Jehoshaphat, but Jehoram the son of Ahab and Jezebel—withdrew at once and relinquished the continuance of the war, when the king of the Moabites, in the extremity of his distress, sacrificed his son as a burnt-offering upon the wall (2 Kings iii. 26, 27). With such an attitude as this on the part of the Israelites towards human sacrifices before the time of Ahaz and Manasseh, who introduced the worship of Moloch into Jerusalem, we cannot, without further evidence, impute to Jephthah the offering of a bloody human sacrifice, the more especially as it is inconceivable, with the diametrical opposition between the worship of Jehovah and the worship of Moloch, that God should have chosen a worshipper of Moloch to carry out His work, or a man who was capable of vowing and offering a human-being sacrifice. The men whom God chose as the recipients of His revelation of mercy and the executors of His will, and whom He endowed with His Spirit as judges and leaders of His people, were no doubt affected with infirmities, faults, and sins of many kinds, so that they could fall to a very great depth; but nowhere is it stated that the Spirit of

God came upon a worshipper of Moloch and endowed him with His own power, that he might be the helper and saviour of Israel.

We cannot therefore regard Jephthah as a servant of Moloch, especially when we consider that, in addition to what has already been said, the account of the actual fulfilment of his vow is apparently irreconcilable with the literal interpretation of the words *והעלתיהו עולה*, as signifying a bleeding burnt-offering. We cannot infer anything with certainty as to the mode of the sacrifice, from the grief which Jephthah felt and expressed when his only daughter came to meet him. For this is quite as intelligible, as even the supporters of the literal view of these words admit, on the supposition that Jephthah was compelled by his vow to dedicate his daughter to Jehovah in a lifelong virginity, as it would be if he had been obliged to put her to death and burn her upon the altar as a burnt-offering. But the entreaty of the daughter, that he would grant her two months' time, in order that she might lament her virginity upon the mountains with her friends, would have been marvellously out of keeping with the account that she was to be put to death as a sacrifice. To mourn one's virginity does not mean to mourn because one has to die a virgin, but because one has to live and remain a virgin. But even if we were to assume that mourning her virginity was equivalent to mourning on account of her youth (which is quite untenable, as *בתולים* is not synonymous with *נערים*), "it would be impossible to understand why this should take place upon the mountains. It would be altogether opposed to human nature, that a child who had so soon to die should make use of a temporary respite to forsake her father altogether. It would no doubt be a reasonable thing that she should ask permission to enjoy life for two months longer before she was put to death; but that she should only think of bewailing her virginity, when a sacrificial death was in prospect, which would rob her father of his only child, would be contrary to all the ordinary feelings of the human heart. Yet, inasmuch as the history lays special emphasis upon her bewailing her virginity, this must have stood in some peculiar relation to the nature of the vow. When a maiden *bewails* her virginity, the reason for this can only be that she will have to remain a bud that has not been allowed to unfold itself, prevented, too, not by death, but by life" (*P. Cassel*, p. 473). And this is confirmed by the expression, to bewail her virginity "*upon the mountains*." "If life had been in question, the same tears might have been shed at home. But her lamentations were devoted to her virginity, and

such lamentations could not be uttered in the town, and in the presence of men. Modesty required the solitude of the mountains for these. The virtuous heart of the maiden does not open itself in the ears of all; but only in sacred silence does it pour out its lamentations of love" (*P. Cassel*, p. 476). And so, again, the still further clause in the account of the fulfilment of the vow, "and she knew no man," is not in harmony with the assumption of a sacrificial death. This clause would add nothing to the description in that case, since it was already known that she was a virgin. The words only gain their proper sense if we connect them with the previous clause, he "did with her according to the vow which he had vowed," and understand them as describing what the daughter did in fulfilment of the vow. The father fulfilled his vow upon her, and she knew no man; *i.e.* he fulfilled the vow through the fact that she knew no man, but dedicated her life to the Lord, as a spiritual burnt-offering, in a lifelong chastity. It was this willingness of the daughter to sacrifice herself which the daughters of Israel went every year to celebrate,—namely, upon the mountains whither her friends had gone with her to lament her virginity, and which they commemorated there four days in the year. And the idea of a spiritual sacrifice is supported not only by the words, but also most decisively by the fact that the historian describes the fulfilment of the vow in the words "he did to her according to his vow," in such a manner as to lead to the conclusion that he regarded the act itself as laudable and good. But a prophetic historian could never have approved of a human sacrifice; and it is evident that the author of the book of Judges does not conceal what was blameable even in the judges themselves, from his remarks concerning the conduct of Gideon (chap. viii. 27), which was only a very small offence in comparison with the abomination of a human sacrifice. To this we have to add the difficulties connected with such an act. The words "he did to her according to his vow" presuppose undoubtedly that Jephthah offered his daughter as לִזְבָּח to Jehovah. But burnt-offerings, that is to say bleeding burnt-offerings, in which the victim was slaughtered and burnt upon the altar, could only be offered upon the lawful altar at the tabernacle, or before the ark, through the medium of the Levitical priests, unless the sacrifice itself had been occasioned by some extraordinary manifestation of God; and that we cannot for a moment think of here. But is it credible that a priest or the priesthood should have consented to offer a sacrifice upon the altar of Jehovah which was denounced in

the law as the greatest abomination of the heathen? This difficulty cannot be set aside by assuming that Jephthah put his daughter to death, and burned her upon some secret altar, without the assistance and mediation of a priest; for such an act would not have been described by the prophetic historian as a fulfilment of the vow that he would offer a burnt-offering to the Lord, simply because it would not have been a sacrifice offered to Jehovah at all, but a sacrifice slaughtered to Moloch.¹

All these circumstances, when rightly considered, almost compel us to adopt the spiritual interpretation of the words "offer as a burnt-offering." It is true that no exactly corresponding parallelisms can be adduced from the Old Testament in support of the spiritual view; but the germs of this view, as met with in the Psalms and the writings of the prophets, are contained in the demand of God addressed to Abraham to offer Him his only son Isaac as a burnt-offering, when compared with the issue of Abraham's temptation,—namely, that God accepted his willingness to offer up his son as a completed sacrifice, and then supplied him with a ram to offer up as a bleeding sacrifice in the place of his son. As this fact teaches that what God demands is not a corporeal but a spiritual sacrifice, so the rules laid down in the law respecting the redemption of the first-born belonging to the Lord, and of persons vowed to Him (Ex. xiii. 1, 13; Num. xviii. 15, 16; Lev. xxvii. 1 sqq.), show clearly how the Israelites could dedicate themselves and those who belonged to them to the Lord, without burning upon the altar the persons who were vowed to Him. And lastly, it is evident, from the perfectly casual reference to the women who

¹ *Auberlen's* remarks upon this subject are very good. "The history of Jephthah's daughter," he says, "would hardly have been thought worth preserving in the Scriptures if the maiden had been really offered in sacrifice; for, in that case, the event would have been reduced, at the best, into a mere family history, without any theocratic significance, though in truth it would rather have been an anti-theocratic abomination, according to Deut. xii. 31 (cf. chap. xviii. 9, Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 1-5). Jephthah's action would in that case have stood upon the same platform as the incest of Lot (Gen. xix. 30 sqq.), and would owe its adoption into the canon simply to genealogical considerations, or others of a similar kind. But the very opposite is the case here; and if, from the conclusion of the whole narrative in chap. xi. 39, 40, the object of it is supposed to be simply to explain the origin of the feast that was held in honour of Jephthah's daughter, even this would tell against the ordinary view. In the eye of the law the whole thing would still remain an abomination, and the canonical Scriptures would not stoop to relate and beautify an institution so directly opposed to the law."

ministered at the tabernacle (Ex. xxxviii. 8 ; 1 Sam. ii. 22), that there were persons in Israel who dedicated their lives to the Lord at the sanctuary, by altogether renouncing the world. And there can be no doubt that Jephthah had such a dedication as this in his mind when he uttered his vow ; at all events in case the Lord, to whom he left the appointment of the sacrifice, should demand the offering up of a human being. The word *עֹלָה* does not involve the idea of burning, like our word burnt-offering, but simply that of going up upon the altar, or of complete surrender to the Lord. *עֹלָה* is a whole offering, as distinguished from the other sacrifices, of which only a part was given up to the Lord. When a virgin, therefore, was set apart as a spiritual *עֹלָה*, it followed, as a matter of course, that henceforth she belonged entirely to the Lord : that is to say, was to remain a virgin for the remainder of her days. The fact that Nazarites contracted marriages, even such as were dedicated by a vow to be Nazarites all their lives, by no means warrants the conclusion that virgins dedicated to the Lord by a vow were also free to marry if they chose. It is true that we learn nothing definite from the Old Testament with regard to this spiritual sacrificial service ; but the absence of any distinct statements upon the subject by no means warrants our denying the fact. Even with regard to the spiritual service of the women at the tabernacle we have no precise information ; and we should not have known anything about this institution, if the women themselves had not offered their mirrors in the time of Moses to make the holy laver, or if we had not the account of the violation of such women by the sons of Eli. In this respect, therefore, the remarks of *Clericus*, though too frequently disregarded, are very true : "It was not to be expected, as I have often observed, that so small a volume as the Old Testament should contain all the customs of the Hebrews, and a full account of all the things that were done among them. There are necessarily many things alluded to, therefore, which we do not fully understand, simply because they are not mentioned elsewhere."

Chap. xii. 1-7. JEPHTHAH'S WAR WITH THE EPHRAIMITES, AND OFFICE OF JUDGE.—Ver. 1. The jealousy of the tribe of Ephraim, which was striving after the leadership, had already shown itself in the time of Gideon in such a way that nothing but the moderation of that judge averted open hostilities. And now that the tribes on the east of the Jordan had conquered the

Ammonites under the command of Jephthah without the co-operation of the Ephraimites, Ephraim thought it necessary to assert its claim to take the lead in Israel in a very forcible manner. The Ephraimites gathered themselves together, and went over *צפון*. This is generally regarded as an appellative noun (*northward*); but in all probability it is a proper name, "to *Zaphon*," the city of the Gadites in the Jordan valley, which is mentioned in Josh. xiii. 27 along with Succoth, that is to say, according to a statement of the *Gemara*, though of a very uncertain character no doubt, *Ἀμαθοῦς* (*Joseph. Ant.* xiii. 13, 5, xiv. 5, 4; *Bell. Jnd.* i. 4, 2; *Reland*, *Pal.* pp. 308 and 559–60), the modern ruins of *Amata* on the Wady *Rajib* or *Ajlun*, the situation of which would suit this passage very well. They then threatened Jephthah, because he had made war upon the Ammonites without them, and said, "*We will burn thy house over thee with fire.*" This arrogance and threat Jephthah opposed most energetically. He replied (vers. 2, 3), "*A man of strife have I been, I and my people on the one hand, and the children of Ammon on the other, very greatly,*" i.e. I and my people had a severe conflict with the Ammonites. "*Then I called you, but ye did not deliver me out of their hand; and when I saw that thou (Ephraim) didst not help me, I put my life in my hand*" (i.e. I risked my own life: see 1 Sam. xix. 5, xxviii. 21, Job xiii. 14. The *Kethibh* *יָצֵאתִי* comes from *יָצָא*: cf. Gen. xxiv. 33), "*and I went against the Ammonites, and Jehovah gave them into my hand.*" Jephthah's appeal to the Ephraimites to fight against the Ammonites is not mentioned in chap. xi., probably for no other reason than because it was without effect. The Ephraimites, however, had very likely refused their co-operation simply because the Gileadites had appointed Jephthah as commander without consulting them. Consequently the Ephraimites had no ground whatever for rising up against Jephthah and the Gileadites in this haughty and hostile manner; and Jephthah had a perfect right not only to ask them, "*Wherefore are ye come up against me now (lit. 'this day'), to fight against me?*" but to resist such conduct with the sword.—Ver. 4. He therefore gathered together all the men (men of war) of Gilead and smote the Ephraimites, because they had said, "*Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim in the midst of Ephraim and Manasseh.*" The meaning of these obscure words is probably the following: Ye Gileadites are a mob gathered together from Ephraimites that have run away; "ye are an obscure set of men, men of no name, dwelling in the midst of two most noble and illustrious tribes"

(*Rosenmüller*). This contemptuous speech did not apply to the tribes of Reuben and Gad as such, but simply to the warriors whom Jephthah had gathered together out of Gilead. For the words are not to be rendered *erepti Ephraim*, "the rescued of Ephraim," as they are by *Seb. Schmidt* and *Stud.*, or to be understood as referring to the fact that the Gileadites had found refuge with the Ephraimites during the eighteen years of oppression on the part of the Ammonites, since such an explanation is at variance with the use of the word *מִלֵּא*, which simply denotes a fugitive who has escaped from danger, and not one who has sought and found protection with another. The Ephraimites had to pay for this insult offered to their brethren by a terrible defeat.—Ver. 5. When the Gileadites had beaten the Ephraimites, they took the fords of the Jordan before the Ephraimites (or towards Ephraim: see chap. iii. 28, vii. 24), to cut off their retreat and prevent their return to their homes. And "when fugitives of Ephraim wanted to cross, the men of Gilead asked them, *Art thou Ephrathi*," i.e. an Ephraimite? And if he said no, they made him pronounce the word *Shibboleth* (a stream or flood, as in Ps. lxi. 3, 16; not an ear of corn, which is quite unsuitable here); "and if he said, *Sibboleth*, not taking care to pronounce it correctly, they laid hold of him and put him to death at the fords of the Jordan." In this manner there fell at that time, i.e. during the whole war, 42,000 Ephraimites. The "*fugitives of Ephraim*" were the Ephraimites who had escaped from the battle and wished to return home. The expression is used here in its ordinary sense, and not with the contemptuous sense in which the Ephraimites had used it in ver. 4. From this history we learn quite casually that the Ephraimites generally pronounced *sh* (shin) like *s* (samech). *הִכִּין* is used elliptically for *לִבְּהִכִּין*, to direct his heart to anything, pay heed (compare 1 Sam. xxiii. 22, 1 Chron. xxviii. 2, with 2 Chron. xii. 14, xxx. 19).—Ver. 7. Jephthah judged Israel six years, though most probably only the tribes on the east of the Jordan. When he died, he was buried in one of the towns of Gilead. The plural *בְּעָרֵי* is used quite indefinitely, as in Gen. xiii. 12, Neh. vi. 2, etc. (see *Ges. Lehrgeb.* p. 665), simply because the historian did not know the exact town.

The Judges Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon.—Chap. xii. 8-15.

Of these three judges no particular deeds are related, just as in the case of Tola and Jair (see the remarks on chap. x. 1). But it certainly follows from the expression *וַיִּשְׁפֹּט אֹחֲרָיו* (vers. 8, 11, 13)

that they were one after another successors of Jephthah, and therefore that their office of judge also extended simply over the tribes on the east of the Jordan, and perhaps the northern tribes on this side.—Vers. 8, 9. *Ibzan* sprang from *Bethlehem*,—hardly, however, the town of that name in the tribe of Judah, as *Josephus* affirms (*Ant.* v. 7, 13), for that is generally distinguished either as Bethlehem “of Judah” (*chap.* xvii. 7, 9; *Ruth* i. 2; 1 *Sam.* xvii. 12), or Bethlehem *Ephratah* (*Micah* v. 1), but probably Bethlehem in the tribe of Zebulun (*Josh.* ix. 15). He had thirty sons and thirty daughters, the latter of whom he sent away נָתַן (out of his house), i.e. gave them in marriage, and brought home thirty women in their places from abroad as wives for his sons. He judged Israel seven years, and was buried in Bethlehem.—Vers. 11, 12. His successor was *Elon* the Zebulunite, who died after filling the office of judge for ten years, and was buried at *Aijalon*, in the land of Zebulun. This *Aijalon* has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Jalún*, about four hours’ journey to the east of Akka, and half an hour to the s.s.w. of Mejdél Kerun (see *V. de Velde*, *Mem.* p. 283).—Vers. 13–15. He was followed by the judge *Abdon*, the son of *Hillel* of *Pirathon*. This place, where Abdon died and was buried after holding the office of judge for eight years, was in the land of Ephraim, on the mountains of the Amalekites (*ver.* 15). It is mentioned in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 30 and 1 *Chron.* xi. 31 as the home of *Benaiah* the hero; it is the same as Φαραθῶ (read Φαραθών) in 1 *Macc.* ix. 50, and *Joseph.* *Ant.* xiii. 1, 3, and has been preserved in the village of *Feráta*, about two hours and a half to the s.s.w. of Nablus (see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* p. 134, and *V. de Velde*, *Mem.* p. 340). On the riding of his sons and daughters upon asses, see at *chap.* x. 4.

Samson’s Life, and Conflicts with the Philistines.—*Chap.* xiii.–xvi.

Whilst Jephthah, in the power of God, was delivering the tribes on the east of the Jordan from the oppression of the Ammonites, the oppression on the part of the Philistines continued uninterruptedly for forty years in the land to the west of the Jordan (*chap.* xiii. 1), and probably increased more and more after the disastrous war during the closing years of the high-priesthood of Eli, in which the Israelites suffered a sad defeat, and even lost the ark of the covenant, which was taken by the Philistines (1 *Sam.* iv.). But even during this period, Jehovah the God of Israel did not leave himself without witness, either in the case of His enemies the Philistines, or in that of His people Israel. The triumphant

delight of the Philistines at the capture of the ark was soon changed into great and mortal terror, when Dagon their idol had fallen down from its place before the ark of God and was lying upon the threshold of its temple with broken head and arms; and the inhabitants of Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron, to which the ark was taken, were so severely smitten with boils by the hand of Jehovah, that the princes of the Philistines felt constrained to send the ark, which brought nothing but harm to their people, back into the land of the Israelites, and with it a trespass-offering (1 Sam. v. vi.). At this time the Lord had also raised up a hero for His people in the person of *Samson*, whose deeds were to prove to the Israelites and Philistines that the God of Israel still possessed the power to help His people and smite His foes.

The life and acts of *Samson*, who was to begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines, and who judged Israel for twenty years under the rule of the Philistines (chap. xiii. 5 and xv. 20), are described in chap. xiii.—xvi. with an elaborate fulness which seems quite out of proportion to the help and deliverance which he brought to his people. His birth was foretold to his parents by an appearance of the angel of the Lord, and the boy was set apart as a Nazarite from his mother's womb. When he had grown up, the Spirit of Jehovah began to drive him to seek occasions for showing the Philistines his marvellous strength, and to inflict severe blows upon them in a series of wonderful feats, until at length he was seduced by the bewitching Delilah to make known to her the secret of his supernatural strength, and was betrayed by her into the power of the Philistines, who deprived him of the sight of his eyes, and compelled him to perform the hardest and most degraded kinds of slave-labour. From this he was only able to escape by bringing about his own death, which he did in such a manner that his enemies were unable to triumph over him, since he killed more of them at his death than he had killed during the whole of his life before. And whilst the small results that followed from the acts of this hero of God do not answer the expectations that might naturally be formed from the miraculous announcement of his birth, the nature of the acts which he performed appears still less to be such as we should expect from a hero impelled by the Spirit of God. His actions not only bear the stamp of adventure, fool-hardiness, and wilfulness, when looked at outwardly, but they are almost all associated with love affairs; so that it looks as if Samson had dishonoured and fooled away the gift entrusted to him, by

making it subservient to his sensual lusts, and thus had prepared the way for his own ruin, without bringing any essential help to his people. "The man who carried the gates of Gaza up to the top of the mountain was the slave of a woman, to whom he frivolously betrayed the strength of his Nazarite locks. These locks grew once more, and his strength returned, but only to bring death at the same time to himself and his foes" (*Ziegler*). Are we to discern in such a character as this a warrior of the Lord? Can Samson, the promised son of a barren woman, a Nazarite from his birth, be the head and flower of the judges? We do not pretend to answer these questions in the affirmative; and to justify this view we start from the fact, which *Ewald* and *Diestel* both admit to be historical, that the deep earnest background of Samson's nature is to be sought for in his Nazarite condition, or rather that it is in this that the distinctive significance of his character and of his life and deeds as judge all culminates. The Nazarite was not indeed what *Bertheau* supposes him to have been, "a man separated from human pursuits and turmoil;" but the significance of the Nazarite condition was to be found in a consecration of the life to God, which had its roots in living faith, and its outward manifestations negatively, in abstinence from everything unclean, from drinking wine, and even from fruit of the vine of every description, and positively, in wearing the hair uncut. In the case of Samson this consecration of the life to God was not an act of his own free will, or a vow voluntarily taken; but it was imposed upon him by divine command from his conception and birth. As a Nazarite, *i.e.* as a person vowed to the Lord, he was to begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines; and the bodily sign of his Nazarite condition—namely, the hair of his head that had never been touched by the scissors—was the vehicle of his supernatural strength with which he smote the Philistines. In Samson the Nazarite, however, not only did the Lord design to set before His people a man towering above the fallen generation in heroic strength, through his firm faith in and confident reliance upon the gift of God committed to him, opening up before it the prospect of a renewal of its own strength, that by this type he might arouse such strength and ability as were still slumbering in the nation; but Samson was to exhibit to his age generally a picture on the one hand of the strength which the people of God might acquire to overcome their strongest foes through faithful submission to the Lord their God, and on the other hand of the weakness into which they had sunk

through unfaithfulness to the covenant and intercourse with the heathen. And it is in this typical character of Samson and his deeds that we find the head and flower of the institution of judge in Israel.

The judges whom Jehovah raised up in the interval between Joshua and Samuel were neither military commanders nor governors of the nation ; nor were they authorities instituted by God and invested with the government of the state. They were not even chosen from the heads of the nation, but were called by the Lord out of the midst of their brethren to be the deliverers of the nation, either through His Spirit which came upon them, or through prophets and extraordinary manifestations of God ; and the influence which they exerted, after the conquest and humiliation of the foe and up to the time of their death, upon the government of the nation and its affairs in general, was not the result of any official rank, but simply the fruit and consequence of their personal ability, and therefore extended for the most part only to those tribes to whom they had brought deliverance from the oppression of their foes. The tribes of Israel did not want any common secular ruler to fulfil the task that devolved upon the nation at that time (see p. 240). God therefore raised up even the judges only in times of distress and trouble. For their appearance and work were simply intended to manifest the power which the Lord could confer upon His people through His Spirit, and were designed, on the one hand, to encourage Israel to turn seriously to its God, and by holding fast to His covenant to obtain the power to conquer all its foes ; and, on the other hand, to alarm their enemies, that they might not attribute to their idols the power which they possessed to subjugate the Israelites, but might learn to fear the omnipotence of the true God. This divine power which was displayed by the judges culminated in Samson. When the Spirit of God came upon him, he performed such mighty deeds as made the haughty Philistines feel the omnipotence of Jehovah. And this power he possessed by virtue of his condition as a Nazarite, because he had been vowed or dedicated to the Lord from his mother's womb, so long as he remained faithful to the vow that had been imposed upon him.

But just as his strength depended upon the faithful observance of his vow, so his weakness became apparent in his natural character, particularly in his intrigues with the daughters of the Philistines ; and in this weakness there was reflected the natural character of the nation generally, and of its constant disposition to fraternize with the heathen. Love to a Philistine woman in

Timnath not only supplied Samson with the first occasion to exhibit his heroic strength to the Philistines, but involved him in a series of conflicts in which he inflicted severe blows upon the uncircumcised. This impulse to fight against the Philistines came from Jehovah (chap. xiv. 4), and in these conflicts Jehovah assisted him with the power of His Spirit, and even opened up a fountain of water for him at Lehi in the midst of his severe fight, for the purpose of reviving his exhausted strength (chap. xv. 19). On the other hand, in his intercourse with the harlot at Gaza, and his love affair with Delilah, he trod ways of the flesh which led to his ruin. In his destruction, which was brought about by his forfeiture of the pledge of the divine gift entrusted to him, the insufficiency of the judgeship in itself to procure for the people of God supremacy over their foes became fully manifest; so that the weakness of the judgeship culminated in Samson as well as its strength. The power of the Spirit of God, bestowed upon the judges for the deliverance of their people, was overpowered by the might of the flesh lusting against the spirit.

This special call received from God will explain the peculiarities observable in the acts which he performed,—not only the smallness of the outward results of his heroic acts, but the character of adventurous boldness by which they were distinguished. Although he had been set apart as a Nazarite from his mother's womb, he was not to complete the deliverance of his people from the hands of the Philistines, but simply to commence it, *i.e.* to show to the people, by the manifestation of supernatural heroic power, the possibility of deliverance, or to exhibit the strength with which a man could slay a thousand foes. To answer this purpose, it was necessary that the acts of Samson should differ from those of the judges who fought at the head of military forces, and should exhibit the stamp of confidence and boldness in the full consciousness of possessing divine and invincible power.

But whilst the spirit which prevailed in Israel during the time of the judges culminated in the nature and deeds of Samson both in its weakness and strength, the miraculous character of his deeds, regarded simply in themselves, affords no ground for pronouncing the account a mere legend which has transformed historical acts into miracles, except from a naturalistic point of view, which rejects all miracles, and therefore denies *a priori* the supernatural working of the living God in the midst of His people. The formal character of the whole of the history of Samson, which the oppo

nents of the biblical revelation adduce for the further support of this view, does not yield any tenable evidence of its correctness. The external rounding off of the account proves nothing more than that Samson's life and acts formed in themselves a compact and well-rounded whole. But the assertion, that "well-rounded circumstances form a suitable framework for the separate accounts, and that precisely twelve acts are related of Samson, which are united into beautiful pictures and narrated in artistic order" (*Bertheau*), is at variance with the actual character of the biblical account. In order to get exactly twelve heroic acts, *Bertheau* has to fix the stamp of a heroic act performed by Samson himself upon the miraculous help which he received from God through the opening up of a spring of water (chap. xv. 18, 19), and also to split up a closely connected event, such as his breaking the bonds three times, into three different actions.¹ If we simply confine ourselves to the biblical account, the acts of Samson may be divided into two parts. The *first* (chap. xiv. and xv.) contains those in which Samson smote the Philistines with gradually increasing severity; the *second* (chap. xvi.) those by which he brought about his own fall and ruin. These are separated from one another by the account of the time that his judgeship lasted (chap. xv. 20), and this account is briefly repeated at the close of the whole account (chap. xvi. 31). The *first* part includes six distinct acts which are grouped together in twos: viz. (1 and 2) the killing of the lion on the way to Timnath, and the slaughter of the thirty Philistines for the purpose of paying for the solution of his riddle with the clothes that he took off them (chap. xiv.); (3 and 4) his revenge upon the Philistines by burning their crops, because his wife had been given to a Philistine, and also by the great slaughter with which he punished them for having

¹ On these grounds, *L. Diestel*, in the article *Samson* in *Herzog's Cycl.*, has rejected *Bertheau's* enumeration as unsatisfactory; and also the division proposed by *Ewald* into five acts with three turns in each, because, in order to arrive at this grouping, *Ewald* is not only obliged to refer the general statement in chap. xiii. 25, "the Spirit of God began to drive Samson," to some heroic deed which is not described, but has also to assume that in the case of one act (the carrying away of the gates of Gaza) the last two steps of the legend are omitted from the present account, although in all the rest *Diestel* follows *Ewald's* view almost without exception. The views advanced by *Ewald* and *Bertheau* form the foundation of *Roskoff's* Monograph, "the legend of Samson in its origin, form, and signification, and the legend of Hercules," in which the legend of Samson is regarded as an Israelitish form of that of Hercules.

burned his father-in-law and wife (chap. xv. 1-8); (5 and 6) the bursting of the cords with which his countrymen had bound him for the purpose of delivering him up to the Philistines, and the slaying of 1000 Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass (chap. xv. 9-19). The *second* part of his life comprises only three acts: viz. (1) taking off the town gates of Gaza, and carrying them away (chap. xvi. 1-3); (2) breaking the bonds with which Delilah bound him three separate times (chap. xvi. 4-14); and (3) his heroic death through pulling down the temple of Dagon, after he had been delivered into the power of the Philistines through the treachery of Delilah, and had been blinded by them (chap. xvi. 15-31). In this arrangement there is no such artistic shaping or rounding off of the historical materials apparent, as could indicate any mythological decoration. And lastly, the popular language of Samson in proverbs, rhymes, and a play upon words, does not warrant us in maintaining that the popular legend invented this mode of expressing his thoughts, and put the words into his mouth. All this leads to the conclusion, that there is no good ground for calling in question the historical character of the whole account of Samson's life and deeds.¹

Chap. xiii. BIRTH OF SAMSON.—Ver. 1. The oppression of the Israelites by the Philistines, which is briefly hinted at in chap. x. 7, is noticed again here with the standing formula, "*And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord,*" etc. (cf. chap. x. 6, iv. 1, iii. 12), as an introduction to the account of the life and acts of *Samson*, who began to deliver Israel from the hands of these enemies. Not only the birth of Samson, but the prediction of his birth, also fell, according to ver. 5, within the period of the rule of the Philistines over Israel. Now, as their oppression lasted forty years, and Samson judged Israel for twenty years during that

¹ No safe or even probable conjecture can be drawn from the character of the history before us, with reference to the first written record of the life of Samson, or the sources which the author of our book of Judges made use of for this portion of his work. The recurrence of such expressions as לָחַץ followed by an infinitive (chap. xiii. 5, 25, xvi. 19, 22), נָחַץ (chap. xiv. 15, xvi. 5), פָּרַץ (chap. xiv. 17, xvi. 16, etc.), upon which *Bertheau* lays such stress, arises from the actual contents of the narrative itself. The same expressions also occur in other places where the thought requires them, and therefore they form no such peculiarities of style as to warrant the conclusion that the life of Samson was the subject of a separate work (*Ewald*), or that it was a fragment taken from a larger history of the wars of the Philistines (*Bertheau*).

oppression (chap. xv. 20, xvi. 31), he must have commenced his judgeship at an early age, probably before the completion of his twentieth year; and with this the statement in chap. xiv., that his marriage with a Philistine woman furnished the occasion for his conflicts with these enemies of his people, fully agrees. The end of the forty years of the supremacy of the Philistines is not given in this book, which closes with the death of Samson. It did not terminate till the great victory which the Israelites gained over their enemies under the command of Samuel (1 Sam. vii.). Twenty years before this victory the Philistines had sent back the ark which they had taken from the Israelites, after keeping it for seven months in their own land (1 Sam. vii. 2, and vi. 1). It was within these twenty years that most of the acts of Samson occurred. His first affair with the Philistines, however, namely on the occasion of his marriage, took place a year or two before this defeat of the Israelites, in which the sons of Eli were slain, the ark fell into the hands of the Philistines, and the high priest Eli fell from his seat and broke his neck on receiving the terrible news (1 Sam. iv. 18). Consequently Eli died a short time after the first appearance of Samson (see p. 282).

Vers. 2-7. Whilst the Israelites were given into the hands of the Philistines on account of their sins, and were also severely oppressed in Gilead on the part of the Ammonites, the angel of the Lord appeared to the wife of Manoah, a Danite from *Zorea*, i.e. *Sur'a*, on the western slope of the mountains of Judah (see at Josh. xv. 33). *Mishpachath Dani* (the family of the Danites) is used interchangeably with *shebet Dani* (the tribe of the Danites: see chap. xviii. 2, 11, and xviii. 1, 30), which may be explained on this ground, that according to Num. xxvi. 42, 43, all the Danites formed but one family, viz. the family of the Shuhamites. The angel of the Lord announced to this woman, who was barren, "*Thou wilt conceive and bear a son. And now beware, drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean: for, behold, thou wilt conceive and bear a son, and no razor shall come upon his head; for a vowed man of God (Nazir) will the boy be from his mother's womb,*" i.e. his whole life long, "*to the day of his death,*" as the angel expressly affirmed, according to ver. 7. The three prohibitions which the angel of the Lord imposed upon the woman were the three things which distinguished the condition of a Nazarite (see at Num. vi. 1-8, and the explanation given there of the Nazarite vow). The only other thing mentioned in the Mosaic law is the warning against

defilement from contact with the dead, which does not seem to have been enforced in the case of Samson. When the angel added still further, "*And he (the Nazarite) will begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines,*" he no doubt intended to show that his power to effect this deliverance would be closely connected with his condition as a Nazarite. The promised son was to be a Nazarite all his life long, because he was to begin to deliver Israel out of the power of his foes. And in order that he might be so, his mother was to share in the renunciations of the Nazarite vow during the time of her pregnancy. Whilst the appearance of the angel of the Lord contained the practical pledge that the Lord still acknowledged His people, though He had given them into the hands of their enemies; the message of the angel contained this lesson and warning for Israel, that it could only obtain deliverance from its foes by seeking after a life of consecration to the Lord, such as the Nazarites pursued, so as to realize the idea of the priestly character to which Israel had been called as the people of Jehovah, by abstinence from the *deliciæ carnis*, and everything that was unclean, as being emanations of sin, and also by a complete self-surrender to the Lord (see Pentateuch, vol. iii. p. 38).—Vers. 6, 7. The woman told her husband of this appearance: "*A man of God,*" she said (*lit. the man of God, viz. the one just referred to*), "*came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very terrible; and I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name,*" etc. "*Man of God*" was the expression used to denote a prophet, or a man who stood in immediate intercourse with God, such as Moses and others (see at Dent. xxxiii. 1). "*Angel of God*" is equivalent to "*angel of the Lord*" (chap. ii. 1, vi. 11), the angel in whom the invisible God reveals himself to men. The woman therefore imagined the person who appeared to her to have been a prophet, whose majestic appearance, however, had produced the impression that he was a superior being; consequently she had not ventured to ask him either his name or where he came from.

Vers. 8–20. Being firmly convinced of the truth of this announcement, and at the same time reflecting upon the obligation which it imposed upon the parents, Manoah prayed to the Lord that He would let the man of God whom He had sent come to them again, to teach them what they were to do to the boy that should be born, i.e. how they should treat him. הַיְיָ, according to the *Keri* הַיְיָ, is a participle *Pual* with the ו dropped (see Ewald, § 169, b.). This prayer was heard. The angel of God appeared

once more to the woman when she was sitting alone in the field without her husband.—Vers. 10, 11. Then she hastened to fetch her husband, who first of all inquired of the person who had appeared, “*Art thou the man who said to the woman*” (sc. what has been related in vers. 3-5)? And when this was answered in the affirmative, he said still further (ver. 12), “*Should thy word then come to pass, what will be the manner of the boy, and his doing?*” The plural יְהוָה is construed *ad sensum* with a singular verb, because the words form one promise, so that the expression is not to be taken distributively, as *Rosenmüller* supposes. This also applies to ver. 17. *Mishpat*, the right belonging to the boy, i.e. the proper treatment of him.—Vers. 13, 14. The angel of the Lord then repeated the instructions which he had already given to the woman in ver. 4, simply adding to the prohibition of wine and strong drink the caution not to eat of anything that came from the vine, in accordance with Num. vi. 3.—Ver. 15. As Manoah had not yet recognised in the man the angel of the Lord, as is observed by way of explanation in ver. 16, he wished, like Gideon (chap. vi. 18), to give a hospitable entertainment to the man who had brought him such joyful tidings, and therefore said to him, “*Let us detain thee, and prepare a kid for thee.*” The construction וַיַּעַזְבֵהוּ is a pregnant one: “prepare and set before thee.” On the fact itself, see chap. vi. 19.—Ver. 16. The angel of the Lord replied, “*If thou wilt detain me* (sc. that I may eat), *I will not eat of thy food* (אֶכְלֶה with אֶל, to eat thereat, i.e. thereof, as in Ex. xii. 43, Lev. xxii. 11); *but if thou wilt prepare a burnt-offering for Jehovah, then offer it.*”—Ver. 17. Manoah then asked his name: מִי שְׁמֶךָ, lit. “*Who is thy name?*” מִי inquires after the person; שְׁמֶךָ, the nature or quality (see *Ewald*, § 325, a.). “*For if thy word come to pass, we will do thee honour.*” This was the reason why he asked after his name. כְּבֹד, to honour by presents, so as to show one’s self grateful (see Num. xxii. 17, 37, xxiv. 11).—Ver. 18. The angel replied, “*Why askest thou then after my name? truly it is wonderful.*” The *Kethibh* שְׁמִי is the adjectival form שְׁמִי from שֵׁם, for which the *Keri* has שֵׁם, the pausal form of שֵׁם (from the radical שָׁם = שֵׁם). The word therefore is not the proper name of the angel of the Lord, but expresses the character of his name; and as the name simply denotes the nature, it expresses the peculiarity of his nature also. It is to be understood in an absolute sense—“absolutely and supremely wonderful” (*Seb. Schmidt*)—as a predicate belonging to God alone (compare the term “Wonderful” in Isa. ix. 6), and not to be toned down as it is by *Bertheau*,

who explains it as signifying "neither easy to utter nor easy to comprehend."—Vers. 19, 20. Manoah then took the kid and the *minchah*, i.e., according to Num. xv. 4 sqq., the meat-offering belonging to the burnt-offering, and offered it upon the rock, which is called an altar in ver. 20, because the angel of the Lord, who is of one nature with God, had sanctified it as an altar through the miraculous acceptance of the sacrifice. מַלְאָךְ ה' עָשָׂה, "and wonderfully (miraculously) did he act" (עָשָׂה followed by the infinitive with ה' as in 2 Chron. xxvi. 15). These words form a circumstantial clause, which is not to be attached, however, to the subject of the principal clause, but to ה' : "Manoah offered the sacrifice to the Lord, whereupon He acted to do wonderfully, i.e. He performed a wonder or miracle, and Manoah and his wife saw it" (see *Ewald*, *Lehrb.* § 341, b., p. 724, note). In what the miracle consisted is explained in ver. 20, in the words, "*when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar*;" that is to say, in the fact that a flame issued from the rock, as in the case of Gideon's sacrifice (chap. vi. 21), and consumed the sacrifice. And the angel of the Lord ascended in this flame. When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell upon their faces to the earth (*sc.* in worship), because they discovered from the miracle that it was the angel of the Lord who had appeared to them.

Vers. 21-25. From that time forward the Lord did not appear to them again. But Manoah was afraid that he and his wife should die, because they had seen God (on this belief, see the remarks on Gen. xvi. 13 and Ex. xxxiii. 20). His wife quieted his fears, however, and said, "*Jehovah cannot intend to kill us, as He has accepted our sacrifice, and has shown us all this*" (the twofold miracle). "*And at this time He has not let us see such things as these.*" עַתָּה, at the time in which we live, even if such things may possibly have taken place in the hoary antiquity.—Ver. 24. The promise of God was fulfilled. The boy whom the woman bare received the name of *Samson*. שִׁמְשֹׁן (LXX., Σαμψών) does not mean sun-like, hero of the sun, from שֶׁשׁ (the sun), but, as *Josephus* explains it (*Ant.* v. 8, 4), *ισχυρός*, the strong or daring one, from שִׁשְׁמֹן, from the intensive form שִׁשְׁמֹן, from שָׁמַן, in its original sense to be strong or daring, not "to devastate." שָׁרַן is an analogous word: *lit.* to be powerful, then to act powerfully, to devastate. The boy grew under the blessing of God (see 1 Sam. ii. 21).—Ver. 25. When he had grown up, the Spirit of Jehovah began to thrust him in the camp of Dan. דָּבַק, to thrust, denoting the operation of the Spirit

of God within him, which took possession of him suddenly, and impelled him to put forth supernatural powers. *Mahaneh-Dan*, the camp of Dan, was the name given to the district in which the Danites who emigrated, according to chap. xviii. 12, from the inheritance of their tribe, had pitched their encampment *behind*, i.e. to the west of, *Kirjath-jearim*, or according to this verse, between Zorea and Eshtaol. The situation cannot be determined precisely, as the situation of Eshtaol itself has not been discovered yet (see at Josh. xv. 33). It was there that Samson lived with his parents, judging from chap. xvi. 31. The meaning of this verse, which forms the introduction to the following account of the acts of Samson, is simply that Samson was there seized by the Spirit of Jehovah, and impelled to commence the conflict with the Philistines.

Chap. xiv. SAMSON'S FIRST TRANSACTIONS WITH THE PHILISTINES.—Vers. 1-9. At Tibnath, the present *Tibne*, an hour's journey to the south-west of Sur'a (see at Josh. xv. 10), to which Samson had gone down from Zorea or Mahaneh-Dan, he saw a daughter of the Philistines who pleased him; and on his return he asked his parents to take her for him as a wife (קָחָהּ, to take, as in Ex. xxi. 9).—Vers. 3, 4. His parents expressed their astonishment at the choice, and asked him whether there was not a woman among the daughters of his brethren (i.e. the members of his own tribe), or among all his people, that he should want to fetch one from the Philistines, the uncircumcised. But Samson repeated his request, because the daughter of the Philistines pleased him. The aversion of his parents to the marriage was well founded, as such a marriage was not in accordance with the law. It is true that the only marriages expressly prohibited in Ex. xxxiv. 16 and Deut. vii. 3, 4, are marriages with Canaanitish women; but the reason assigned for this prohibition was equally applicable to marriages with daughters of the Philistines. In fact, the Philistines are reckoned among the Canaanites in Josh. xiii. 3 upon the very same ground. But Samson was acting under a higher impulse, whereas his parents did not know that it was from Jehovah, i.e. that Jehovah had so planned it; "*for Samson was seeking an opportunity on account of the Philistines,*" i.e. an occasion to quarrel with them, because, as is afterwards added in the form of an explanatory circumstantial clause, the Philistines had dominion over Israel at that time. זָמָה, ἄπ. λεγ., an opportunity (cf. זָמָה, 2 Kings v. 7).—Vers. 5, 6.

When Samson went down with his parents to Timnath, a young lion came roaring towards him at the vineyards of that town. Then the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him, so that he tore the lion in pieces as a kid is torn (*lit.* "like the tearing in pieces of the kid"), although he had nothing, *i.e.* no weapon, in his hand. David, when a shepherd, and the hero Benaiah, also slew lions (1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35; 2 Sam. xxiii. 20); and even at the present day Arabs sometimes kill lions with a staff (see *Winer*, *Bibl. R. W. Art.* Löwe). Samson's supernatural strength, the effect of the Spirit of Jehovah, which came upon him, was simply manifested in the fact that he tore the lion in pieces without any weapon whatever in his hand. But he said nothing about it to his parents, who were not eye-witnesses of the deed. This remark is introduced in connection with what follows.—Ver. 7. When he came to Timnath he talked with the girl, and she pleased him. He had only *seen* her before (ver. 1); but now that his parents had asked for her, he talked with her, and found the first impression that he had received of her fully confirmed.—Ver. 8. When some time had elapsed after the betrothal, he came again to fetch her (take her home, marry her), accompanied, as we learn from ver. 9, by his parents. On the way "*he turned aside (from the road) to see the carcase of the lion; and behold a swarm of bees was in the body of the lion, also honey.*" The word מַפְלֵת, which only occurs here, is derived from מָפַץ, like πρῶμα from πίπτω, and is synonymous with נֶפֶשׁ, *cadaver*, and signifies not the mere skeleton, as bees would not form their hive in such a place, but the carcase of the lion, which had been thoroughly dried up by the heat of the sun, without passing into a state of putrefaction. "In the desert of Arabia the heat of a sultry season will often dry up all the moisture of men or camels that have fallen dead, within twenty-four hours of their decease, without their passing into a state of decomposition and putrefaction, so that they remain for a long time like mummies, without change and without stench" (*Rosenmüller*, *Bibl. Althk.* iv. 2, p. 424). In a carcase dried up in this way, a swarm of bees might form their hive, just as well as in the hollow trunks of trees, or clefts in the rock, or where wild bees are accustomed to form them, notwithstanding the fact that bees avoid both dead bodies and carrion (see *Bochart*, *Hieroz. ed. Ros.* iii. p. 355).—Ver. 9. Samson took it (the honey) in his hands, ate some of it as he went, and also gave some to his father and mother to eat, but did not tell them that he had got the honey out of the dead body of the lion; for in that case they would not only have refused to

eat it as being unclean, but would have been aware of the fact, which Samson afterwards took as the subject of the riddle that he proposed to the Philistines. רָדָה, to tread, to tread down; hence to get forcible possession of, not to break or to take out, neither of which meanings can be established. The combination of רָדָה and אֶל-כַּפָּי is a pregnant construction, signifying to obtain possession of and take into the hands.

Vers. 10-20. *Samson's Wedding and Riddle*.—Ver. 10. When his father had come down to the girl (*sc.* to keep the wedding, not merely to make the necessary preparations for his marriage), Samson prepared for a feast there (in Timnath), according to the usual custom (for so used the young men to do).—Ver. 11. "*And when they saw him, they fetched thirty friends, and they were with him.*" The parents or relations of the bride are the subject of the first clause. They invited thirty of their friends in Timnath to the marriage feast, as "children of the bride-chamber" (Matt. ix. 15), since Samson had not brought any with him. The reading פְּרָאוֹתֵם from רָאוּהָ needs no alteration, though *Bertheau* would read פְּרָאוֹתֵם from רָאוּ, in accordance with the rendering of the LXX. (*Cod. Al.*) and of *Josephus*, ἐν τῇ φοβέσθαι αὐτοῦς. Fear of Samson would neither be in harmony with the facts themselves, nor with the words וְהָיוּ אִתּוֹ, "*they were with him,*" which it is felt to be necessary to paraphrase in the most arbitrary manner "*they watched him.*"—Ver. 12. At the wedding feast Samson said to the guests, "*I will give you a riddle. If you show it to me during the seven days of the meal (the wedding festival), and guess it, I will give you thirty sedinim (σινδόνας, tunicae, i.e. clothes worn next to the skin) and thirty changes of garments (costly dresses, that were frequently changed: see at Gen. xlv. 22); but if ye cannot show it to me, ye shall give me the same number of garments.*" The custom of proposing riddles at banquets by way of entertainment is also to be met with among the ancient Grecians. (For proofs from *Athenæus*, *Pollux*, *Gellius*, see *Bochart*, *Hieroz.* P. ii. l. ii. c. 12; and *K. O. Müller*, *Dorier*, ii. p. 392). As the guests consented to this proposal, Samson gave them the following riddle (ver. 14): "*Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.*" This riddle they could not show, i.e. solve, for three days. That is to say, they occupied themselves for three days in trying to find the solution; after that they let the matter rest until the appointed term was drawing near.—Ver. 15. On the seventh day they said to Samson's wife, "*Persuade thy husband to show us*

the riddle," sc. through thee, without his noticing it, "*lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire. Have ye invited us to make us poor; is it not so?*" In this threat the barbarism and covetousness of the Philistines came openly to light. הָלִיץ without *Metheg* in the ך is the *inf. Kal* of שׂוּר, to make poor,—a meaning derived from inheriting, not the *Piel* of שׂוּר = שׂוּר, to be poor. הֵלֵא, *nonne*, strengthens the interrogative clause, and has not the signification "here" = הֵלֵא. Samson's wife, however, wept over him, i.e. urged him with tears in her eyes, and said, "*Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not; thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people (my countrymen), and hast not shown it to me.*" חֲרָתָהּ is from חָרַח. Samson replied, that he had not even shown it to his father and mother, "*and shall I show it to thee?*"—Ver. 17. "*Thus his wife wept before him the seven days of the banquet.*" This statement is not at variance with that in ver. 15, to the effect that it was only on the seventh day that the Philistine young men urged her with threats to entice Samson to tell the riddle, but may be explained very simply in the following manner. The woman had already come to Samson every day with her entreaties from simple curiosity; but Samson resisted them until the seventh day, when she became more urgent than ever, in consequence of this threat on the part of the Philistines. And "*Samson showed it to her, because she lay sore upon him;*" whereupon she immediately betrayed it to her countrymen.—Ver. 18. Thus on the seventh day, before the sun went down (חָרַח = חָרַח, chap. viii. 13; Job. ix. 7, with a toneless *ah*, a softening down of the feminine termination: see *Ewald*, § 173, *h.*), the men of the city (i.e. the thirty young men who had been invited) said to Samson, "*What is sweeter than honey, and what stronger than a lion?*" But Samson saw through the whole thing, and replied, "*If ye had not ploughed with my heifer, ye had not hit upon (guessed) my riddle,*"—a proverbial saying, the meaning of which is perfectly clear.—Ver. 19. Nevertheless he was obliged to keep his promise (ver. 12). Then the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him. He went down to Ashkelon, slew thirty men of them, i.e. of the Ashkelonites, took their clothes (חֲלִיצוֹת, *exuviae*; see 2 Sam. ii. 21), and gave the changes of garments to those who had shown the riddle. This act is described as the operation of the Spirit of Jehovah which came upon Samson, because it showed to the Philistines the superior power of the servants of Jehovah. It was not carnal revenge that had impelled Samson to the deed. It was not till the deed itself was done that his anger

was kindled; and even then it was not against the Philistines, to whom he had been obliged to pay or give the thirty garments, but against his wife, who had betrayed his secret to her countrymen, so that he returned to his father's house, viz. without his wife.—Ver. 20. “*And Samson's wife was given to his friend, whom he had chosen as a friend.*” מִרְיָ is no doubt to be understood here in the sense of “the friend of the bridegroom” (John iii. 29), ὁ νυμφαγωγός (LXX.), the conductor of the bride,—namely, one of the thirty companions (ver. 10), whom Samson had entrusted with this office at the marriage festival. The faithlessness of the Philistines towards the Israelites was no doubt apparent here; for even if Samson went home enraged at the treacherous behaviour of his wife, without taking her with him, he did not intend to break the marriage tie, as chap. xv. 1, 2 clearly shows. So that instead of looking at the wrong by which Samson felt himself aggrieved, and trying to mitigate his wrath, the parents of the woman made the breach irreparable by giving their daughter as a wife to his companion.

Chap. xv. FURTHER ACTS OF SAMSON.—Vers. 1-8. *His revenge upon the Philistines.*—Ver. 1. Some time after, Samson visited his wife in the time of the wheat harvest with a kid,—a customary present at that time (Gen. xxxviii. 17),—and wished to go into the chamber (the women's apartment) to her; but her father would not allow him, and said, “*I thought thou hatedst her, and therefore gave her to thy friend* (chap. xiv. 20): *behold her younger sister is fairer than she; let her be thine in her stead.*”—Ver. 3. Enraged at this answer, Samson said to them (*i.e.* to her father and those around him), “*Now am I blameless before the Philistines, if I do evil to them.*” נָקִיָּה with מִן, to be innocent away from a person, *i.e.* before him (see Num. xxxii. 22). Samson regarded the treatment which he had received from his father-in-law as but one effect of the disposition of the Philistines generally towards the Israelites, and therefore resolved to avenge the wrong which he had received from one member of the Philistines upon the whole nation, or at all events upon the whole of the city of Timnath.—Vers. 4, 5. He therefore went and caught three hundred *shualim*, *i.e.* jackals, animals which resemble foxes and are therefore frequently classed among the foxes even by the common Arabs of the present day (see Niebuhr, *Beschr. v. Arab.* p. 166). Their European name is derived from the Persian *schaghal*. These animals, which are still found in great quantities at Joppa, Gaza, and in Galilee, herd

together, and may easily be caught (see *Rosenmüller*, *Bibl. Althk.* iv. 2, pp. 155 sqq.). He then took torches, turned tail to tail, i.e. coupled the jackals together by their tails, putting a torch between the two tails, set the torches on fire, and made the animals run into the fields of standing corn belonging to the Philistines. Then he burned "*from the shocks of wheat to the standing grain and to the olive gardens*," i.e. the shocks of wheat as well as the standing corn and the olive plantations. *וַיִּהְיוּ* are joined together in the construct state.—Ver. 6. The Philistines found out at once, that Samson had done them this injury because his father-in-law, the Timnite, had taken away his wife and given her to his companion. They therefore avenged themselves by burning her and her father,—probably by burning his house down to the ground, with its occupants within it,—an act of barbarity and cruelty which fully justified Samson's war upon them.—Ver. 7. Samson therefore declared to them, "*If ye do such things, truly (וְאֵל) when I have avenged myself upon you, then will I cease*," i.e. I will not cease till I have taken vengeance upon you.—Ver. 8. "*Then he smote them hip and thigh (lit. 'thigh upon hip;'* *עַל* as in *Gen.* xxxii. 12), *a great slaughter.*" *וַיַּחַד*, thigh, strengthened by *וַיַּחַד*, is a second accusative governed by the verb, and added to define the word *וַיַּחַד* more minutely, in the sense of "on hip and thigh;" whilst the expression which follows, *מִכָּה נִדְּלָה*, is added as an adverbial accusative to strengthen the verb *וַיַּחַד*. Smiting hip and thigh is a proverbial expression for a cruel, unsparing slaughter, like the German "cutting arm and leg in two," or the Arabic "war in thigh fashion" (see *Bertheau in loc.*). After smiting the Philistines, Samson went down and dwelt in the cleft of the rock *Etam*. There is a town of *Etam* mentioned in 2 Chron. xi. 6, between Bethlehem and Tekoah, which was fortified by Rehoboam, and stood in all probability to the south of Jerusalem, upon the mountains of Judah. But this *Etam*, which *Robinson* (*Pal.* ii. 168) supposes to be the village of *Urtas*, a place still inhabited, though lying in ruins, is not to be thought of here, as the Philistines did not go up to the mountains of Judah (ver. 9), as *Bertheau* imagines, but simply came forward and encamped in Judah. The *Etam* of this verse is mentioned in 1 Chron. iv. 32, along with Ain Rimmon and other Simeonitish towns, and is to be sought for on the border of the Negeb and of the mountains of Judah, in the neighbourhood of *Khuweilifeh* (see *V. de Velde*, *Mem.* p. 311). The expression "he went down" suits this place very well, but not the *Etam* on the

mountains of Judah, to which he would have had to go up, and not down, from Timnath.

Vers. 9-17. *Samson is delivered up to the Philistines, and smites them with the jaw-bone of an Ass.*—Ver. 9. The Philistines came (“went up,” denoting the advance of an army: see at Josh. viii. 1) to avenge themselves for the defeat they had sustained from Samson; and having encamped in Judah, spread themselves out in *Lechi* (*Lehi*). *Lechi* (לְחִי, in pause לֶחִי, i.e. a jaw), which is probably mentioned again in 2 Sam. xxiii. 11, and, according to ver. 17, received the name of *Ramath-lechi* from Samson himself, cannot be traced with any certainty, as the early church tradition respecting the place is utterly worthless. *Van de Velde* imagines that it is to be found in the flattened rocky hill *el Lechieh*, or *Lekieh*, upon which an ancient fortification has been discovered, in the middle of the road from *Tell Khewelfeh* to *Beersheba*, at the south-western approach of the mountains of Judah.—Vers. 10 sqq. When the Judæans learned what was the object of this invasion on the part of the Philistines, three thousand of them went down to the cleft in the rock Etam, to bind Samson and deliver him up to the Philistines. Instead of recognising in Samson a deliverer whom the Lord had raised up for them, and crowding round him that they might smite their oppressors with his help and drive them out of the land, the men of Judah were so degraded, that they cast this reproach at Samson: “*Knowest thou not that the Philistines rule over us? Wherefore hast thou done this* (the deed described in ver. 8)? *We have come down to bind thee, and deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines.*” Samson replied, “*Swear to me that ye will not fall upon me yourselves.*” וַיִּשְׁבַּע with אֵל, to thrust at a person, fall upon him, including in this case, according to ver. 13, the intention of killing.—Ver. 13. When they promised him this, he let them bind him with two new cords and lead him up (into the camp of the Philistines) out of the rock (i.e. the cleft of the rock).—Ver. 14. But when he came to Lechi, and the Philistines shouted with joy as they came to meet him, the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him, “*and the cords on his arms became like tow that had been burnt with fire, and his fetters melted from his hands.*” The description rises up to a poetical parallelism, to depict the triumph which Samson celebrated over the Philistines in the power of the Spirit of Jehovah.—Ver. 15. As soon as he was relieved of his bands, he seized upon a fresh jaw-bone of an ass, which he found there, and smote therewith a thousand men. He himself commemorated this victory in a

short poetical strain (ver. 16): "*With the ass's jaw-bone a heap, two heaps; with the ass's jaw-bone I smote a thousand men.*" The form of the word $\text{הָמֹר} = \text{חֶמֶר}$ is chosen on account of the resemblance to הָמֹר , and is found again at 1 Sam. xvi. 20. How Samson achieved this victory is not minutely described. But the words "a heap, two heaps," point to the conclusion that it did not take place in one encounter, but in several. The supernatural strength with which Samson rent asunder the fetters bound upon him, when the Philistines thought they had him safely in their power, filled them with fear and awe as before a superior being, so that they fled, and he pursued them, smiting one heap after another, as he overtook them, with an ass's jaw-bone which he found in the way. The number given, viz. a thousand, is of course a round number signifying a very great multitude, and has been adopted from the song into the historical account.—Ver. 17. When he had given utterance to his saying, he threw the jaw-bone away, and called the place *Ramath-lechi*, i.e. the jaw-bone height. This seems to indicate that the name *Lechi* in ver. 9 is used proleptically, and that the place first received its name from this deed of Samson.

Vers. 18–20. The pursuit of the Philistines, however, and the conflict with them, had exhausted Samson, so that he was very thirsty, and feared that he might die from exhaustion; for it was about the time of the wheat-harvest (ver. 1), and therefore hot summer weather. Then he called to the Lord, "*Thou hast through (וְיָ) Thy servant given this great deliverance; and now I shall die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised!*" From this prayer we may see that Samson was fully conscious that he was fighting for the cause of the Lord. And the Lord helped him out of this trouble. God split the hollow place at Lechi, so that water came out of it, as at Horeb and Kadesh (Ex. xvii. 6, and Num. xx. 8, 11). The word מַחֲבֵיט , which is used in Prov. xxvii. 22 to signify a mortar, is explained by rabbinical expositors as denoting the socket of the teeth, or the hollow place in which the teeth are fixed, like the Greek $\delta\lambda\mu\acute{\iota}\sigma\kappa\omicron\varsigma$, *mortariolum*, according to Pollux, Onom. ii. c. 4, § 21. Accordingly many have understood the statement made here, as meaning that God caused a fountain to flow miraculously out of the socket of a tooth in the jaw-bone which Samson had thrown away, and thus provided for his thirst. This view is the one upon which Luther's rendering, "God split a tooth in the jaw, so that water came out," is founded, and it has been voluminously defended by Bochart (Hieroz. l. ii. c. 15). But the

expression *אֲשֶׁר בְּלֶחִי*, "the *maktesh* which is at *Lechi*," is opposed to this view, since the tooth-socket in the jaw-bone of the ass would be simply called *מִכְתָּשׁ הַלֶּחִי* or *מִכְתָּשׁ בְּלֶחִי*; and so is also the remark that this fountain was still in existence in the historian's own time. And the article proves nothing to the contrary, as many proper names are written with it (see *Ewald*, § 277, c.). Consequently we must follow *Josephus* (*Ant.* v. 8), who takes *הַמִּכְתָּשׁ* as the name given to the opening of the rock, which was cleft by God to let water flow out. "If a rocky precipice bore the name of jaw-bone (*lechi*) on account of its shape, it was a natural consequence of this figurative epithet, that the name *tooth-hollow* should be given to a hole or gap in the rock" (*Studer*). Moreover, the same name, *Maktesh*, occurs again in *Zeph.* i. 11, where it is applied to a locality in or near Jerusalem. The hollow place was split by *Elohim*, although it was to *Jehovah* that Samson had prayed, to indicate that the miracle was wrought by God as the Creator and Lord of nature. Samson drank, and his spirit returned, so that he revived again. Hence the fountain received the name of *En-hakkore*, "the crier's well which is at *Lechi*," unto this day. According to the accents, the last clause does not belong to *בְּלֶחִי* (in *Lechi*), but to *קָרָא וַיָּרֵ* (he called, etc.). It received the name given to it unto this day. This implies, of course, that the spring itself was in existence when our book was composed.—In ver. 20 the account of the judicial labours of Samson are brought to a close, with the remark that Samson judged Israel in the days of the Philistines, *i.e.* during their rule, for twenty years. What more is recorded of him in chap. xvi. relates to his fall and ruin; and although even in this he avenged himself upon the Philistines, he procured no further deliverance for Israel. It is impossible to draw any critical conclusions from the position in which this remark occurs, as to a plurality of sources for the history of Samson.

Chap. xvi. SAMSON'S FALL AND DEATH.—Samson's judicial labours reached their highest point when he achieved his great victory over the Philistines at *Lechi*. Just as his love to the daughter of a Philistine had furnished him with the occasion designed by God for the manifestation of his superiority to the uncircumcised enemies of Israel, so the degradation of that love into sensual lust supplied the occasion for his fall which is related in this chapter. "Samson, when strong and brave, strangled a lion; but he could not strangle his own love. He burst the fetters

of his foes, but not the cords of his own lusts. He burned up the crops of others, and lost the fruit of his own virtue when burning with the flame enkindled by a single woman." (*Ambros. Apol. ii., David. c. iii.*)

Vers. 1-3. *His heroic deed at Gaza.*—Samson went to Gaza in the full consciousness of his superiority in strength to the Philistines, and there went in unto a harlot whom he saw. For Gaza, see Josh. xiii. 3. גָּזָא is used in the same sense as in Gen. vi. 4 and xxxviii. 16. It is not stated in this instance, as in chap. xiv. 4, that it was of the Lord.—Ver. 2. When this was told to the Gazites, they surrounded him (the object to the verb is to be supplied from the following word לוֹ) and laid wait for him all night at the city gate, but they kept themselves quiet during the night, saying, "*Till the dawning (רֹמָם, infin.) of the morning,*" *sc.* we can wait, "*then will we kill him.*" For this construction, see 1 Sam. i. 22. The verb נִסְּרָה, "it was told" (according to the LXX. and *Chald.*: cf. Gen. xxii. 20), or נִסְּרָה, "they said," is wanting before וַיִּשְׁכְּחוּ, and must have fallen out through a copyist's error. The verb וַיִּשְׁכְּחוּ has evidently the subordinate idea of giving themselves up to careless repose; for if the watchmen who were posted at the city gate had but watched in a regular manner, Samson could not have lifted out the closed gates and carried them away. But as they supposed that he would not leave the harlot before daybreak, they relied upon the fact that the gate was shut, and probably fell asleep.—Ver. 3. But at midnight Samson got up, and "laying hold of the folding wings of the city gate, as well as the two posts, tore them out of the ground with his herculean strength, together with the bar that fastened them, and carried them up to the top of the mountain which stands opposite to Hebron." וְעַל־הַר merely means in the direction towards, as in Gen. xviii. 16, and does not signify that the mountain was in the front of Hebron or in the immediate neighbourhood (see Deut. xxxii. 49, where Mount Nebo, which was on the other side of the Jordan, and at least four geographical miles from Jericho, is said to have been over against it, and the same expression is employed). The distance from Gaza to Hebron was about nine geographical miles. To the east of Gaza there is a range of hills which runs from north to south. The highest of them all is one which stands somewhat isolated, about half an hour to the south-east of the town, and is called *el Montar* from a wely which is found upon the top of it. From this hill there is a splendid prospect over the whole of the

surrounding country. Hebron itself is not visible from this hill, but the mountains of Hebron are. According to an ancient tradition, it was to the summit of this hill that Samson carried the city gates; and both *Robinson* (Pal. ii. 377) and *V. de Velde* regard this tradition as by no means improbable, although the people of Gaza are not acquainted with it. "The city gate of the Gaza of that time was probably not less than three-quarters of an hour from the hill *el Montar*; and to climb this peak with the heavy gates and their posts and bar upon his shoulders through the deep sand upon the road, was a feat which only a Samson could perform" (*V. de Velde*).

Vers. 4-21. *Samson and Delilah*.—Ver. 4. After this successful act, Samson gave himself up once more to his sensual lusts. He fell in love with a woman in the valley of *Sorek*, named *Delilah* (i.e. the weak or pining one), to whose snares he eventually succumbed. With reference to the valley of *Sorek*, *Eusebius* affirms in the *Onom.* (s. v. Σωρήχ), that there was a village called Βαρήχ (i. Καὶὰρ σωρήχ according to *Jerome*) near Zorea, and ἐν ὀπίους (i. βορείους according to *Jerome*, who has *ad septentrionalem plagam*); and also (s. v. Σωρήκ) that this place was near to Eshtaol. Consequently the *Sorek* valley would have to be sought for somewhere in the neighbourhood of Samson's birthplace (chap. xiii. 1), and the dwelling-place of his family (ver. 31).—Ver. 5. The princes of the Philistines offered Delilah a considerable sum (they would give her one thousand and one hundred shekels of silver each, i.e. a thousand shekels or more: cf. chap. xvii. 2) if she would persuade Samson, and bring out from him "whereby his strength was great," and whereby they could overpower and bind him, *וַיַּבְיֵחֻהוּ*, to bend him, i.e. to oppress him. The Philistine princes thought that Samson's supernatural strength arose from something external, which he wore or carried about with him as an amulet. There was a certain truth at the foundation of this heathen superstition, inasmuch as this gift of divine grace was really bound up with the possession of a corporeal pledge, the loss of which was followed by the immediate loss of the gift of God (see at ver. 17).—Ver. 6. Allured by the reward in prospect, Delilah now sought to get from him the secret of his strength. But he deceived her three times by false statements. He first of all said to her (ver. 7), "*If they bound me with strings that have not been dried, I should be weak and like one of the men*" (i.e. like any other man). *וְיָרִיב* signifies a sinew or string, e.g. a bow-string, Ps. xi. 2, and in the different dialects

either a bow-string or the string of a harp or guitar. As a distinction is made here between the יָתָרִים and the עֲבָתִים in ver. 11, the strings intended here are those of catgut or animal sinew. The number *seven* is that of a divine act, answering to the divine power which Samson possessed.—Vers. 8, 9. When Delilah told this to the princes of the Philistines, they brought the seven strings required, and Delilah bound Samson with them. “*And the spy sat in the room* (וָהִיא, dat. com., lit. ‘to her,’ i.e. *to help her*,” namely, without Samson knowing it, as Delilah had certainly not told him that she should betray the secret of his strength to the Philistines. He was there, no doubt, that he might be at hand and overpower the fettered giant as soon as it became apparent that his strength was gone. She then cried out to him, “*Philistines upon thee, Samson!*” And he snapped the strings as one would snap a cord of tow “when it smells fire,” i.e. is held to the fire.—Vers. 10-12. The second deception: Samson had himself bound with new cords, which had not yet been used for any purpose, and these also he burst from his arms like a thread.—Vers. 13 and 14. The third deception: “*If thou weavest together the seven locks of my hair with the warp. And she drove it in with the plug.*” These words are difficult to explain, partly because several technical terms are used which have more than one meaning, and partly because the account itself is contracted, both Samson’s advice and her fulfilment of it being only given in a partial form, so that the one has to be completed from the other. In ver. 19, the only other passage in which מַחֲלָפוֹת occurs, it no doubt means the plaits into which Samson’s long flowing hair was plaited. הַמַּשְׁכָּת only occurs here (vers. 13 and 14), and probably means the woven cloth, or rather what was still upon the loom, the warp of the cloth, *δίασμα* (LXX.). Accordingly the meaning of the verse would be this: If thou weavest the seven plaits of my hair along with the warp upon the loom. The commentators are all agreed that, according to these words, there must be something wanting in the account, though they are not of one opinion as to whether the binding of Samson is fully given here, and all that has to be supplied is the clause “*Then shall I be weak*,” etc. (as in vers. 7 and 11), or whether the words וַתִּתְּנֵהוּ בַיָּדָם add another fact which was necessary to the completeness of the binding, and if so, how these words are to be understood. In *Bertheau’s* opinion, the words “*and she thrust with the plug*” probably mean nothing more than that she made a noise to wake the sleeping Samson, because it is neither stated here

that she forced the plug into the wall or into the earth to fasten the plaits with (LXX., *Jerome*), nor that her thrusting with the plug contributed in any way to the further fastening of the hair. These arguments are sound no doubt, but they do not prove what is intended. When it is stated in ver. 14*b*, that "he tore out the weaver's plug and the cloth," it is certainly evident that the plug served to fasten the hair to the cloth or to the loom. Moreover, not only would any knocking with the plug to waken Samson with the noise have been altogether superfluous, as the loud cry, "Philistines upon thee, Samson," would be amply sufficient for this; but it is extremely improbable that a fact with so little bearing upon the main facts would be introduced here at all. We come therefore to the same conclusion as the majority of commentators, viz. that the words in question are to be understood as referring to something that was done to fasten Samson still more securely. הַיִּתָּר הָאָרֶג = הַיִּתָּר (ver. 14) does not mean the roller or weaver's beam, to which the threads of the warp were fastened, and round which the cloth was rolled when finished, as *Bertheau* supposes, for this is called מְנוֹר אֲרָגִים in 1 Sam. xvii. 7; nor the σπάθη of the Greeks, a flat piece of wood like a knife, which was used in the upright loom for the same purpose as our comb or press, viz. to press the weft together, and so increase the substance of the cloth (*Braun, de vestitu Sacerd.* p. 253); but the comb or press itself which was fastened to the loom, so that it could only be torn out by force. To complete the account, therefore, we must supply between vers. 13 and 14, "And if thou fastenest it (the woven cloth) with the plug (the weaver's comb), I shall be weak like one of the other men; and she wove the seven plaits of his hair into the warp of the loom." Then follows in ver. 14, "*and fastened the cloth with the weaver's comb.*" There is no need, however, to assume that what has to be supplied fell out in copying. We have simply an ellipsis, such as we often meet with. When Samson was wakened out of his sleep by the cry of "Philistines upon thee," he tore out the weaver's comb and the warp (*sc.*) from the loom, with his plaits of hair that had been woven in. The reference to his sleeping warrants the assumption that Delilah had also performed the other acts of binding while he was asleep. We must not understand the account, however, as implying that the three acts of binding followed close upon one another on the very same day. Several days may very probably have elapsed between them. In this third deception Samson had

already gone so far in his presumptuous trifling with the divine gift entrusted to him, as to suffer the hair of his head to be meddled with, though it was sanctified to the Lord. "It would seem as though this act of sin ought to have brought him to reflection. But as that was not the case, there remained but one short step more to bring him to thorough treachery towards the Lord" (*O. v. Gerlach*).

This last step was very speedily to follow.—Ver. 15. After this triple deception, Delilah said to him, "*How canst thou say, I love thee, as thine heart is not with me*" (i.e. not devoted to me)?—Ver. 16. With such words as these she plagued him every day, so that his soul became impatient even to death (see chap. x. 16). The *אפ. לַעַי. יָצַק* signifies in Aramæan, to press or plague. The form is *Piel*, though without the reduplication of the *ל* and *Chateph-patach* under (see *Ewald*, § 90, b.).—Ver. 17. "*And he showed her all his heart,*" i.e. he opened his mind thoroughly to her, and told her that no razor had come upon his head, because he was a Nazarite from his mother's womb (cf. chap. xiii. 5, 7). "*If I should be shaven, my strength would depart from me, and I should be weak like all other men.*"—Ver. 18. When Delilah saw (i.e. perceived, namely from his words and his whole behaviour while making this communication) that he had betrayed the secret of his strength, she had the princes of the Philistines called: "*Come up this time, . . . for he had revealed to her all his heart.*" This last clause is not to be understood as having been spoken by Delilah to the princes themselves, as it is by the Masorites and most of the commentators, in which case *וַיָּבֹאוּ* would have to be altered into *וַיָּבֹאוּ*; but it contains a remark of the writer, introduced as an explanation of the circumstance that Delilah sent for the princes of the Philistines now that she was sure of her purpose. This view is confirmed by the word *וַיָּבֹאוּ* (came up) which follows, since the use of the perfect instead of the imperfect with *var consec.* can only be explained on the supposition that the previous clause is a parenthetical one, which interrupts the course of the narrative, and to which the account of the further progress of the affair could not be attached by the historical tense (*וַיָּבֹאוּ*).¹ The princes of the Philistines came up to Delilah on the receipt of this

¹ The *Keri* reading *וַיָּבֹאוּ* arose simply from a misunderstanding, although it is found in many mss. and early editions, and is without any critical worth. The Masorites overlooked the fact that the main point is all that is related of the message of Delilah to the princes of the Philistines, namely that they were to

communication, bringing the money, the promised reward of her treachery (ver. 5), in their hands.—Ver. 19. “*Then she made him sleep upon her knees, and called to the man,*” possibly the man lying in wait (vers. 9 and 12), that she might not be alone with Samson when cutting off his hair; and she cut off the seven plaits of his hair, and began to afflict him, as his strength departed from him now.—Ver. 20. She then cried out, “*Philistines upon thee, Samson!*” And he awaked out of his sleep, and thought (“*said,*” *i.e.* to himself), “*I will go away as time upon time* (this as at other times), *and shake myself loose,*” *sc.* from the fetters or from the hands of the Philistines; “*but he knew not that Jehovah had departed from him.*” These last words are very important to observe in order to form a correct idea of the affair. Samson had said to Delilah, “If my hair were cut off, *my strength* would depart from me” (ver. 17). The historian observes, on the other hand, that “*Jehovah had departed from him.*” The superhuman strength of Samson did not reside in his hair as hair, but in the fact that Jehovah was with or near him. But Jehovah was with him so long as he maintained his condition as a Nazarite. As soon as he broke away from this by sacrificing the hair which he wore in honour of the Lord, Jehovah departed from him, and with Jehovah went his strength.¹—Ver. 21. The Philistines then seized him, put out his eyes, and led him to Gaza fettered with double brass chains. The chains are probably called *nechushtaim* (double brass) because both hands or both feet were fettered with them. King Zedekiah, when taken prisoner by the Chaldeans, was treated in the same manner (2 Kings xxv. 7). There Samson was obliged to turn the mill in the prison, and grind corn (the participle *בִּינָה* expresses the continuance of the action). Grinding a handmill was the hardest and lowest

come this time, and that the rest can easily be supplied from the context. *Studer* admits how little *שָׁנָה* suits that view of the clause which the *Keri* reading *שָׁנָה* requires, and calls it “syntactically impossible.” He proposes, however, to read *שָׁנָה*, without reflecting that this reading is also nothing more than a change which is rendered necessary by the alteration of *שָׁנָה* into *שָׁנָה*, and has no critical value.

¹ “Samson was strong because he was dedicated to God, as long as he preserved the signs of his dedication. But as soon as he lost those signs, he fell into the utmost weakness in consequence. The whole of Samson’s misfortune came upon him, therefore, because he attributed to himself some portion of what God did through him. God permitted him to lose his strength, that he might learn by experience how utterly powerless he was without the help of God. We have no better teachers than our own infirmities.”—*Berleb. Bible.*

kind of slave labour (compare Ex. xi. 5 with xii. 29); and both Greeks and Romans sentenced their slaves to this as a punishment (see *Od.* xx. 105 sqq., vii. 103-4; *Terent.* Phorm. ii. 1, 19, Andr. i. 2, 29), and it is still performed by female slaves in the East (see *Chardin* in *Harmer's* Beob. üb. d. Orient. iii. 64).

Vers. 22-31. *Samson's Misery, and his Triumph in Death.*—

Ver. 22. The hair of his head began to grow, as he was shaven. In the word וַיִּשְׁבַּח, as (from the time when he was shaven), there is an indication that Samson only remained in his ignominious captivity till his hair began to grow again, i.e. visibly to grow. What follows agrees with this.—Vers. 23, 24. The captivity of this dreaded hero was regarded by the Philistines as a great victory, which their princes resolved to celebrate with a great and joyous sacrificial festival in honour of their god *Dagon*, to whom they ascribed this victory. “*A great sacrifice*,” consisting in the offering up of a large number of slain sacrifices. “*And for joy*,” viz. to give expression to their joy, i.e. for a joyous festival. *Dagon*, one of the principal deities of the Philistines, was worshipped at Gaza and Ashdod (1 Sam. v. 2 sqq., and 1 Macc. x. 83), and, according to Jerome on Isa. xlv. 1, in the rest of the Philistine towns as well. It was a fish-deity (דָּגוֹן, from דָּג, a fish), and in shape resembled the body of a fish with the head and hands of a man (1 Sam. v. 4). It was a male deity, the corresponding female deity being *Atargatis* (2 Macc. xii. 26) or *Derceto*, and was a symbol of water, and of all the vivifying forces of nature which produce their effects through the medium of water, like the Babylonian *’Ođákwon*, one of the four *Oannes*, and the Indian *Vishnu* (see *Movers*, Phöniz. i. pp. 143 sqq., 590 sqq., and *J. G. Müller* in *Herzog's Cycl.*).—Ver. 24. All the people took part in this festival, and sang songs of praise to the god who had given the enemy, who had laid waste their fields and slain many of their countrymen, into their hands.—Vers. 25 sqq. When their hearts were merry (וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ, inf. of שָׂחַ), they had Samson fetched out of the prison, that he might make sport before them, and “put him between the pillars” of the house or temple in which the triumphal feast was held. Then he said to the attendant who held his hand, “*Let me loose, and let me touch the pillars upon which the house is built, that I may lean upon it.*” וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ is the imperative *Hiphil* of the radical verb שָׂחַ, which only occurs here; and the *Keri* substitutes the ordinary form שָׂחַ from שָׂחַ. “*But the house*,” adds the historian by way of preparation for what follows, “*was filled with men and women: all the princes*

of the Philistines also were there; and upon the roof were about three thousand men and women, who feasted their eyes with Samson's sports" (נִחַד with נָ, used to denote the gratification of looking).—Ver. 28. Then Samson prayed to Jehovah, "*Lord Jehovah, remember me, and only this time make me strong, O God, that I may avenge myself (with) the revenge of one of my two eyes upon the Philistines,*" i.e. may take vengeance upon them for the loss of only one of my two eyes (נִחַד, without *Dagesh lene* in the נ: see *Ewald*, § 267, b.),—a sentence which shows how painfully he felt the loss of his two eyes, "a loss the severity of which even the terrible vengeance which he was meditating could never outweigh" (*Bertheau*).—Vers. 29, 30. After he had prayed to the Lord for strength for this last great deed, he embraced the two middle pillars upon which the building was erected, leant upon them, one with his right hand, the other with the left (viz. embracing them with his hands, as these words also belong to נִחַד), and said, "*Let my soul die with the Philistines.*" He then bent (the two pillars) with force, and the house fell upon the princes and all the people who were within. So far as the fact itself is concerned, there is no ground for questioning the possibility of Samson's bringing down the whole building with so many men inside by pulling down two middle columns, as we have no accurate acquaintance with the style of its architecture. In all probability we have to picture this temple of Dagon as resembling the modern Turkish kiosks, namely as consisting of a "spacious hall, the roof of which rested in front upon four columns, two of them standing at the ends, and two close together in the centre. Under this hall the leading men of the Philistines celebrated a sacrificial meal, whilst the people were assembled above upon the top of the roof, which was surrounded by a balustrade" (*Faber*, *Archäol. der Hebr.* p. 444, cf. pp. 436-7; and *Shaw*, *Reisen*, p. 190). The ancients enter very fully into the discussion of the question whether Samson committed suicide or not, though without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion. *O. v. Gerlach*, however, has given the true answer. "Samson's deed," he says, "was not suicide, but the act of a hero, who sees that it is necessary for him to plunge into the midst of his enemies with the inevitable certainty of death, in order to effect the deliverance of his people and decide the victory which he has still to achieve. Samson would be all the more certain that this was the will of the Lord, when he considered that even if he should deliver himself in any other way cut of the hands of the Philistines, he would always carry

about with him the mark of his shame in the blindness of his eyes,—a mark of his unfaithfulness as the servant of God quite as much as of the double triumph of his foes, who had gained a spiritual as well as a corporeal victory over him.” Such a triumph as this the God of Israel could not permit His enemies and their idols to gain. The Lord must prove to them, even through Samson’s death, that the shame of his sin was taken from him, and that the Philistines had no cause to triumph over him. Thus Samson gained the greatest victory over his foes in the moment of his own death. The terror of the Philistines when living, he became a destroyer of the temple of their idol when he died. Through this last act of his he vindicated the honour of Jehovah the God of Israel, against Dagon the idol of the Philistines. “*The dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.*”—Ver. 31. This terrible blow necessarily made a powerful impression upon the Philistines, not only plunging them into deep mourning at the death of their princes and so many of their countrymen, and the destruction of the temple of Dagon, but filling them with fear and terror at the omnipotence of the God of the Israelites. Under these circumstances it is conceivable enough that the brethren and relatives of Samson were able to come to Gaza, and fetch away the body of the fallen hero, to bury it in his father’s grave between Zorea and Eshtaol (see chap. xiii. 25).—In conclusion, it is once more very appropriately observed that Samson had judged Israel twenty years (cf. chap. xv. 20).

III.—IMAGE-WORSHIP OF MICAH AND THE DANITES; INFAMOUS CONDUCT OF THE INHABITANTS OF GIBEAH; VENGEANCE TAKEN UPON THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN.

CHAP. XVII.—XXI.

The death of Samson closes the body of the book of Judges, which sets forth the history of the people of Israel under the judges in a continuous and connected form. The two accounts, which follow in chap. xvii.—xxi., of the facts mentioned in the heading are attached to the book of Judges in the form of *appendices*, as the facts in question not only belonged to the times of the judges, and in fact to the very commencement of those times (see p. 238), but furnished valuable materials for forming a correct idea of the actual

character of this portion of the Israelitish history. The *first* appendix (chap. xvii. xviii.)—viz. the account of the introduction of image-worship, or of the worship of Jehovah under the form of a molten image, by the Ephraimite Micah, and of the seizure of this image by the Danites, who emigrated from their own territory when upon their march northwards, and the removal of it to the city of *Laish-Dan*, which was conquered by them—shows us how shortly after the death of Joshua the inclination to an idolatrous worship of Jehovah manifested itself in the nation, and how this worship, which continued for a long time in the north of the land, was mixed up from the very beginning with sin and unrighteousness. The *second* (chap. xix.–xxi.)—viz. the account of the infamous act which the inhabitants of Gibeah attempted to commit upon the Levite who stayed there for the night, and which they actually did perform upon his concubine, together with its consequences, viz. the war of vengeance upon the tribe of Benjamin, which protected the criminals—proves, on the one hand, what deep roots the moral corruptions of the Canaanites had struck among the Israelites at a very early period, and, on the other hand, how even at that time the congregation of Israel as a whole had kept itself free and pure, and, mindful of its calling to be the holy nation of God, had endeavoured with all its power to root out the corruption that had already forced its way into the midst of it.

These two occurrences have no actual connection with one another, but they are both of them narrated in a very elaborate and circumstantial manner; and in both of them we not only find Israel still without a king (chap. xvii. 6, xviii. 1, and xix. 1, xxi. 25), and the will of God sought by a priest or by the high priest himself (chap. xviii. 5, 6, xx. 18, 23, 27), but the same style of narrative is adopted as a whole, particularly the custom of throwing light upon the historical course of events by the introduction of circumstantial clauses, from which we may draw the conclusion that they were written by the same author. On the other hand, they do not contain any such characteristic marks as could furnish a certain basis for well-founded conjectures concerning the author, or raise *Bertheau's* conjecture, that he was the same person as the author of chap. i. 1–ii. 5, into a probability. For the frequent use of the perfect with *!* (compare chap. xx. 17, 33, 37, 38, 40, 41, 48, xxi. 1, 15, with chap. i. 8, 16, 21, 25, etc.) can be fully explained from the contents themselves; and the notion that the perfect is used here more frequently for the historical

imperfect with *vav consec.* rests upon a misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the passages in question. The other and not very numerous expressions, which are common to chap. xvii.-xxi. and chap. i., are not sufficiently characteristic to supply the proof required, as they are also met with elsewhere: see, for example, וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל (chap. i. 8, xx. 48), which not only occurs again in 2 Kings viii. 12 and Ps. lxxiv. 7, but does not even occur in both the appendices, וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל being used instead in chap. xviii. 27. So much, however, may unquestionably be gathered from the exactness and circumstantiality of the history, viz. that the first recorder of these events, whose account was the source employed by the author of our book, cannot have lived at a time very remote from the occurrences themselves. On the other hand, there are not sufficient grounds for the conjecture that these appendices were not attached to the book of the Judges till a later age. For it can neither be maintained that the object of the first appendix was to show how the image-worship which Jeroboam set up in his kingdom at Bethel and Dan had a most pernicious origin, and sprang from the image-worship of the Ephraimite Micah, which the Danites had established at Laish, nor that the object of the second appendix was to prove that the origin of the pre-Davidic kingdom (of Saul) was sinful and untheocratic, i.e. opposed to the spirit and nature of the kingdom of God, as *Auberlen* affirms (*Theol. Stud. u. Kr.* 1860). The identity of the golden calf set up by Jeroboam at Dan with the image of Jehovah that was stolen by the Danites from Micah the Ephraimite and set up in Laish-Dan, is precluded by the statement in chap. xviii. 31 respecting the length of time that this image-worship continued in Dan (see the commentary on the passage itself). At the most, therefore, we can only maintain, with *O. v. Gerlach*, that "both (appendices) set forth, according to the intention of the author, the misery which arose during the wild unsettled period of the judges from the want of a governing, regal authority." This is hinted at in the remark, which occurs in both appendices, that at that time there was no king in Israel, and every one did what was right in his own eyes (chap. xvii. 6, xxi. 25). This remark, on the other hand, altogether excludes the time of the falling away of the ten tribes, and the decline of the later kingdom, and is irreconcilable with the assumption that these appendices were not added to the book of the Judges till after the division of the kingdom, or not till the time of the Assyrian or Babylonian captivity.

IMAGE-WORSHIP OF MICAH THE EPHRAIMITE, AND ITS REMOVAL
TO LAISH-DAN.—CHAP. XVII. XVIII.

Chap. xvii. MICAH'S IMAGE-WORSHIP.—The account of the image-worship which Micah established in his house upon the mountains of Ephraim is given in a very brief and condensed form, because it was simply intended as an introduction to the account of the establishment of this image-worship in Laish-Dan in northern Palestine. Consequently only such points are for the most part given, as exhibit in the clearest light the sinful origin and unlawful character of this worship.

Vers. 1-10. A man of the mountains of Ephraim named Micah (מִיכָה, vers. 1, 4, then contracted into מִיכָה, vers. 5, 8, etc.), who set up this worship for himself, and "respecting whom the Scriptures do not think it worth while to add the name of his father, or to mention the family from which he sprang" (*Berleb. Bible*), had stolen 1100 shekels of silver (about £135) from his mother. This is very apparent from the words which he spoke to his mother (ver. 2): "*The thousand and hundred shekels of silver which were taken from thee* (the singular לָקַח refers to the silver), *about which thou cursedst and spakest of also in mine ears* (i.e. didst so utter the curse that among others I also heard it), *behold, this silver is with me; I have taken it.*" אָלֶּה, to swear, used to denote a malediction or curse (cf. קִלְ אֶלֶּה, Lev. v. 1). He seems to have been impelled to make this confession by the fear of his mother's curse. But his mother praised him for it,—"*Blessed be my son of Jehovah*,"—partly because she saw in it a proof that there still existed a germ of the fear of God, but in all probability chiefly because she was about to dedicate the silver to Jehovah; for, when her son had given it back to her, she said (ver. 3), "*I have sanctified the silver to the Lord from my hand for my son, to make an image and molten work.*" The perfect הִקְדַּשְׁתִּי is not to be taken in the sense of the pluperfect, "I had sanctified it," but is expressive of an act just performed: I have sanctified it, I declare herewith that I do sanctify it. "*And now I give it back to thee*," namely, to appropriate to thy house of God.—Ver. 4. Hereupon—namely, when her son had given her back the silver ("he restored the silver unto his mother" is only a repetition of ver. 3a, introduced as a link with which to connect the appropriation of the silver)—the mother took 200 shekels and gave them to the goldsmith, who made an image and molten work of them, which were henceforth in Micah's house. The 200 shekels were

not quite the fifth part of the whole. What she did with the rest is not stated; but from the fact that she dedicated the silver generally, *i.e.* the whole amount, to Jehovah, according to ver. 3, we may infer that she applied the remainder to the maintenance of the image-worship.¹ *Pesel* and *massecah* (image and molten work) are joined together, as in Deut. xxvii. 15. The difference between the two words in this instance is very difficult to determine. *Pesel* signifies an idolatrous image, whether made of wood or metal. *Massecah*, on the other hand, signifies a cast, something poured; and when used in the singular, is almost exclusively restricted to the calf cast by Aaron or Jeroboam. It is generally connected with *בן*, but it is used in the same sense without this definition (*e.g.* Deut. ix. 12). This makes the conjecture a very natural one, that the two words together might simply denote a likeness of Jehovah, and, judging from the occurrence at Sinai, a representation of Jehovah in the form of a molten calf. But there is one obstacle in the way of such a conjecture, namely, that in chap. xviii. 17, 18, *massecah* is separated from *pesel*, so as necessarily to suggest the idea of two distinct objects. But as we can hardly suppose that Micah's mother had two images of Jehovah made, and that Micah had both of them set up in his house of God, no other explanation seems possible than that the *massecah* was something belonging to the *pesel*, or image of Jehovah, but yet distinct from it,—in other words, that it was the pedestal upon which it stood. The *pesel* was at any rate the principal thing, as we may clearly infer from the fact that it is placed in the front rank among the four objects of Micah's sanctuary, which the Danites took with them (chap. xviii. 17, 18), and that in chap. xviii. 30, 31, the *pesel* alone is mentioned in connection with the setting up of the image-worship in Dan. Moreover, there can hardly be any doubt that *pesel*, as a representation of Jehovah, was an image of a bull, like the golden calf which Aaron had made at Sinai (Ex. xxxii. 4), and the golden calves which Jeroboam set up in the kingdom of Israel, and one of which was set up in Dan (1 Kings xii. 29).—Ver. 5. His mother did this, because

¹ There is no foundation for Bertheau's opinion, that the 200 shekels were no part of the 1100, but the trespass-money paid by the son when he gave his mother back the money that he had purloined, since, according to Lev. v. 24, when a thief restored to the owner any stolen property, he was to add the fifth of its value. There is no ground for applying this law to the case before us, simply because the taking of the money by the son is not even described as a theft, whilst the mother really praises her son for his open confession.

her son Micah had a house of God, and had had an ephod and teraphim made for himself, and one of his sons consecrated to officiate there as a priest. הָאִישׁ מִיכָה (the man Micah) is therefore placed at the head absolutely, and is connected with what follows by לוֹ: "*As for the man Micah, there was to him (he had) a house of God.*" The whole verse is a circumstantial clause explanatory of what precedes, and the following verbs וַיַּעַשׂ, וַיִּסְּאֵה, and וַיִּהְיֶה, are simply a continuation of the first clause, and therefore to be rendered as pluperfects. Micah's *beth Elohim* (house of God) was a domestic temple belonging to Micah's house, according to chap. xviii. 15-18. מָלֵא אֶת־יָדְךָ, to fill the hand, i.e. to invest with the priesthood, to institute as priest (see at Lev. vii. 37). The *ephod* was an imitation of the high priest's shoulder-dress (see at chap. viii. 27). The *teraphim* were images of household gods, penates, who were worshipped as the givers of earthly prosperity, and as oracles (see at Gen. xxxi. 19).—In ver. 6 it is observed, in explanation of this unlawful conduct, that at that time there was no king in Israel, and every one did what was right in his own eyes.

Vers. 7-13. *Appointment of a Levite as Priest.*—Vers. 7 sqq. In the absence of a Levitical priest, Micah had first of all appointed one of his sons as priest at his sanctuary. He afterwards found a Levite for this service. A young man from Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah, who, being a Levite, stayed (וָרָה) there (in Bethlehem) as a stranger, left this town to sojourn "*at the place which he should find,*" sc. as a place that would afford him shelter and support, and came up to the mountains of Ephraim to Micah's house, "*making his journey,*" i.e. upon his journey. (On the use of the *inf. constr.* with לוֹ in the sense of the Latin gerund in *do*, see *Ewald*, § 280, d.) Bethlehem was not a Levitical town. The young Levite from Bethlehem was neither born there nor made a citizen of the place, but simply "*sojourned there,*" i.e. dwelt there temporarily as a stranger. The further statement as to his descent (*mishpachath Judah*) is not to be understood as signifying that he was a descendant of some family in the tribe of Judah, but simply that he belonged to the Levites who dwelt in the tribe of Judah, and were reckoned in all civil matters as belonging to that tribe. On the division of the land, it is true that it was only to the priests that dwelling-places were allotted in the inheritance of this tribe (Josh. xxi. 9-19), whilst the rest of the Levites, even the non-priestly members of the family of Kohath, received their dwelling-places among the other tribes (Josh. xxi. 20 sqq.). At the same

time, as many of the towns which were allotted to the different tribes remained for a long time in the possession of the Canaanites, and the Israelites did not enter at once into the full and undisputed possession of their inheritance, it might easily so happen that different towns which were allotted to the Levites remained in possession of the Canaanites, and consequently that the Levites were compelled to seek a settlement in other places. It might also happen that individuals among the Levites themselves, who were disinclined to perform the service assigned them by the law, would remove from the Levitical towns and seek some other occupation elsewhere (see also at chap. xviii. 30).¹—Ver. 10. Micah made this proposal to the Levite: “*Dwell with me, and become my father and priest; I will give thee ten shekels of silver yearly, and fitting out with clothes and maintenance.*” אב, *father*, is an honourable title given to a priest as a paternal friend and spiritual adviser, and is also used with reference to prophets in 2 Kings vi. 21 and xiii. 14, and applied to Joseph in Gen. xlv. 8. יָמִים, *for the days*, sc. for which a person was engaged, i.e. for the year (cf. 1 Sam. xxvii. 7, and Lev. xxv. 29). “*And the Levite went,*” i.e. went to Micah’s house. This meaning is evident from the context. The repetition of the subject, “the Levite,” precludes our connecting it with the following verb אָנָּה.—In vers. 11–13 the result is summed up. The Levite resolved (see at Deut. i. 5) to dwell with Micah, who treated him as one of his sons, and entrusted him with the priesthood at his house of God. And Micah rejoiced that he had got a Levite as priest, and said, “*Now I know that Jehovah will prosper me.*” This belief, or, to speak more correctly, superstition, for which Micah was very speedily to atone, proves that at that time the tribe of Levi held the position assigned it in the law of Moses; that is to say, that it was regarded as the tribe elected by God for the performance of divine worship.

Chap. xviii. THE IMAGE-WORSHIP REMOVED TO LAISH-DAN.

¹ There is no reason, therefore, for pronouncing the words מְלִצְפָּהּ יְהוּדָה (of the family of Judah) a gloss, and erasing them from the text, as Houbigant proposes. The omission of them from the *Cod. Vat.* of the LXX., and from the Syriac, is not enough to warrant this, as they occur in the *Cod. Al.* of the LXX., and their absence from the authorities mentioned may easily be accounted for from the difficulty which was felt in explaining their meaning. On the other hand, it is impossible to imagine any reason for the interpolation of such a gloss into the text.

—Vers. 1-10. *Spies sent out by the tribe of Dan*, to seek for a place suitable for a settlement, and their success.—Ver. 1. This took place at a time when Israel had no king, and the tribe of the Danites sought an inheritance for themselves to dwell in, because until that day no such portion had fallen to them among the tribes as an inheritance. To the expression *לֹא נָפַלָה* (had not fallen) we must supply *נַחֲלָה* as the subject from the previous clause; and *נַחֲלָה* signifies in the character of a *nachalah*, i.e. of a possession that could be transmitted as hereditary property from father to son. *נָפַל*, to fall, is used with reference to the falling of the lot (*vid.* Num. xxxiv. 2, Josh. xiii. 6, etc.). The general statement, that as yet no inheritance had fallen to the tribe of Dan by lot, has its limitation in the context. As the Danites, according to ver. 2, sent out five men from Zorea and Eshtaol, and, according to ver. 11, six hundred men equipped for fight went out to Laish, which the spies had discovered to be a place well fitted for a settlement, and had settled there, it is very evident from this that the Danites were not absolutely without an inheritance, but that hitherto they had not received one sufficient for their wants. The emigrants themselves were already settled in Zorea and Eshtaol, two of the towns that had fallen to the tribe of Dan by lot (Josh. xix. 41). Moreover, the six hundred equipped Danites, who went out of these towns, were only a very small part of the tribe of Danites, which numbered 64,400 males of twenty years old and upwards at the last census (Num. xxvi. 43). For a tribe of this size the land assigned by Joshua to the tribe of Dan, with all the towns that it contained, was amply sufficient. But from chap. i. 34 we learn that the Amorites forced the Danites into the mountains, and would not allow them to come down into the plain. Consequently they were confined to a few towns situated upon the sides or tops of the mountains, which did not supply all the room they required. Feeling themselves too weak to force back the Canaanites and exterminate them, one portion of the Danites preferred to seek an inheritance for themselves somewhere else in the land. This enterprise and emigration are described in vers. 2 sqq. The time cannot be determined with perfect certainty, as all that can be clearly inferred from ver. 12, as compared with chap. xiii. 25, is, that it took place some time before the days of Samson. Many expositors have therefore assigned it to the period immediately following the defeat of Jabin by Barak (chap. iv. 24), because it was not till after the overthrow of this powerful king of the Canaanites that conquests were possible

in the north of Canaan, and the tribe of Dan at that time still remained in ships (chap. v. 17), so that it had not yet left the territory assigned it by the sea-shore (Josh. xix.). But these arguments have neither of them any force; for there is nothing surprising in the fact that Danites should still be found by the sea-shore in the time of Deborah, even if Danite families from Zorea and Eshtaol had settled in Laish long before, seeing that these emigrants formed but a small fraction of the whole tribe, and the rest remained in the possessions assigned them by Joshua. Moreover, the strengthening of the force of the Canaanites, and the extension of their dominion in the north, did not take place till 150 years after Joshua, in the days of Jabin; so that long before Jabin the town of Laish may have been conquered by the Danites, and taken possession of by them. In all probability this took place shortly after the death of Joshua, as we may infer from ver. 30 (see the exposition of this verse).—Ver. 2. To spy out and explore the land for the object mentioned, the Danites sent out five brave men “*out of their* (the Danites’) *ends*,” i.e. from their whole body (vid. 1 Kings xii. 31, xiii. 33, and the commentary on Gen. xix. 4). They came up to the mountains of Ephraim, and as far as Micah’s house, where they passed the night.—Vers. 3–6. When they were at Micah’s house and recognised the voice of the young Levite, i.e. heard his voice, and perceived from his dialect that he was not a native of these mountains, they turned aside there, *sc.* from the road into the house, near to which they rested, and asked him, “*Who brought thee hither, and what doest thou at this place? what hast thou to do here?*” When he told them his history (“thus and thus,” *lit.* according to this and that; cf. 2 Sam. xi. 25, 1 Kings xiv. 5), they said to him, “*Ask God, we pray thee, that we may learn whether our way will be prosperous.*” שאל אל־ה' used for asking the will of God, as in chap. i. 1, except that here the inquiry was made through the medium of the imitation of the ephod and the worship of an image. And he said to them, *sc.* after making inquiry of the divine oracle, “*Go in peace; straight before Jehovah is your way,*” i.e. it is known and well-pleasing to Him (vid. Prov. v. 21, Jer. xvii. 16).—Ver. 7. Thus the five men proceeded to Laish, which is called Leshem in Josh. xix. 47, and was named Dan after the conquest by the Danites,—a place on the central source of the Jordan, the present Tell el Kadi (see at Josh. xix. 47),—and saw the people of the town dwelling securely after the manner of the Sidonians, who lived by trade and commerce, and did not go out to war. וְהָיוּ כְּשִׁדְוֹנִים is

the predicate to אֶתְהַעֵם, and the feminine is to be explained from the fact that the writer had the population before his mind (see *Ewald*, § 174, b.); and the use of the masculine in the following words, שָׁקֵט וְנִיחָא, which are in apposition, is not at variance with this. The connection of יִשְׁבֶּת with בְּקִרְבָּה, which *Bertheau* revives from the earlier commentators, is opposed to the genius of the Hebrew language. שָׁקֵט וְנִיחָא, "living quietly and safely there." וְאִי־מְכַלִּים וְט', "and no one who seized the government to himself did any harm to them in the land." הַכְּלִים, to shame, then to do an injury (1 Sam. xxv. 7). מְכַלִּים דָּבָר, shaming with regard to a thing, i.e. doing any kind of injury. עֶצֶר, dominion, namely tyrannical rule, from עָצַר, *imperio coercere*. The rendering "riches" (θησαυρός, LXX.), which some give to this word, is founded simply upon a confounding of עֶצֶר with אִיצֵר. אִיצֵר does not mean "to possess," but "to take possession of," and that by force (as in 1 Kings xxi. 18). "And they were far from the Sidonians," so that in the event of a hostile invasion they could not obtain any assistance from this powerful city. *Grotius* draws the very probable conclusion from these words, that Laish may have been a colony of the Sidonians. "And they had nothing to do with (other) men," i.e. they did not live in any close association with the inhabitants of other towns, so as to be able to obtain assistance from any other quarter.—Vers. 8, 9. On their return, the spies said to their fellow-citizens, in reply to the question מָה אַתֶּם עוֹשִׂים, "What have you accomplished?" "Up, let us go up against them (the inhabitants of Laish), for the land is very good, and ye are silent," i.e. standing inactive (1 Kings xxii. 3; 2 Kings vii. 9). "Be not slothful to go (to proceed thither), to come and take possession of the land!"—Ver. 10. "When ye arrive, ye will come to a secure people (i.e. a people living in careless security, and therefore very easy to overcome); and the land is broad on both sides (i.e. furnishes space to dwell in, and also to extend: *vid.* Gen. xxxiv. 21, 1 Chron. iv. 40); for God has given it into your hand." They infer this from the oracular reply they had received from the Levite (ver. 6). "A place where there is no want of anything that is in the land (of Canaan)."

Vers. 11-29. *Removal of Six Hundred Danites to Laish—Robbery of Micah's Images—Conquest of Laish, and Settlement there.*—Vers. 11, 12. In consequence of the favourable account of the spies who returned, certain Danites departed from Zorea and Eshtaol, to the number of 600 men, accoutred with weapons of war, with their families and their possessions in cattle and goods (see

ver. 21), and encamped by the way at Kirjath-jearim (*i.e.* Kuriyet Enab; see Josh. ix. 17), in the tribe territory of Judah, at a place which received the permanent name of *Mahaneh Dan* (camp of Dan) from that circumstance, and was situated behind, *i.e.* to the west of, Kirjath-jearim (see at chap. xiii. 25). The fact that this locality received a standing name from the circumstance described, compels us to assume that the Danites had encamped there for a considerable time, for reasons which we cannot determine from our want of other information. The emigrants may possibly have first of all assembled here, and prepared and equipped themselves for their further march.—Ver. 13. From this point they went across to the mountains of Ephraim, and came to Micah's house, *i.e.* to a place near it.—Ver. 14. Then the five men who had explored the land, viz. Laish (*Laish* is in apposition to לַיִשׁ, the land), said to their brethren (tribe-mates), "*Know ye that in these houses (the village or place where Micah dwelt) there are an ephod and teraphim, and image and molten work (see at chap. xvii. 4, 5)? and now know what ye will do.*" The meaning of these last words is very easily explained: do not lose this opportunity of obtaining a worship of our own for our new settlement.—Ver. 15. Then they turned from the road thither, and went to the house of the young Levite, the house of Micah, and asked him (the Levite) concerning his health, *i.e.* saluted him in a friendly manner (see Gen. xliii. 27, Ex. xviii. 7, etc.).—Ver. 16. The 600 men, however, placed themselves before the door.—Ver. 17. Then the five spies went up, *sc.* into Micah's house of God, which must therefore have been in an upper room of the building (see 2 Kings xxiii. 12, Jer. xix. 13), and took the image, ephod, etc., whilst the priest stood before the door with the 600 armed men. With the words וַיֵּלֶךְ the narrative passes from the aorist or historical tense וַיֵּלֶךְ into the perfect. "The perfects do not denote the coming and taking on the part of the five men as a continuation of the previous account, but place the coming and taking in the same sphere of time as that to which the following clause, 'and the priest stood,' etc., belongs" (*Bertheau*). But in order to explain what appears very surprising, viz. that the priest should have stood before the gate whilst his house of God was being robbed, the course which the affair took is explained more clearly afterwards in vers. 18, 19, in the form of a circumstantial clause. Consequently the verbs in these verses ought to be rendered as pluperfects, and the different clauses comprised in one period, ver. 18 forming the protasis, and ver. 19 the apodosis.

"Namely, when those (five) men had come into Micah's house, and had taken the image of the ephod, etc., and the priest had said to them, *What are ye doing?* they had said to him, *Be silent, lay thy hand upon thy mouth and go with us, and become a father and priest to us* (see chap. xvii. 10). *Is it better to be a priest to the house of a single man, or to a tribe and family in Israel?*" The combination הַפֶּסֶל הָאֵפֹד (the ephod-pesel), i.e. the image belonging to the ephod, may be explained on the ground, that the use of the ephod as a means of ascertaining the will of God presupposes the existence of an image of Jehovah, and does not prove that the ephod served as a covering for the *pesel*. The priest put on the ephod when he was about to inquire of God. The וְאִם in the second question is different from אִם, and signifies "or rather" (see Gen. xxiv. 55), indicating an improvement upon the first question (see *Ewald*, § 352, a.). Consequently it is not a sign of a later usage of speech, as *Bertheau* supposes. The word לְמִשְׁפָּחָה (unto a family) serves as a more minute definition or limitation of לְשִׁבְתָּם (to a tribe).—Ver. 20. Then was the priest's heart glad (merry; cf. chap. xix. 6, 9, Ruth iii. 7), and he took the ephod, etc., and came amongst the people (the Danites). The first clause of this verse is attached to the supplementary statement in vers. 18, 19, for the purpose of linking on the further progress of the affair, which is given in the second clause; for, according to ver. 17, the priest could only receive the ephod, etc., into his charge from the hands of the Danites, since they had taken them out of Micah's God's house.—Ver. 21. The 600 Danites then set out upon their road again and went away; and they put the children, the cattle, and the valuable possessions in front, because they were afraid of being attacked by Micah and his people from behind. הַיְּטִף, "the little ones," includes both women and children, as the members of the family who were in need of protection (see at Ex. xii. 37). קְבוֹרָה is literally an adjective, signifying splendid; but here it is a neuter substantive: the valuables, not the heavy baggage. The 600 men had emigrated with their families and possessions.—Vers. 22, 23. The two clauses of ver. 22 are circumstantial clauses: "*When they* (the 600) *had got to some distance from Micah's house, and the men who were in the houses by Micah's house were called together, and had overtaken the Danites, they* (i.e. Micah and his people, whom he had called together from the neighbourhood to pursue the emigrants) *called to the Danites; and they turned their faces, and said to Micah, What is to thee* (what is the matter), *that thou hast gathered together?*"—

Vers. 24, 25. And when he replied, "*Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and have departed; what is there still to me (what have I left)? and how can ye say to me, What is to thee?*" they ordered him to be silent, lest he should forfeit his life: "*Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest men of savage disposition (שׂוֹנֵאִים as in 2 Sam. xvii. 8) should fall upon thee (vid. chap. xv. 12, viii. 21, etc.), and thou shouldst not save thy life and that of thy household,*" i.e. shouldst bring death upon thyself and thy family. מִדְּפִנְיָ is also dependent upon יָדְךָ.—Ver. 26. Then the Danites went their way; but Micah, seeing that they were stronger than he, turned back and returned home.—Vers. 27, 28. And they (the Danites) had taken what Micah had made, i.e. his idols and his priest, and they fell upon Laish (לָאִישׁ, to come over a person, to fall upon him, as in Gen. xxxiv. 25), a people living quietly and free from care (vid. ver. 7), smote them with the edge of the sword (see at Gen. xxxiv. 26), and burned down the city (cf. Josh. vi. 24), as it had no deliverer in its isolated condition (ver. 28a; cf. ver. 7). It was situated "*in the valley which stretches to Beth-rehob.*" This valley is the upper part of the *Huleh* lowland, through which the central source of the Jordan (*Leddan*) flows, and by which *Laish-Dan*, the present *Tell el Kadi*, stood (see at Josh. xix. 47). *Beth-rehob* is most probably the same place as the *Rehob* mentioned in Num. xiii. 21, and the *Beth-rehob* of 2 Sam. x. 6, which is there used to designate a part of Syria, and for which *Rehob* only is also used in ver. 8. *Robinson* (*Bibl. Res.* pp. 371 sqq.) supposes it to be the castle of *Hunin* or *Honin*, on the south-west of *Tell el Kadi*; but this is hardly correct (see the remarks on Num. xiii. 21, *Pent.* vol. iii. p. 88). The city, which lay in ashes, was afterwards rebuilt by the Danites, and called *Dan*, from the name of the founder of their tribe; and the ruins are still to be seen, as already affirmed, on the southern slope of the *Tell el Kadi* (see *Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 391-2, and the comm. on Josh. xix. 47).

Vers. 30, 31. *Establishment of the Image-worship in Dan.*—After the rebuilding of Laish under the name of Dan, the Danites set up the *pesel* or image of Jehovah, which they had taken with them out of Micah's house of God. "*And Jehonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites till the day of the captivity of the land.*" As the Danites had taken the Levite whom Micah had engaged for his private worship with them to Dan, and had promised him the priesthood (vers. 19 and 27), *Jehonathan* can hardly be any other

than this Levite. He was a son of Gershom, the son of Moses (Ex. ii. 22, xviii. 3; 1 Chron. xxiii. 14, 15). Instead of בְּרִמְשֶׁה, our Masoretic text has בְּרִמְנַשֶּׁה with a hanging נ. With regard to this reading, the *Talmud* (Baba bathr. f. 109b) observes: "Was he a son of Gershom, or was he not rather a son of Moses? as it is written, the sons of Moses were Gershom and Eliezer (1 Chron. xxiii. 14), but because he did the deeds of Manasseh (the idolatrous son of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xxi.) the Scripture assigns him to the family of Manasseh." On this *Rabbabar bar Channa* observes, that "the prophet (i.e. the author of our book) studiously avoided calling Gershom *the son of Moses*, because it would have been ignominious to Moses to have had an ungodly son; but he calls him *the son of Manasseh*, raising the נ, however, above the line, to show that it might either be inserted or omitted, and that he was the son of either מְנַשֶּׁה (Manasseh) or מֹשֶׁה (Moses),—of Manasseh through imitating his impiety, of Moses by descent" (cf. *Buxtorfi Tiber.* p. 171). Later Rabbins say just the same. *R. Tanchum* calls the writing *Menasseh*, with a hanging nun, a תַּקָּף סוּפְרִים, and speaks of *ben Mosheh* as *Kethibh*, and *ben Menasseh* as *Keri*. *Ben Mosheh* is therefore unquestionably the original reading, although the other reading *ben Menasseh* is also very old, as it is to be found in the *Targums* and the *Syriac* and *Sept.* versions, although some *Codd.* of the LXX. have the reading *υἱοῦ Μωϋσῆ* (*vid. Kennic. dissert. gener. in V. T.* § 21).¹ *Jerome* also has *filiū Moysi*. At the same time, it does not follow with certainty from the reading *ben Gershom* that Jehonathan was actually a son of Gershom, as *ben* frequently denotes a grandson in such genealogical accounts, unknown fathers being passed over in the genealogies. There is very little probability of his having been a son, for the simple reason, that if Jehonathan was the same person as Micah's high priest—and there is no ground for doubting this—he is described as נַעַר in chap. xvii. 7, xviii. 3, 15, and therefore was at any rate a young man, whereas the son of Gershom and grandson of Moses would certainly have passed the age of youth by a few years after the death of Joshua. This Jehonathan and his sons performed the duties of the priesthood at Dan עֲרִיּוֹם וְלֹאֵת הָאֶרֶץ. This statement is obscure. וְלֹאֵת הָאֶרֶץ can hardly mean anything else than the carrying away of the people of the land into exile, that is to say, of

¹ These two readings of the LXX. seem to be fused together in the text given by *Theodoret* (*quest.* xxvi.): 'Ιωνάθαν γὰρ φησιν υἱὸς Μανασσῆ, υἱοῦ Γερσάμ υἱοῦ Μωϋσῆ

the inhabitants of Dan and the neighbourhood at least, since *הָאֵלֹהִים* is the standing expression for this. Most of the commentators suppose the allusion to be to the Assyrian captivity, or primarily to the carrying away by Tiglath-Pileser of the northern tribes of Israel, viz. the population of Gilead, Galilee, and the tribe of Naphtali, in the midst of which Laish-Dan was situated (2 Kings xv. 29). But the statement in ver. 31, "*And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh,*" is by no means reconcilable with such a conclusion. We find the house of God, i.e. the Mosaic tabernacle, which the congregation had erected at Shiloh in the days of Joshua (Josh. xviii. 1), still standing there in the time of Eli and Samuel (1 Sam. i. 3 sqq., iii. 21, iv. 3); but in the time of Saul it was at Nob (1 Sam. xxi.), and during the reign of David at Gibeon (1 Chron. xvi. 39, xxi. 29). Consequently "the house of God" only stood in Shiloh till the reign of Saul, and was never taken there again. If therefore Micah's image, which the Danites set up in Dan, remained there as long as the house of God was at Shiloh, Jonathan's sons can only have been there till Saul's time at the longest, and certainly cannot have been priests at this sanctuary in Dan till the time of the Assyrian captivity.¹ There are also other historical facts to be considered, which render the continuance of this Danite image-worship until the Assyrian captivity extremely improbable, or rather preclude it altogether. Even if we should not lay any stress upon the fact that the Israelites under Samuel put away the Baalim and Astartes in consequence of his appeal to them to turn to the Lord (1 Sam. vii. 4), it is hardly credible that in the time of David the image-worship should have continued at Dan by the side of the lawful worship of Jehovah which he restored and organized, and should not have been observed and suppressed by this king, who carried on repeated wars in the northern part of his kingdom. Still more incredible would the continuance of this image-worship appear after the erection of Solomon's temple, when all the men of Israel, and all the elders and heads of tribes, came to Jerusalem, at the summons of Solomon, to celebrate the consecration of this splendid national sanctuary (1 Kings v.-vii.). Lastly, the supposition that the image-worship established by the Danites

¹ The impossibility of reconciling the statement as to time in ver. 31 with the idea that "the captivity of the land" refers to the Assyrian captivity, is admitted even by Bleek (Einl. p. 349), who adopts Houbigant's conjecture, viz. *בְּלֹאֵת הָאָרֶץ*, "the carrying away of the ark."

at Dan still continued to exist, is thoroughly irreconcilable with the fact, that when Jeroboam established the kingdom of the ten tribes he had two golden calves made as images of Jehovah for the subjects of his kingdom, and set up one of them at Dan, and appointed priests out of the whole nation who were not of the sons of Levi. If an image-worship of Jehovah had been still in existence in Dan, and conducted by Levitical priests, Jeroboam would certainly not have established a second worship of the same kind under priests who were not Levitical. All these difficulties preclude our explaining the expression, "the day of the captivity of the land," as referring to either the Assyrian or Babylonian captivity. It can only refer to some event which took place in the last years of Sammel, or the first part of the reign of Saul. *David Kimchi* and many others have interpreted the expression as relating to the carrying away of the ark by the Philistines, for which the words *וְלָהּ בְּבוֹד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל* are used in 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22 (e.g. *Hengstenberg*, Beitr. vol. ii. pp. 153 sqq.; *Hävernick*, Einl. ii. 1, p. 109; *O. r. Gerlach*, and others). With the carrying away of the ark of the covenant, the tabernacle lost its significance as a sanctuary of Jehovah. We learn from Ps. lxxviii. 59–64 how the godly in Israel regarded that event. They not only looked upon it as a casting away of the dwelling-place of God at Shiloh; but in the fact that Jehovah gave up His might and glory (i.e. the ark) into captivity, they discerned a surrender of the nation into the full power of its foes which resembled a carrying away into captivity. For, apart altogether from the description in Ps. lxxviii. 62–64, we may infer with certainty from the account of the tyranny which these foes still exercised over the Israelites in the time of Saul (1 Sam. xiii. 19–23), that, after this victory, the Philistines may have completely subjugated the Israelites, and treated them as their prisoners. We may therefore affirm with *Hengstenberg*, that "the author looked upon the whole land as carried away into captivity in its sanctuary, which formed as it were its kernel and essence." If, however, this figurative explanation of *וְלָהּ בְּבוֹד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל* should not be accepted, there is no valid objection to our concluding that the words refer to some event with which we have no further acquaintance, in which the city of Dan was conquered by the neighbouring Syrians, and the inhabitants carried away into captivity. For it is evident enough from the fact of the kings of *Zoba* being mentioned, in 1 Sam. xiv. 47, among the different enemies of Israel against whom Saul carried on war, that the Syrians also invaded Israel in

the time of the Philistine supremacy, and carried Israelites away out of the conquered towns and districts. The Danite image-worship, however, was probably suppressed and abolished when Sammel purified the land and people from idolatry, after the ark had been brought back by the Philistines (1 Sam. ii. sq.).

WAR OF THE CONGREGATION WITH THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN ON
ACCOUNT OF THE CRIME AT GIBEAH.—CHAP. XIX. XX.

This account belongs to the times immediately following the death of Joshua, as we may see from the fact that Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the contemporary of Joshua, was high priest at that time (chap. xx. 28). In chap. xix. we have an account of the infamous crime committed by the inhabitants of Gibeah, which occasioned the war; in chap. xx. the war itself; and in chap. xxi. an account of what was afterwards done by the congregation to preserve the tribe of Benjamin, which was almost annihilated by the war.

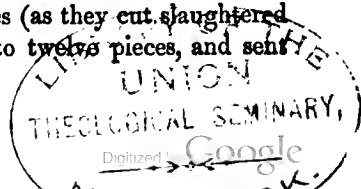
Chap. 'xix. INFAMOUS CRIME OF THE INHABITANTS OF GIBEAH.—Vers. 1-14. At the time when there was no king in Israel, a Levite, who sojourned (*i.e.* lived outside a Levitical town) in the more remote parts of the mountains of Ephraim, took to himself a concubine out of Bethlehem in Judah, who proved unfaithful to him, and then returned to her father's house. יִרְכָתִי הָרְאָפָרִים, the hinder or outermost parts of the mountains of Ephraim, are the northern extremity of these mountains; according to ver. 18, probably the neighbourhood of Shiloh. הָזֹנֶה עָלָיו, "*she played the harlot out beyond him,*" *i.e.* was unfaithful to her husband, "*and then went away from him,*" back to her father's house.—Vers. 3, 4. Some time afterwards, namely at the end of four months (אַרְבַּעָה חֳדָשִׁים is in apposition to יָמִים, and defines more precisely the יָמִים, or days), her husband went after her, "*to speak to her to the heart,*" *i.e.* to talk to her in a friendly manner (see Gen. xxxiv. 3), and to reconcile her to himself again, so that she might return; taking with him his attendant and a couple of asses, for himself and his wife to ride upon. The suffix attached to לְהָשִׁיבוּ refers to לָבָה, "*to bring back her heart,*" to turn her to himself again. The *Keri* הָשִׁיבָהּ is a needless conjecture. "*And she brought him into her father's house, and her father received his son-in-law with joy, and constrained him* (יִחְזָקֵבּוּ, *lit.* held him fast) *to remain there thrss*

day*." It is evident from this that the Levite had succeeded in reconciling his wife.—Vers. 5 sqq. Also on the fourth day, when he was about to depart in the morning, the Levite yielded to the persuasion of his father-in-law, that he would first of all strengthen his heart again with a bit of bread (כֶּסֶד לֶחֶם as in Gen. xviii. 5; the imperative form with δ is unusual); and then afterwards, whilst they were eating and drinking, he consented to stay another night.—Ver. 7. When he rose up to go, his father-in-law pressed him; then he turned back (חָזַר is quite in place, and is not to be altered into חָשַׁב, according to the LXX. and one Heb. Cod.), and remained there for the night.—Ver. 8. And even in the morning of the fifth day he suffered himself to be induced to remain till the afternoon. הִתְחַמְּקוּהוּ is an imperative, "Tarry till the day turns," i.e. till mid-day is past.—Vers. 9, 10. When at length he rose up, with his concubine and his attendant, to go away, the father entreated his daughter once more: "*Behold the day has slackened to become evening, spend the night here! Behold the declining of the day, spend the night here,*" etc. הִנּוּחַ inf. of הִנָּח, to bend, incline. The interchange of the plural and singular may be explained from the simple fact that the Levite was about to depart with his wife and attendant, but that their remaining or departing depended upon the decision of the man alone. But the Levite did not consent to remain any longer, but set out upon the road, and came with his companions to before Jebus, i.e. Jerusalem, which is only two hours from Bethlehem (compare *Rob. Pal. ii. 375* with 379). עֵדֶר לִבְיָ, to before Jebus, for the road from Bethlehem to Shiloh went past Jerusalem.—Vers. 11 sqq. But as the day had gone far down when they were by Jebus (יָרַ, third pers. perf., either of יָרַד with ' dropped like הִתְחַמְּקוּ in 2 Sam. xxii. 41 for הִתְחַמְּקוּ, or from יָרַד in the sense of יָרַד), the attendant said to his master, "*Come, let us turn aside into this Jebusite city, and pass the night in it.*" But his master was unwilling to enter a city of the foreigners (יִבְיָ is a genitive), where there were none of the sons of Israel, and would pass over to Gibeah. "*Come* (לָךְ = לָכֵה, Num. xxiii. 13), *we will draw near to one of the places* (which he immediately names), *and pass the night in Gibeah or Ramah.*" These two towns, the present *Jeba* and *er Râm*, were not a full hour's journey apart, and stood opposite to one another, only about two and a half or three hours from Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 25, 28).—Ver. 14. Then they went forward, and the sun went down upon them as they were near (at) Gibeah of Benjamin.

Vers. 15-30. And they turned aside thither to pass the night in Gibeah; and he (the Levite) remained in the market-place of the town, as no one received them into his house to pass the night.—Vers. 16 sqq. Behold, there came an old man from the field, who was of the mountains of Ephraim, and dwelt as a stranger in Gibeah, the inhabitants of which were Benjaminites (as is observed here, as a preliminary introduction to the account which follows). When he saw the traveller in the market-place of the town, he asked him whither he was going and whence he came; and when he had heard the particulars concerning his descent and his journey, he received him into his house. וְאִתִּי הָלַכְתִּי (ver. 18), “and I walk at the house of Jehovah, and no one receives me into his house” (Seb. Schm., etc.); not “I am going to the house of Jehovah” (Ros., Berth., etc.), for אִתִּי הָלַכְתִּי does not signify to go to a place, for which the simple accusative is used either with or without ה local. It either means “to go through a place” (Deut. i. 19, etc.), or “to go with a person,” or, when applied to things, “to go about with anything” (see Job xxxi. 5, and Ges. Thes. p. 378). Moreover, in this instance the Levite was not going to the house of Jehovah (i.e. the tabernacle), but, as he expressly told the old man, from Bethlehem to the outermost sides of the mountains of Ephraim. The words in question explain the reason why he was staying in the market-place. Because he served at the house of Jehovah, no one in Gibeah would receive him into his house,¹ although, as he adds in ver. 19, he had everything with him that was requisite for his wants. “We have both straw and fodder for our asses, and bread and wine for me and thy maid, and for the young man with thy servants. No want of anything at all,” so as to cause him to be burdensome to his host. By the words “thy maid” and “thy servants” he means himself and his concubine, describing himself and his wife, according to the obsequious style of the East in olden times, as servants of the man from whom he was expecting a welcome.—Ver. 20. The old man replied, “Peace to thee,” assuring him of a welcome by this style of greeting; “only all thy wants upon me,” i.e. let me provide for them. Thus the friendly host declined the offer made by his guest to provide for himself. “Only do not pass the night in the market-place.”—Ver. 21. He then took him into

¹ As Seb. Schmidt correctly observes, “the argument is taken from the indignity shown him: the Lord thinks me worthy to minister to Him, as a Levite, in His house, and there is not one of the people of the Lord who thinks me worthy to receive his hospitality.”

his house, mixed fodder for his asses (יָבֹל from בָּלַל, a *denom. verb* from בָּלַל, to make a mixture, to give fodder to the beasts), and waited upon his guest with washing of feet, food, and drink (see Gen. xviii. 4 sqq., xix. 2).—Ver. 22. Whilst they were enjoying themselves, some worthless men of the city surrounded the house, knocking continuously at the door (הִתְחַפֵּק, a form indicative of gradual increase), and demanding of the master of the house that he would bring out the man who had entered his house, that they might know him,—the very same demand that the Sodomites had made of Lot (Gen. xix. 6 sqq.). The construct state אֲנָשֵׁי בְנֵי-בִלְעֵל is used instead of אֲנָשִׁים בְּנֵי-בִלְעֵל (Deut. xiii. 14, etc.), because בְּנֵי בִלְעֵל is regarded as *one* idea: people of worthless fellows. Other cases of the same kind are given by Ewald, Lehrb. § 289, c.—Vers. 23 sqq. The old man sought, as Lot had done, to defend his guests from such a shameful crime by appealing to the sacred rights of hospitality, and by giving up his own virgin daughter and the concubine of his guest (see the remarks on Gen. xix. 7, 8). נָבְלָה, *folly*, used to denote shameful licentiousness and whoredom, as in Gen. xxxiv. 7 and Deut. xxii. 21. עֲנִי אוֹתָם, “humble them.” The masculine is used in אוֹתָם and לָהֶם as the more general gender, instead of the more definite feminine, as in Gen. xxxix. 9, Ex. i. 21, etc.—Vers. 25 sqq. But as the people would not listen to this proposal, the man (no doubt the master of the house, according to ver. 24) took his (the guest’s) concubine (of course with the consent of his guest) and led her out to them, and they abused her the whole night. It is not stated how it was that they were satisfied with this; probably because they felt too weak to enforce their demand. הִתְעַלְלָה בָּ, to exercise his power or wantonness upon a person (see Ex. x. 2).—Ver. 26. When the morning drew on (*i.e.* at the first dawn of day), the woman fell down before the door of the house in which אֲדֹנֶיהָ, “her lord,” *i.e.* her husband, was, and lay there till it was light, *i.e.* till sunrise.—Ver. 27. There her husband found her, when he opened the house-door to go his way (having given up all thought of receiving her back again from the barbarous crowd), “*lying before the house-door, and her hands upon the threshold*” (*i.e.* with outstretched arms), and giving no answer to his word, having died, that is to say, in consequence of the ill-treatment of the night. He then took the corpse upon his ass to carry it to his place, *i.e.* to his home.—Ver. 29. As soon as he arrived there, he cut up the body, according to its bones (as they cut slaughtered animals in pieces: see at Lev. i. 6), into twelve pieces, and sent



them (the corpse in its pieces) into the whole of the territory of Israel, i.e. to all the twelve tribes, in the hope that every one who saw it would say: No such thing has happened or been seen since the coming up of Israel out of Egypt until this day. Give ye heed to it (שִׁימוּ לִבְכִּי); make up your minds and say on, i.e. decide how this unparalleled wickedness is to be punished. Sending the dissected pieces of the corpse to the tribes was a symbolical act, by which the crime committed upon the murdered woman was placed before the eyes of the whole nation, to summon it to punish the crime, and was naturally associated with a verbal explanation of the matter by the bearer of the pieces. See the analogous proceeding on the part of Saul (1 Sam. xi. 7), and the Scythian custom related by *Lucian* in *Toxaris*, c. 48, that whoever was unable to procure satisfaction for an injury that he had received, cut an ox in pieces and sent it round, whereupon all who were willing to help him to obtain redress took a piece, and swore that they would stand by him to the utmost of their strength. The perfects *וַיֵּאמְרוּ* — *וַיִּהְיֶה* (ver. 30) are not used for the imperfects *c. vav consec.* *וַיֵּאמְרוּ* — *וַיִּהְיֶה*, as *Hitzig* supposes, but as simple perfects (*perfecta conseq.*), expressing the result which the Levite expected from his conduct; and we have simply to supply *וַיֵּאמְרוּ* before *וַיִּהְיֶה*, which is often omitted in lively narrative or animated conversation (compare, for example, Ex. viii. 5 with Judg. vii. 2). The perfects are used by the historian instead of imperfects with a simple *vav*, which are commonly employed in clauses indicating intention, "because what he foresaw would certainly take place, floated before his mind as a thing already done" (*Rosenmüller*). The moral indignation, which the Levite expected on the part of all the tribes at such a crime as this, and their resolution to avenge it, are thereby exhibited not merely as an uncertain conjecture, but a fact that was sure to occur, and concerning which, as chap. xx. clearly shows, he had not deceived himself.

Chap. xx. WAR WITH BENJAMIN ON THE PART OF ALL THE OTHER TRIBES.—The expectation of the Levite was fulfilled. The congregation of Israel assembled at Mizpeh to pass sentence upon Gibeah, and formed the resolution that they would not rest till the crime was punished as it deserved (vers. 1–10). But when the Benjaminites refused to deliver up the offenders in Gibeah, and prepared to offer resistance, the other tribes began to make war upon Gibeah and Benjamin (vers. 11–19), but were twice defeated

by the Benjaminites with very great loss (vers. 20-28). At length, however, they succeeded by an act of stratagem in taking Gibeah and burning it to the ground, and completely routing the Benjaminites, and also in putting to death all the men and cattle that they found in the other towns of this tribe, and laying the towns in ashes, whereby the whole of the tribe of Benjamin was annihilated, with the exception of a very small remnant (vers. 29-48).

Vers. 1-11. *Decree of the Congregation concerning Gibeah.*—

Vers. 1, 2. All the Israelites went out (rose up from their dwelling-places) to assemble together as a congregation like one man; all the tribes from Dan, the northern boundary of the land (*i.e.* Dan-laish, chap. xviii. 29), to Beersheba, the most southerly town of Canaan (see at Gen. xxi. 31), and the land of Gilead, *i.e.* the inhabitants of the land to the east of the Jordan, “to *Jehovah at Mizpeh*” in Benjamin, *i.e.* the present *Nebi-samwil*, in the neighbourhood of Kirjath-jearim, on the western border of the tribe of Benjamin (see at Josh. xviii. 26). It by no means follows with certainty from the expression “to *Jehovah*,” that there was a sanctuary at Mizpeh, or that the ark of the covenant was taken thither, but simply that the meeting took place in the sight of Jehovah, or that the congregation assembled together to hold a judicial court, which they held in the name of Jehovah, analogous to the expression *el-Elohim* in Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 7. It was not essential to a judicial proceeding that the ark should be present. At this assembly the *pinnoth* (the corner-pillars) of the whole nation presented themselves, *i.e.* the heads and fathers as the supports of the congregation or of the state organism (*vid.* 1 Sam. xiv. 38, Isa. xix. 13), even of all the tribes of Israel, four hundred thousand men on foot, drawing the sword, *i.e.* armed foot soldiers ready for battle.—Ver. 3. “*The Benjaminites heard that the children of Israel* (the rest of the Israelites, the eleven tribes) *had come up to Mizpeh*,” but they themselves were not found there. This follows from the fact that nothing is said about the Benjaminites coming, and still more clearly from ver. 13, where it is stated that the assembled tribes sent men to the Benjaminites, after holding their deliberations and forming their resolutions, to call them to account for the crime that had been committed in the midst of them. Consequently the question with which the whole affair was opened, “*Say, how did this wicked deed take place?*” is not to be regarded as addressed to the two parties, the inhabitants of Gibeah or the Benjaminites and the Levite (*Bertheau*), but as a summons to all who were assembled to relate

what any one knew respecting the occurrence.—Vers. 4–7. Then the Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, described the whole affair. בְּעַל הַנִּבְכָּה, the owners or citizens of Gibeah (see at chap. ix. 2). “*Me they intended to kill:*” the Levite draws this conclusion from what had happened to his wife; the men of Gibeah had not expressed any such intention in chap. xix. 22. “*All the country (lit. field) of the inheritance of Israel,*” i.e. all the land of the Israelites. זִמָּה is applied to the vice of lewdness, as in Lev. xviii. 17, which was to be punished with death. הָבִי לָכֶם וְ, “*give yourselves (לָכֶם is dat. comm.) word and counsel here,*” i.e. make up your minds and pass sentence (vid. 2 Sam. xvi. 20). הֵלֶם, here, where you are all assembled together.—Ver. 8. Then all the people rose up as one man, saying, “*We will not any of us go into his tent, neither will we any of us return to his house,*” sc. till this crime is punished. The sentence follows in ver. 9: “*This is the thing that we will do,*” i.e. this is the way in which we will treat Gibeah: “*against it by lot*” (sc. we will act). The Syriac gives the sense correctly—We will cast lots upon it; but the LXX. quite erroneously supply ἀναβησόμεθα (we will go up); and in accordance with this, many expositors connect the words with ver. 10 in the following sense: “*We will choose one man out of every ten by lot, to supply the army with the necessary provision during the expedition.*” This is quite a mistake, because in this way a subordinate point, which only comes into consideration in connection with the execution of the sentence, would be made the chief point, and the sentence itself would not be given at all. The words “*against it by lot*” contain the resolution that was formed concerning the sinful town, and have all the enigmatical brevity of judicial sentences, and are to be explained from the course laid down in the Mosaic law with regard to the Canaanites, who were to be exterminated, and their land divided by lot among the Israelites. Consequently the meaning is simply this: “*Let us proceed with the lot against Gibeah,*” i.e. let us deal with it as with the towns of the Canaanites, conquer it, lay it in ashes, and distribute its territory by lot. In ver. 10 a subordinate circumstance is mentioned, which was necessary to enable them to carry out the resolution that had been made. As the assembled congregation had determined to keep together for the purpose of carrying on war (ver. 8), it was absolutely necessary that resources should be provided for those who were actively engaged in the war. For this purpose they chose one man in every ten “*to fetch provision for the people,*” לְמַעַן לִבְרֹאִם, “*that*

they might do on their coming to Gibeah of Benjamin according to all the folly which had been done in Israel," i.e. might punish the wickedness in Gibeah as it deserved.—Ver. 11. Thus the men of Israel assembled together against Gibeah, united as one man. חֲבֵרִים, *lit.* as comrades, simply serves to strengthen the expression "as one man." With this remark, which indicates briefly the carrying out of the resolution that was adopted, the account of the meeting of the congregation is brought to a close; but the actual progress of the affair is really anticipated, inasmuch as what is related in vers. 12-21 preceded the expedition in order of time.

Vers. 12-19. Before the tribes of Israel entered upon the war, they sent men to all the tribes of Benjamin, who were to demand that the culprits in Gibeah should be given up to be punished, that the evil might thus be exterminated from Israel, according to the law in Deut. xxii. 22 as compared with chap. xiii. 6 and xvii. 12. "The tribes of Benjamin" are the same as "the families of Benjamin:" the historian pictured to himself the different divisions of the tribe of Benjamin as warlike powers about to carry on a war with the other tribes of Israel. The word *shebet* (tribe) is used in a different way in Num. iv. 18. But the Benjaminites would not hearken to the voice of their brethren, the other tribes of Israel. The *Keri* (sons of Benjamin) is a needless alteration, since *Benjamin* may be construed with the plural as a collective term. By refusing this just demand on the part of the other tribes, the Benjaminites took the side of the culprits in Gibeah, and compelled the congregation to make war upon the whole tribe.—Vers. 14 sqq. Both sides now made their preparations. The Benjaminites assembled together at Gibeah out of their different towns, and "were mustered 26,000 men drawing the sword, beside the inhabitants of Gibeah they were mustered, 700 picked men" (הַתִּפְקָדִים, with the reduplication dropped, like the *Hohtpael* in Num. i. 47). "Out of all this people there were 700 picked men, lamed in the right hand, all these (were) slinging with a stone (hitting) at a hair's breadth without fail." These statements are not quite clear. Since, according to the distinct words of ver. 16, the 700 slingers with their left hands were "out of the whole people," i.e. out of the whole number of fighting men mentioned in ver. 16, they cannot be the same as the 700 chosen men referred to in ver. 15, notwithstanding the similarity in the numbers and the expression "chosen men." The obscurity arises chiefly from the word הַתִּפְקָדִים in ver. 15, which is separated by the Masoretic accents from שָׁבַע מ', and connected

with the previous words: "*Beside the inhabitants of Gibeah they (the men of the towns of Benjamin) were mustered.*" On the other hand, the earlier translators took the clause as a relative one: "*Beside the inhabitants of Gibeah, who were mustered 700 men.*" And this seems absolutely necessary, because otherwise the following words, "700 picked men," would stand without any connection; whilst we should certainly expect at least to find the *cop. var.*, if these 700 men were not inhabitants of Gibeah. But even if וְהַמִּקְרָא should be taken as a simple repetition of וְהַמִּקְרָא, according to the analogy of Deut. iii. 5 and 1 Kings v. 30, the statement which follows could not be understood in any other way than as referring to the number of the fighting men of Gibeah. There is something striking too in the fact that only Benjaminites "out of the cities" are mentioned, and that emphasis is laid upon this by the repetition of the expression "out of the cities" (vers. 14, 15). Some have inferred from this, that the Benjaminites as the rulers had settled in the towns, whilst the Canaanites who had been subdued settled as dependants in the villages (*Bertheau*); or that the Benjaminites had formed military brotherhoods, the members of which lived unmarried in the towns, and that this may possibly account for the abominable crime to which the inhabitants of Gibeah were addicted, and in relation to which the whole tribe took their part (*O. v. Gerlach*). But such inferences as these are extremely uncertain, as the cities may be mentioned *a potiori* for all the places inhabited by this tribe. There is another difficulty in the numbers. According to vers. 14, 15, the total number of the fighting men of Benjamin amounted to 26,000 and 700, without reckoning Gibeah. But, according to the account of the battle, 25,100 were slain (ver. 35), viz. 18,000 in the principal engagement, 5000 as a gleanings, and 2000 in the pursuit, i.e. 25,000 men in all (vers. 44-46), and only 600 were left, who fled into the desert to the rock Rimmon (ver. 47). According to these accounts, the whole tribe would have contained only $25,100 + 600 = 25,700$ fighting men, or $25,000 + 600 = 25,600$. Accordingly, in ver. 15, the LXX. (*Cod. Al.* etc.) and *Vulgate* give only 25,000 men; whilst the rest of the ancient versions have 26,000, in agreement with the Masoretic text. *Josephus* (*Ant.* v. 2, 10) also gives the number of fighting men in Benjamin as 25,600, of whom 600 were splendid slingers; but he has merely taken the numbers from vers. 44-47. Now, although mistakes do frequently occur in the numbers given, it is a most improbable supposition that we have a mistake of this kind (26,000

for 25,000) in the instance before us, since even the latter number would not agree with vers. 44 sqq.; and the assumption, that in vers. 35 and 44 sqq. we have an account of *all* the Benjaminites who fell, finds no support whatever in the history itself. In the verses referred to we have simply a statement of the number of Benjaminites who fell in the defeat which they sustained on the third day, whereas the victories which they gained on the first and second days could hardly have been obtained without some loss on their part; on the contrary, we may confidently assume that they would not lose less than a thousand men, though these are not mentioned in the brief account before us. The other difference between ver. 35 and vers. 44-46, viz. that 25,100 are given in the one and 25,000 in the other, may be explained on the simple assumption that we have only the full thousands mentioned in the latter, whilst the exact number is given in the former. "*Left-handed:*" see at chap. iii. 15.—Vers. 17, 18. The forces of the other tribes amounted when numbered to 400,000 men. These numbers (26,000 Benjaminites and 400,000 Israelites) will not appear too great if we consider that the whole of the congregation of Israel took part in the war, with the simple exception of Jabesh in Gilead (chap. xxi. 8), and that in the time of Moses the twelve tribes numbered more than 600,000 men of twenty years old and upwards (Num. xxvi.), so that not much more than two-thirds of the whole of the fighting men went out to the war.—Ver. 18. Before opening the campaign the Israelites went to Bethel, to inquire of God which tribe should commence the war, i.e. should fight at the head of the other tribes (on the fact itself, see chap. i. 1); and God appointed the tribe of Judah, as in chap. i. 2. They went to Bethel,¹ not to Shiloh, where the tabernacle was standing, because that place was too far from the seat of war. The ark of the covenant was therefore brought to Bethel, and Phinehas the high priest inquired of the Lord before it through the Urim and Thummim (vers. 27, 28). Bethel was on the northern boundary of the tribe of Benjamin, and was consecrated to this purpose before any other place by the revelations of God which had been made to the patriarch Jacob there (Gen. xxviii. and xxxv.).—Ver. 19. Thus equipped, the Israelites proceeded against Gibeah.

Vers. 20-28. As soon as the Israelites had posted themselves at Gibeah in battle array (עָרְךָ מִלְחָמָה), to put in a row, or arrange the war or conflict, i.e. to put themselves in battle array, 1 Sam. iv. 2,

¹ Rendered "the house of God" in the English version.—Tr.

xvii 2, etc.), the Benjaminites came out and destroyed 22,000 men of Israel upon that day. וַיִּשְׁחֶתוּ אֶרֶץ, to destroy to the earth, *i.e.* to lay dead upon the ground.—Ver. 22. Notwithstanding this terrible overthrow, the people strengthened themselves, and prepared again for battle, “at the same place” where they had made ready on the first day, “seeking out of pure vainglory to wipe out the stains and the disgrace which their previous defeat had brought upon them” (Berleb. Bible).—Ver. 23. But before renewing the conflict they went up to Bethel, wept there before Jehovah, *i.e.* before the sanctuary of the ark, where Jehovah was present in the midst of His people, enthroned between the cherubim, until the evening, and then inquired of the Lord (again through the high priest), “*Shall I again draw near to war with the children of Benjamin my brother*” (*i.e.* renew the war with him)? The answer ran thus: “*Advance against him.*”—Vers. 24, 25. But on the second day also the Benjaminites brought 18,000 of them to the ground. “The second day” is not the day following the first engagement, as if the battles had been fought upon two successive days, but the second day of actual fighting, which took place some days after the first, for the inquiry was made at Bethel as to the will of God between the two engagements.—Vers. 26 sqq. After this second terrible overthrow, “*the children of Israel*” (*i.e.* those who were engaged in the war), and “*all the people,*” *i.e.* the rest of the people, those members of the congregation who were not capable of bearing arms, old men and women, came to Bethel, to complain to the Lord of their misfortune, and secure His favour by fasting and sacrifices. The congregation now discovered, from this repeated defeat, that the Lord had withdrawn His grace, and was punishing them. Their sin, however, did not consist in the fact that they had begun the war itself,—for the law in Deut. xxii. 22, to which they themselves had referred in ver. 13, really required this,—but rather in the state of mind with which they had entered upon the war, their strong self-consciousness, and great confidence in their own might and power. They had indeed inquired of God (*Elohim*) who should open the conflict; but they had neglected to humble themselves before Jehovah the covenant God, in the consciousness not only of their own weakness and sinfulness, but also of grief at the moral corruption of their brother-tribe. It is certainly not without significance, that in ver. 18 it is stated that “*they asked God*” (וַיִּשְׁאֲלוּ אֱלֹהִים), *i.e.* they simply desired a supreme or divine decision as to the question who should lead the van in the war; whereas, after

the first defeat, they wept before *Jehovah*, and inquired of *Jehovah* (ver. 23), the covenant God, for whose law and right they were about to contend. But even then there were still wanting the humility and penitence, without which the congregation of the Lord could not successfully carry on the conflict against the ungodly. The remark in ver. 22, "*The people felt (showed) themselves strong, and added (continued) to set in array the war,*" is thoroughly expressive of the feeling of the congregation. They resolved upon the continuance of the war, in the full consciousness of their superior power and numerical strength; and it was not till afterwards that they complained to the Lord of their misfortune, and inquired whether they should renew the conflict. The question was followed by a corresponding answer on the part of God, "*Go up against him,*" which certainly sanctioned the continuance of the war, but gave no promise as to the result, because the people, thinking that they might be certain of success, had not inquired about that at all. It was not till after the second severe defeat, when 22,000 and 18,000, the tenth part of the whole army, had fallen, that they humbled themselves before the Lord. They not only wept because of the calamity which had befallen them, but fasted the same day before the Lord,—the fasting being the manifest expression of the bending of the heart before God,—and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. The *shelamim* here are not thank-offerings, but supplicatory offerings, presented to implore the gracious assistance of God, and to commemorate the enjoyment of fellowship with the Lord, through the sacrificial meal associated with this sacrifice (as in chap. xxi. 4, 1 Sam. xiii. 9, 2 Sam. xxiv. 25).—Vers. 27, 28. Having made these preparations, they inquired of the Lord whether they should continue the war, and received this reply: "*Go up (against Benjamin); for to-morrow I will give it into thy hand*" (פָּרַח, the hand of the congregation carrying on the war). To this the supplementary remark is appended, that the ark of the covenant was at Bethel in those days, and the high priest served before it. The expression "in those days" implies that the ark of the covenant was only temporarily at Bethel, and therefore had been brought thither from the tabernacle at Shiloh during this war.

Vers. 29-48. *The Victory on the Third Day's Engagement.*—Ver. 29. The account of this commences with the most important point, so far as their success was concerned: Israel set liers in wait (troops in ambush) round about Gibeah.—Ver. 30. They then advanced

as on the former occasions.—Vers. 31, 32. The Benjaminites came out again to meet the people (of Israel), and were drawn away from the town (the perfect *הִנָּחִי* without *ו* is subordinate to the preceding verb, and defines more precisely the advance itself, whilst the mode in which they were drawn away from the town is not described more fully till vers. 32, 33), and began to smite the beaten of the people (who pretended to fly) as formerly upon the roads (where two roads part), of which one led up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah, into the field (Gibeah is the town at which the battle took place, that is to say, somewhere in the neighbourhood, so that a road might easily run from the field of battle towards the town into the field), “about (*sc.* putting to death) *thirty men of Israel.*” This statement introduces the more precise definition of the *חַלְלִים*.—Ver. 32. Then the Benjaminites supposed that Israel was beaten by them as before; but the Israelites said: We will flee, and draw it (the tribe of Benjamin) away from the town to the roads (the high-roads mentioned in ver. 31). On the *Dagesh dirimens* in *הִנָּחִי*, see *Ewald*, § 92, c.—Ver. 33. Carrying out this plan, “all the men of Israel rose up from their place,” *i.e.* left the place they had occupied, drew back, “and set themselves in battle array” in *Baal-thamar*, *i.e.* palm-place, which still existed, according to the *Onom.*, in the time of *Eusebius*, as a small place in the neighbourhood of Gibeah, bearing the name of *Bethamar*. While this was going on, the ambush of Israel broke forth from its position “from the plains of Geba.” The *אֶר. לָעַי. מַעְרָה*, from *מַעַר* to strip, denotes a naked region destitute of wood. *גִּבְעָה* is the masculine form for *גִּבְעָה*, and *מַעְרַת-גִּבְעָה* a more precise definition of *מַעְרָה*. This rendering, which is the one given in the Targum, certainly appears the simplest explanation of a word that has been rendered in very different ways, and which the LXX. left untranslated as a proper name, *Μαπαργαβέ*. The objection raised to this, *viz.* that a naked level country was not a place for an ambush, has no force, as there is no necessity to understand the words as signifying that the treeless country formed the actual hiding-place of the ambush; but the simple meaning is, that when the men broke from their hiding-place, they came from the treeless land towards the town. The rendering given by *Rashi*, *Trem.*, and others, “on account of the stripping of Gibeah,” is much less suitable, since, apart from the difficulty of taking *ב* in different senses so close together, we should at least expect to find *הָעִיר* (the city) instead of *גִּבְעָה*.—Ver. 34. Through the advance of the ambush there came 10,000 picked men of all

Israel "from opposite to Gibeah" (who now attacked in the rear the Benjaminites who were pursuing the flying army of Israel); "*and the contest became severe, since they (the Benjaminites) did not know that the calamity was coming upon them.*"—Ver. 35. And Jehovah smote Benjamin before Israel (according to His promise in ver. 28), so that the Israelites destroyed of Benjamin on that day twenty and five thousand and an hundred men (*i.e.* twenty-five thousand and upwards).

This was the result of the battle, which the historian gives at once, before entering more minutely into the actual account of the battle itself. He does this in vers. 36-46 in a series of explanations, of which one is attached to the other, for the most part in the form of circumstantial clauses, so that it is not till ver. 46 that he again comes to the result already announced in ver. 35.¹—Ver. 36. The Benjaminites, for instance, saw (this is the proper rendering of *וַיֵּרְאוּ* with *vav consec.*, which merely indicates the order of thought, not that of time) that they were beaten, and the men of Israel vacated the field before Benjamin (*וַיָּתְּנוּ מָקוֹם*, to give place by falling back and flying), because they relied upon the ambush which they had placed against Gibeah. The Benjaminites did not perceive this till the ambush fell upon their rear. But the ambush itself, as is added in ver. 37 by way of further explanation, hastened and fell (fell as quickly as possible) into Gibeah, and went thither and smote the whole town with the edge of the sword. To this there is added the further explanation in ver. 38: "*And the arrangement of the Israelites with the ambush was this: multiply, to cause smoke-rising to ascend (i.e. cause a great cloud of smoke to ascend) out of the city.*" The only objection that can be raised to this view of *וַיִּרְבּוּ*, as the imperative *Hiphil* of *רָבָה*, is the suffix *ם* attached to *וַיִּרְבּוּ*, since this is unsuitable to a direct address. This suffix can only be explained by supposing that there is an admixture of two constructions, the direct appeal, and the indirect explanation, that they were to cause to ascend. If this be not admitted, however, we can only follow *Studer*, and erase the suffix as an error of the pen occasioned by the following word *וַיִּשְׁלַח*; for the other course sug-

¹ The opinions expressed by *De Wette*, etc., that ver. 35 is spurious, and by *Bertheau*, that vers. 36-46 contain a different account of the battle, simply prove that they have overlooked this peculiarity in the Hebrew mode of writing history, viz. that the general result of any occurrence is given as early as possible, and then the details follow afterwards; whilst these critics have not succeeded in adducing even apparent differences in support of their opinions.

gested by *Bertheau*, namely that הָרֵב should be struck out as a gloss, is precluded by the circumstance that there is no possible way of explaining the interpolation of so apparently unsuitable a word into the text. It certainly stood in the text used by the LXX., though they have most foolishly confounded הָרֵב with חָרֵב, and rendered it μάχαρπα.—Ver. 39. “*And the men of Israel turned in the battle:*” that is to say, as is afterwards more fully explained in vers. 39, 40, in the form of a long new circumstantial clause, whilst Benjamin had begun to smite, etc. (repeated from vers. 31, 32), and the cloud (מִשְׁמַחַת הָעֵשָׁן = מִשְׁמַחַת הָעֵשָׁן, ver. 38) had begun to ascend out of the city as a pillar of smoke, and Benjamin turned back, and behold the whole city ascended towards heaven (in smoke), Israel turned (fighting) and Benjamin was terrified, for it saw that misfortune had come upon it (see ver. 34). In ver. 41a, the thread of the narrative, which was interrupted by the long circumstantial clause, is again resumed by the repetition of “*and the men of Israel turned.*”—Ver. 42. The Benjaminites “*now turned (flying) before the Israelites to the way of the desert,*” i.e. no doubt the desert which rises from Jericho to the mountains of Bethel (Josh. xvi. 1). They fled therefore towards the north-east; but the battle had overtaken (reached or seized) them, and those out of the towns (had perished). The difficult expression וְאִשְׁרֵי מְהַעֲרִים, of which very different, and for the most part arbitrary, explanations have been given, can only be in apposition to the suffix attached to the verb: “Benjamin, and in fact those who had come to the help of Gibeah out of the towns of Benjamin” (see vers. 14, 15), i.e. all the Benjaminites. The following words, מִשְׁחִיתִים וְנִי, are a circumstantial clause explanatory of the previous clause, הִמְלִיכָהוּ הָרֵב: “*since they (the men of Israel) destroyed him (Benjamin) in the midst of it.*” The singular suffix בְּחוּבֵי does not refer to Benjamin, as this would yield no sense at all, but to the preceding words, “the way of the desert” (see ver. 45).—In ver. 43 the account is continued by three perfects attached to one another without a copula: “*they enclosed (hedged round) Benjamin, pursued him; at the place of rest they trod him down to before Gibeah eastwards.*” מְנוּחָה is not used adverbially in the sense of “quietly,” which would not give any fitting meaning, but is an *accus. loci*, and signifies place of rest, as in Num. x. 33. The notice “to before Gibeah” refers to all three verbs.—Ver. 44. In this battle there fell of Benjamin 18,000 men, all brave men. The אִתָּה before בְּלִיאָה is not a preposition, “with” (as the LXX., *Cod. Al.*, and *Bertheau* render it), but a sign of the accusative. It serves to show that the

thought which follows is governed by the principal clause, "*so far as all these were concerned, they were brave men.*"—Ver. 45. The remainder fled to the desert, to the rock (of the place) *Rimmon*, which is described in the *Onom.* (s. v. *Remmon*) as a *vicus* fifteen Roman miles to the north of Jerusalem. It has been preserved in the village of *Rummôn*, which stands upon and around the summit of a conical limestone mountain, and is visible in all directions (*Rob. Pal.* ii. p. 113). "*And they (the Israelites) smote as a gleaning upon the roads 5000 men.*" עָלְיוּ, to have a gleaning of the battle, i.e. to smite or slay, as it were, as a gleaning of the principal battle (*vid. Jer.* vi. 9). *Mesilloth* are the high-roads mentioned in ver. 31. "*And pursued them to Gideom, and smote of them 2000 more.*" The situation of Gideom, which is only met with here, is not precisely known; hut it must have been somewhere between Giheah and Rimmon, as the rock Rimmon, according to ver. 47, afforded a safe place of refuge to the fugitives.—Ver. 46. On the total number of the slain, see the remarks on ver. 15.—In ver. 47 the statement already made in ver. 45 with regard to the flight is resumed; and it is still further related, that 500 men reached the rock Rimmon, and dwelt there four months, i.e. till the occurrence described in chap. xxi. 13 sqq.—Ver. 48. The Israelites turned (from any further pursuit of the fugitive warriors of Benjamin) to the children of Benjamin, i.e. to such of the people of the tribe of Benjamin as were unarmed and defenceless, and smote them with the edge of the sword, "*from the town (or towns) onwards, men to cattle (i.e. men, women, children, and cattle), to every one who was found;*" i.e. they cut down men and cattle without quarter, from the towns onwards even to those who were found elsewhere. עַרְבֵי-הַנֶּמֶץ (to all that was found) corresponds to מֵעִיר (from the city), and מֵהֶם (men to beast) serves as a more precise definition of the עִיר (city): everything that was in the city, man and beast. מֵהֶם is pointed wrongly for מֵהֶם, *men*, the reading in several mss. and most of the early editions (see *Deut.* ii. 34, iii. 6). They also set fire to all the towns that were met with, i.e. all without exception. Thus they did the same to the Benjaminites as to the Canaanites who were put under the ban, carrying out the ban with the strictest severity.

PRESERVATION OF THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN—THE REMNANT
PROVIDED WITH WIVES.—CHAP. XXI.

Through the extraordinary severity with which the tribes of Israel had carried on the war against Benjamin, this tribe had been reduced to 600 men, and thus brought very near to extermination. Such a conclusion to the sanguinary conflict went to the heart of the congregation. For although, when forming the resolution to punish the unparalleled wickedness of the inhabitants of Gibeah with all the severity of the law, they had been urged on by nothing else than the sacred duty that was binding upon them to root out the evil from their midst, and although the war against the whole tribe of Benjamin was justified by the fact that they had taken the side of the culprits, and had even received the approval of the Lord; there is no doubt that in the performance of this resolution, and the war that was actually carried on, feelings of personal revenge had disturbed the righteous cause in consequence of the defeat which they had twice sustained at the hands of the Benjaminites, and had carried away the warriors into a war of extermination which was neither commanded by the law nor justified by the circumstances, and had brought about the destruction of a whole tribe from the twelve tribes of the covenant nation with the exception of a small vanishing remnant. When the rash deed was done, the congregation began most bitterly to repent. And with repentance there was awakened the feeling of brotherly love, and also a sense of duty to provide for the continuance of the tribe, which had been brought so near to destruction, by finding wives for those who remained, in order that the small remnant might grow into a vigorous tribe again.

Vers. 1-14. The proposal to find wives for the six hundred Benjaminites who remained was exposed to this difficulty, that the congregation had sworn at Mizpeh (as is supplemented in ver. 1 to the account in chap. xx. 1-9) that no one should give his daughter to a Benjaminite as a wife.—Vers. 2, 3. After the termination of the war, the people, *i.e.* the people who had assembled together for the war (see ver. 9), went again to Bethel (see at chap. xx. 18, 26), to weep there for a day before God at the serious loss which the war had brought upon the congregation. Then they uttered this lamentation: "*Why, O Lord God of Israel, is this come to pass in Israel, that a tribe is missing to-day from Israel?*" This lamentation involved the wish that God might show them the way to avert the

threatened destruction of the missing tribe, and build up the six hundred who remained. To give a practical expression to this wish, they built an altar the next morning, and offered burnt-offerings and supplicatory offerings upon it (see at chap. xx. 26), knowing as they did that their proposal would not succeed without reconciliation to the Lord, and a return to the fellowship of His grace. There is something apparently strange in the erection of an altar at Bethel, since sacrifices had already been offered there during the war itself (chap. xx. 26), and this could not have taken place without an altar. Why it was erected again, or another one built, is a question which cannot be answered with any certainty. It is possible, however, that the first was not large enough for the number of sacrifices that had to be offered now.—Ver. 5. The congregation then resolved upon a plan, through the execution of which a number of virgins were secured for the Benjaminites. They determined that they would carry out the great oath, which had been uttered when the national assembly was called against such as did not appear, upon that one of the tribes of Israel which had not come to the meeting of the congregation at Mizpeh. The deliberations upon this point were opened (ver. 5) with the question, *“Who is he who did not come up to the meeting of all the tribes of Israel, to Jehovah?”* In explanation of this question, it is observed at ver. 5, *“For the great oath was uttered upon him that came not up to Jehovah to Mizpeh: he shall be put to death.”* We learn from this supplementary remark, that when important meetings of the congregation were called, all the members were bound by an oath to appear. The meeting at Mizpeh is the one mentioned in chap. xx. 1 sqq. The “great oath” consisted in the threat of death in the case of any that were disobedient. To this explanation of the question in ver. 5a, the further explanation is added in vers. 6, 7, that the Israelites felt compassion for Benjamin, and wished to avert its entire destruction by procuring wives for such as remained. The word וַיִּחַן in ver. 6 is attached to the explanatory clause in ver. 5b, and is to be rendered as a pluperfect: *“And the children of Israel had shown themselves compassionate towards their brother Benjamin, and said, A tribe is cut off from Israel to-day; what shall we do to them, to those that remain with regard to wives, as we have sworn?”* etc. (compare ver. 1). The two thoughts—(1) the oath that those who had not come to Mizpeh should be punished with death (ver. 5b), and (2) anxiety for the preservation of this tribe which sprang from compassion towards Benjamin, and was shown in their endeavour to

provide such as remained with wives, without violating the oath that none of them would give them their own daughters as wives—formed the two factors which determined the course to be adopted by the congregation. After the statement of these two circumstances, the question of ver. 5a, “*Who is the one (only one) of the tribes of Israel which,*” etc., is resumed and answered: “*Behold, there came no one into the camp from Jabesh in Gilead, into the assembly.*” שָׁבִי is used in vers. 8, 5, in a more general sense, as denoting not merely the tribes as such, but the several subdivisions of the tribes.—Ver. 9. In order, however, to confirm the correctness of this answer, which might possibly have been founded upon a superficial and erroneous observation, the whole of the (assembled) people were mustered, and not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh was found there (in the national assembly at Bethel). The situation of *Jabesh* in Gilead has not yet been ascertained. This town was closely besieged by the Ammonite *Nahash*, and was relieved by Saul (1 Sam. xi. 1 sqq.), on which account the inhabitants afterwards showed themselves grateful to Saul (1 Sam. xxxi. 8 sqq.). *Josephus* calls *Jabesh* the metropolis of Gilead (Ant. vi. 5, 1). According to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Jabis*), it was six Roman miles from Pella, upon the top of a mountain towards Gerasa. *Robinson* (Bibl. Res. p. 320) supposes it to be the ruins of *ed Deir* in the Wady *Jabes*.—Vers. 10 sqq. To punish this unlawful conduct, the congregation sent 12,000 brave fighting men against Jabesh, with orders to smite the inhabitants of the town with the edge of the sword, together with their wives and children, but also with the more precise instructions (ver. 11), “to ban all the men, and women who had known the lying with man” (i.e. to slay them as exposed to death, which implied, on the other hand, that virgins who had not lain with any man should be spared). The fighting men found 400 such virgins in Jabesh, and brought them to the camp at Shiloh in the land of Canaan. זָנוֹת (ver. 12) refers to the virgins, the masculine being used as the more common genus in the place of the feminine. *Shiloh*, with the additional clause “in the land of Canaan,” which was occasioned by the antithesis *Jabesh in Gilead*, as in Josh. xxi. 2, xxii. 9, was the usual meeting-place of the congregation, on account of its being the seat of the tabernacle. The representatives of the congregation had moved thither, after the deliberations concerning Jabesh, which were still connected with the war against Benjamin, were concluded.—Ver. 13. The congregation then sent to call the Benjaminites, who had taken refuge

upon the rock Rimmon, and gave them as wives, when they returned (*sc.* into their own possessions), the 400 virgins of Jabesh who had been preserved alive. "*But so they sufficed them not*" (12, *so, i.e.,* in their existing number, 400: *Bertheau*). In this remark there is an allusion to what follows.

Vers. 15-25. Of the six hundred Benjaminites who had escaped, there still remained two hundred to be provided with wives. To these the congregation gave permission to take wives by force at a festival at Shiloh. The account of this is once more introduced, with a description of the anxiety felt by the congregation for the continuance of the tribe of Benjamin. Vers. 15, 16, and 18 are only a repetition of vers. 6 and 7, with a slight change of expression. The "*breach (perez) in the tribes of Israel*" had arisen from the almost complete extermination of Benjamin. "*For out of Benjamin is (every) woman destroyed,*" viz. by the ruthless slaughter of the whole of the people of that tribe (chap. xx. 48). Consequently the Benjaminites who were still unmarried could not find any wives in their own tribe. The fact that four hundred of the Benjaminites who remained were already provided with wives is not noticed here, because it has been stated just before, and of course none of them could give up their own wives to others.—Ver. 17. Still Benjamin must be preserved as a tribe. The elders therefore said, "*Possession of the saved shall be for Benjamin,*" *i.e.* the tribe-land of Benjamin shall remain an independent possession for the Benjaminites who have escaped the massacre, so that a tribe may not be destroyed out of Israel. It was necessary, therefore, that they should take steps to help the remaining Benjaminites to wives. The other tribes could not give them their daughters, on account of the oath which has already been mentioned in vers. 1 and 7b and is repeated here (ver. 18). Consequently there was hardly any other course open, than to let the Benjaminites seize upon wives for themselves. And the elders lent them a helping hand by offering them this advice, that at the next yearly festival at Shiloh, at which the daughters of Shiloh carried on dances in the open air (outside the town), they should seize upon wives for themselves from among these daughters, and promising them that when the thing was accomplished they would adjust it peaceably (vers. 19-22). The "*feast of Jehovah,*" which the Israelites kept from year to year, was one of the three great annual festivals, probably one which lasted seven days, either the passover or the feast of tabernacles,—most likely the former, as the dances of the

daughters of Shiloh were apparently an imitation of the dances of the Israelitish women at the Red Sea under the superintendence of Miriam (Ex. xv. 20). The minute description of the situation of Shiloh (ver. 19), viz. "to the north of Bethel, on the east of the road which rises from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of *Lebonah*" (the present village of *Lubban*, on the north-west of Seilun: see *Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 89), serves to throw light upon the scene which follows, *i.e.* to show how the situation of Shiloh was peculiarly fitted for the carrying out of the advice given to the Benjaminites; since, as soon as they had issued from their hiding-places in the vineyards at Shiloh, and seized upon the dancing virgins, they could easily escape into their own land by the neighbouring high-road which led from Bethel to Shechem, without being arrested by the citizens of Shiloh.—Ver. 20. The *Kethibh* יִצְחָק in the singular may be explained on the ground that one of the elders spoke and gave the advice in the name of the others. רָחֵק in ver. 21 and Ps. x. 9, to seize hold of, or carry off as prey = רָחֵק.—Ver. 22. "*And when the fathers or brethren of the virgins carried off, come to us to chide with us, we (the elders) will say to them (in your name), Present them to us (פָּרְאֵם as in ver. 12); for we did not receive every one his wife through the war (with Jabesh); for ye have not given them to them; now would ye be guilty.*" The words "Present them to us," etc., are to be understood as spoken in the name of the Benjaminites, who were accused of the raid, to the relatives of the virgins who brought the complaint. This explains the use of the pronoun in the first person in וַנִּשְׁמָע and וַנִּשְׁמָעָה, which must not be altered therefore into the third person.¹ The two clauses commencing with וְ are co-ordinate, and contain two points serving to enforce the request, "Present them," etc. The first is pleaded in the name of the Benjaminites; the second is adduced, as a general ground on the part of the elders of the congregation, to pacify the fathers and brothers making the complaint, on account of the oath which the Israelites had taken, that none of them would give their daughters as wives to the Benjaminites. The meaning

¹ One circumstance which is decisive against this alteration of the text is, that the Seventy had the Masoretic text before them, and founded their translation upon it (ἰλεῖσθαι ἡμῖν αὐτάς, ὅτι οὐκ ἔλαβον ἀνὴρ γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ πολέμῳ). The different rendering of Jerome given in the *Vulgate*—*miseremini eorum! non enim rapuerunt eas jure bellantium atque victorum*—is nothing but an unfortunate and unsuccessful attempt to get rid of the difficulties connected with the readings in the text.

is the following: Ye may have your daughters with the Benjaminites who have taken them by force, for ye have not given them voluntarily, so as to have broken your oath by so doing. In the last clause *תָּעַתְּ* has an unusui meaning: "at the time" (or *now*), *i.e.* in that case, ye would have been guilty, viz. if ye had given them voluntarily.—Ver. 23. The Benjaminites adopted this advice. They took to themselves wives according to their number, *i.e.* two hundred (according to ver. 12, compared with chap. xx. 47), whom they caught from the dancing daughters of Shiloh, and returned with them into their inheritance, where they rebuilt the towns that had been reduced to ashes, and dwelt therein.

In vers. 24 and 25, the account of this event is brought to a close with a twofold remark: (1) that the children of Israel, *i.e.* the representatives of the congregation who were assembled at Shiloh, separated and returned every man into his inheritance to his tribe and family; (2) that at that time there was no king in Israel, and every man was accustomed to do what was right in his own eyes. Whether the fathers or brothers of the virgins who had been carried off brought any complaint before the congregation concerning the raid that had been committed, the writer does not state, simply because this was of no moment so far as the history was concerned, inasmuch as, according to ver. 22, the complaint made no difference in the facts themselves.¹ With the closing remark in ver. 25, however, with which the account returns to its commencement in chap. xix. 1, the prophetic historian sums up his judgment upon the history in the words, "At that time every man did what was right in his own eyes, because there was no king in Israel," in which the idea is implied, that under the government of a king, who administered right and justice in the kingdom, such things could not possibly have happened. This not only refers to the conduct of the Israelites towards Benjamin in the war, the severity of which was not to be justified (see p. 458), but also to their conduct towards the inhabitants of Jabesh, as described in chap. xxi. 5 sqq. The congregation had no doubt a perfect right, when all the people were summoned to deliberate upon important matters affecting

¹ "No doubt the fathers and brothers of the virgins demanded them both from the Benjaminites themselves, and also from the elders of Israel, or at any rate petitioned that the Benjaminites might be punished: but the elders replied as they had said that they should; and the persons concerned were satisfied with the answer, and so the affair was brought to a peaceable termination."—*Seb. Schmidt*.

the welfare of the whole nation, to utter the "great oath" against such as failed to appear, *i.e.* to threaten them with death and carry out this threat upon such as were obstinate; but such a punishment as this could only be justly inflicted upon persons who were really guilty, and had rebelled against the congregation as the supreme power, and could not be extended to women and children unless they had also committed a crime deserving of death. But even if there were peculiar circumstances in the case before us, which have been passed over by our author, who restricts himself simply to points bearing upon the main purpose of the history, but which rendered it necessary that the ban should be inflicted upon all the inhabitants of Jabesh, it was at any rate an arbitrary exemption to spare all the marriageable virgins, and one which could not be justified by the object contemplated, however laudable that object might be. This also applies to the oath taken by the people, that they would not give any of their daughters as wives to the Benjaminites, as well as to the advice given by the elders to the remaining two hundred, to carry off virgins from the festival at Shiloh. However just and laudable the moral indignation may have been, which was expressed in that oath by the nation generally at the scandalous crime of the Gibeites, a crime unparalleled in Israel, and at the favour shown to the culprits by the tribe of Benjamin, the oath itself was an act of rashness, in which there was not only an utter denial of brotherly love, but the bounds of justice were broken through. When the elders of the nation came to a better state of mind, they ought to have acknowledged their rashness openly, and freed themselves and the nation from an oath that had been taken in such sinful haste. "Wherefore they would have acted far more uprightly, if they had seriously confessed their fault and asked forgiveness of God, and given permission to the Benjaminites to marry freely. In this way there would have been no necessity to cut off the inhabitants of Jabesh from their midst by cruelty of another kind" (*Buddeus*). But if they felt themselves bound in their consciences to keep the oath inviolably, they ought to have commended the matter to the Lord in prayer, and left it to His decision; whereas, by the advice given to the Benjaminites, they had indeed kept the oath in the letter, but had treated it in deed and truth as having no validity whatever.

THE BOOK OF RUTH.¹

INTRODUCTION.

CONTENTS, CHARACTER, AND ORIGIN OF THE BOOK OF RUTH.



THE book of *Ruth* ('Ρούθ) introduces us to the family life of the ancestors of king David, and informs us, in a simple and attractive form of historical narrative, and one in harmony with the tender and affectionate contents, how *Ruth* the Moabitess, a daughter-in-law of the Bethlehemite Elimelech, of the family of Judah, who had emigrated with his wife and his two sons into the land of Moab on account of a famine, left father and mother, fatherland and kindred, after the death of her husband, and out of childlike affection to her Israelitish mother-in-law Naomi, whose husband had also died in the land of Moab, and went with her to Judah, to take refuge under the wings of the God of Israel (chap. i.); and how, when there, as she was going in her poverty to glean some ears of corn in the field of a wealthy man, she came apparently by accident to the field of Boaz, a near relation of Elimelech, and became acquainted with this honourable and benevolent man (chap. ii.); how she then sought marriage with him by the wish of her mother-in-law (chap. iii.), and was taken by him as a wife, according to the custom of Levirate marriage, in all the ordinary legal forms, and bare a son in this marriage, named Obed. This Obed was the grandfather of David (chap. iv. 1-17), with whose genealogy the book closes (chap. iv. 18-22).

¹ The book of *Ruth* does not indeed belong to the prophetical books of history so far as its historical character is concerned, and even in the Hebrew canon it is placed among the hagiographa; but as its contents directly follow upon those of the book of Judges, it seemed advisable to place the exposition immediately after that of Judges.

In this conclusion the meaning and tendency of the whole narrative is brought clearly to light. The genealogical proof of the descent of David from Perez through Boaz and the Moabitess Ruth (chap. iv. 18-22) forms not only the end, but the starting-point, of the history contained in the book. For even if we should not attach so much importance to this genealogy as to say with *Auberlen* that "the book of Ruth contains, as it were, the inner side, the spiritually moral background of the genealogies which play so significant a part even in the Israelitish antiquity;" so much is unquestionably true, that the book contains a historical picture from the family life of the ancestors of David, intended to show how the ancestors of this great king walked uprightly before God and man in piety and singleness of heart, and in modesty and purity of life. "Ruth, the Moabitish great-great-grandmother of David, longed for the God and people of Israel with all the deepest earnestness of her nature, and joined herself to them with all the power of love; and Boaz was an upright Israelite, without guile, full of holy reverence for every ordinance of God and man, and full of benevolent love and friendliness towards the poor heathen woman. From such ancestors was the man descended in whom all the nature of Israel was to find its royal concentration and fullest expression" (*Auberlen*). But there is also a Messianic trait in the fact that Ruth, a heathen woman, of a nation so hostile to the Israelites as that of Moab was, should have been thought worthy to be made the tribe-mother of the great and pious king David, on account of her faithful love to the people of Israel, and her entire confidence in Jehovah, the God of Israel. As Judah begat Perez from Tamar the Canaanitish woman (Gen. xxxviii.), and as Rahab was adopted into the congregation of Israel (Josh. vi. 25), and according to ancient tradition was married to Salmon (Matt. i. 5), so the Moabitess Ruth was taken by Boaz as his wife, and incorporated in the family of Judah, from which Christ was to spring according to the flesh (see Matt. i. 3, 5, where these three women are distinctly mentioned by name in the genealogy of Jesus).

The incidents described in the book fall within the times of the judges (chap. i. 1), and most probably in the time of Gideon (see at chap. i. 1); and the book itself forms both a supplement to the book of Judges and an introduction to the books of Samuel, which give no account of the ancestors of David. So far as its contents are concerned it has its proper place, in the Septuagint, the Vulgate, the Lutheran and other versions, between the book of Judges

and those of Samuel. In the Hebrew Codex, on the contrary, it is placed among the *hagiographa*, and in the Talmud (*baba bathr.* f. 14b) it is even placed at the head of them before the Psalms; whilst in the Hebrew MSS. it stands among the five *megilloth*: *Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther*. The latter position is connected with the liturgical use of the book in the synagogue, where it was read at the feast of weeks; whilst its place among the *hagiographa* is to be explained from the principle upon which the general arrangement of the Old Testament canon was founded,—namely, that the different books were divided into three classes according to the relation in which their authors stood to God and to the theocracy, and the books themselves in their contents and spirit to the divine revelation (see *Keil, Lehrbuch der Einleitung*, § 155). The latter is therefore to be regarded as the original classification, and not the one in the Septuagint rendering, where the original arrangement has unquestionably been altered in the case of this and other books, just because this principle has been overlooked.¹

¹ Many critics of the present day, indeed, appeal to the testimony of Josephus and the earlier fathers as favouring the opposite view, viz. that the book of Ruth was originally placed at the close of the book of Judges, to which it formed an appendix. *Josephus* (c. Ap. i. 8) reckons, as is well known, only twenty-two books of the Old Testament; and the only way by which this number can be obtained is by joining together the books of Judges and Ruth, so as to form one book. Again, *Melito of Sardes*, who lived in the second century, and took a journey into Palestine for the purpose of obtaining correct information concerning the sacred writings of the Jews (πῶς τὸν ἀριθμὸν καὶ ὅποια τὴν τάξιν εἴη), places Ruth after Judges in the list which has been preserved by *Eusebius* (h. e. iv. 26), but does not give the number of the books, as *Bertheau* erroneously maintains, nor observes that "Judges and Ruth form one book under the name of *Shofetim*." This is first done by *Origen* in his list as given by *Eusebius* (h. e. vi. 25), where he states that the Hebrews had twenty-two ἰνδιαθέτους βιβλους, and then adds in the case of Ruth, παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν ἑνὶ Σωφριμ. Ruth occupies the same place in the lists of the later Greek fathers, as in *Rufinus* (Expos. in Symb. Apost.) and *Jerome* (in Prolog. Gal.), the latter of whom makes this remark on the book of Judges, *Et in eundem compingunt Ruth, quia in diebus Judicum facta ejus narratur historia*; and after enumerating the twenty-two books of the Old Testament, adds, *Quoniam nonnulli Ruth et Kinoth inter Hagiographa scriptitent et hos libros in suo putent numero supputandos*, etc. But all these testimonies prove nothing more than that the Hellenistic Jews, who made use of the Old Testament in the Greek rendering of the LXX., regarded the book of Ruth as an appendix of the book of Judges, and not that the book of Ruth ever followed the book of Judges in the Hebrew canon, so as to form one book. The reduction of the sacred writings of the Old Testament to twenty-two is nothing more than the product of the cabbalistic and mystical numbers wrought out by the Hellenistic or Alexandrian Jews. If this numbering had been the original

The book of Ruth is not a mere (say a third) appendix to the book of Judges, but a small independent work, which does indeed resemble the two appendices of the book of Judges, so far as the incidents recorded in it fall within the period of the Judges, and are not depicted in the spirit of the prophetic view of history; but, on the other hand, it has a thoroughly distinctive character both in form and contents, and has nothing in common with the book of Judges either in style or language: on the contrary, it differs essentially both in substance and design from the substance and design of this book and of its two appendices, for the simple reason that at the close of the history (chap. iv. 17), where Obed, the son

one, the Hebrew Jews would never have increased the number to twenty-four, since the Hebrew alphabet never contained twenty-four letters. *Josephus*, however, is not a witness with regard to the orthodox opinions of the Hebrew Jews, but was an eclectic and a Hellenist, who used the Old Testament in the Septuagint version and not in the original text, and who arranged the books of the Old Testament in the most singular manner. The fathers, too, with the exception of *Jerome*, whenever they give any account of their inquiries among the Jews with regard to the number and order of the books accepted by them as canonical, never give them in either the order or number found in the Hebrew canon, but simply according to the Septuagint version, which was the only one that the Christians understood. This is obvious in the case of *Melito*, from the fact that he reckons *Βασιλείων τίσσαρα* and *Παραλειπομένων δύο*, and places *Daniel* between the twelve minor prophets and *Ezekiel*. We find the same in *Origen*, although he gives the Hebrew names to the different books, and states in connection with the four books of Kings and the two books of *Paralipomena*, that the Hebrews named and numbered them differently. Lastly, it is true that *Jerome* arranges the writings of the Old Testament in his Prol. Gal. according to the three classes of the Hebrew canon; but he endeavours to bring the Hebrew mode of division and enumeration as much as possible into harmony with the Septuagint numbering and order as generally adopted in the Christian Church, and to conceal all existing differences. You may see this very clearly from his remarks as to the number of these books, and especially from the words, *Porro quinque litteræ duplices apud Hebræos sunt, Caph, Mem, Nun, Pe, Sade . . . Unde et quinque a plerisque libri duplices existimantur, Samuel, Melachim, Dibre Hajamim, Esdras, Jeremias cum Kinoth, i.e. Lamentationibus suis*. For the *plerique* who adopt two books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, are not Hebrew but Hellenistic Jews, as the Hebrew Jews did not divide these writings in their canon into two books each, but this mode of dividing them was first introduced into the Hebrew Bibles by *Dan. Bomberg* from the *Septuagint* or *Vulgate*. The further remark of this father, *quanquam nonnulli Ruth et Kinoth inter hagiographa scriptitent*, etc., is also to be estimated in the same way, and the word *nonnulli* to be attributed to the conciliatory efforts of *Jerome*. And lastly, his remark concerning the connection between the book of Ruth and that of Judges is not to be regarded as any evidence of the position which this book occupied in the Hebrew canon, but simply as a proof of the place assigned it by the Hellenistic Jews.

of Boaz and Ruth, is described as the grandfather of David, and still more clearly in the genealogy of Perez, which is brought down to David (chap. iv. 18-22), the book passes beyond the times of the Judges. In this simple fact the author very plainly shows that his intention was not to give a picture of the family life of pious Israelites in the time of the judges from a civil and a religious point of view, but rather to give a biographical sketch of the pious ancestors of David the king.

The *origin* of the book of Ruth is involved in obscurity. From its contents, and more especially from the object so apparent in the close of the book, it may be inferred with certainty that it was not written earlier than the time of David's rule over Israel, and indeed not before the culminating point of the reign of this great king. There would therefore be an interval of 150 to 180 years between the events themselves and the writing of the book, during which time the custom mentioned in chap. iv. 7, of taking off the shoe in acts of trade and barter, which formerly existed in Israel, may have fallen entirely into disuse, so that the author might think it necessary to explain the custom for the information of his contemporaries. We have not sufficient ground for fixing a later date, say the time of the captivity; and there is no force in the arguments that have been adduced in support of this (see my *Lehrb. der Einl.* § 137). The discovery that words and phrases such as מְנוּלוֹת (chap. iii. 7, 8, 14), פָּרַשׁ כְּנָמִים (chap. iii. 9), מִקְרָה, chance (chap. ii. 3), either do not occur at all or only very rarely in the earlier writings, simply because the thing itself to which they refer is not mentioned, does not in the least degree prove that these words were not formed till a later age. The supposed Chaldaisms, however,—namely the forms תִּדְבֹּקֶן and תִּעֲבֹדִי (chap. ii. 8, 21), יִצְלָה (chap. ii. 9), יִרְדֵּתִי, שְׂמִתִּי, שְׂכַבְתִּי (chap. iii. 3, 4), מָרָא for מָרָה (chap. i. 20), or the use of לָהֶן, and of the ἀπ. λεγ. עֵן (chap. i. 13), etc.,—we only meet with in the speeches of the persons acting, and never where the author himself is narrating; and consequently they furnish no proofs of the later origin of the book, but may be simply and fully explained from the fact, that the author received these forms and words from the language used in common conversation in the time of the judges, and has faithfully recorded them. We are rather warranted in drawing the conclusion from this, that he did not derive the contents of his work from oral tradition, but made use of written documents, with regard to the origin and nature of which, however, nothing certain can be determined.

EXPOSITION.

RUTH GOES WITH NAOMI TO BETHLEHEM.—CHAP. I.

IN the time of the judges Elimelech emigrated from Bethlehem in Judah into the land of Moab, along with his wife Naomi, and his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, because of a famine in the land (vers. 1, 2). There Elimelech died; and his two sons married Moabitish women, named Orpah and Ruth. But in the course of ten years they also died, so that Naomi and her two daughters-in-law were left by themselves (vers. 3-5). When Naomi heard that the Lord had once more blessed the land of Israel with bread, she set out with Orpah and Ruth to return home. But on the way she entreated them to turn back and remain with their relations in their own land; and Orpah did so (vers. 6-14). But Ruth declared that she would not leave her mother-in-law, and went with her to Bethlehem (vers. 15-22).

Vers. 1-5. *Elimelech's Emigration* (vers. 1, 2).—By the word *וַיֵּמָּח* the following account is attached to other well-known events (see at Josh. i. 1); and by the definite statement, "*in the days when judges judged*," it is assigned to the period of the judges generally. "*A famine in the land*," i.e. in the land of Israel, and not merely in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem. The time of this famine cannot be determined with certainty, although it seems very natural to connect it, as *Seb. Schmidt* and others do, with the devastation of the land by the Midianites (Judg. vi.); and there are several things which favour this. For example, the famine must have been a very serious one, and not only have extended over the whole of the land of Israel, but have lasted several years, since it compelled Elimelech to emigrate into the land of the Moabites; and it was not till ten years had elapsed, that his wife Naomi, who survived him, heard that Jehovah had given His people bread again, and returned to her native land (vers. 4, 5). Now the Midianites oppressed Israel for seven years, and their invasions were generally attended by a destruction of the produce of the soil (Judg. vi. 3, 4), from which famine must necessarily have ensued. Moreover, they extended their devastations as far as Gaza (Judg. vi. 4). And although it by no means follows with certainty from this, that they also came into the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, it is still less possible to draw the opposite conclusion, as *Bertheau* does, from the fact they en-

camped in the valley of Jezreel (Judg. vi. 33), and were defeated there by Gideon, namely, that they did not devastate the mountains of Judah, because the road from the plain of Jezreel to Gaza did not lie across those mountains. There is just as little force in the other objection raised by *Bertheau*, namely, that the genealogical list in chap. iv. 18 sqq. would not place Boaz in the time of Gideon, but about the time of the Philistian supremacy over Israel, since this objection is founded partly upon an assumption that cannot be established, and partly upon an erroneous chronological calculation. For example, the assumption that every member is included in this chronological series cannot be established, inasmuch as unimportant members are often omitted from the genealogies, so that Obed the son of Boaz might very well have been the grandfather of Jesse. And according to the true chronological reckoning, the birth of David, who died in the year 1015 B.C. at the age of seventy, fell in the year 1085, i.e. nine or ten years after the victory gained by Samuel over the Philistines, or after the termination of their forty years' rule over Israel, and only ninety-seven years after the death of Gideon (see the chronological table, p. 289). Now David was the youngest of the eight sons of Jesse. If therefore we place his birth in the fiftieth year of his father's life, Jesse would have been born in the first year of the Philistian oppression, or forty-eight years after the death of Gideon. Now it is quite possible that Jesse may also have been a younger son of Obed, and born in the fiftieth year of his father's life; and if so, the birth of Obed would fall in the last years of Gideon. From this at any rate so much may be concluded with certainty, that Boaz was a contemporary of Gideon, and the emigration of Elimelech into the land of Moab may have taken place in the time of the Midianitish oppression. "*To sojourn in the fields of Moab*," i.e. to live as a stranger there. The form שָׂרָא (vers. 1, 2, 22, and chap. ii. 6) is not the construct state singular, or only another form for שָׂרָא, as *Bertheau* maintains, but the construct state plural of the absolute שָׂרָא, which does not occur anywhere, it is true, but would be a perfectly regular formation (comp. Isa. xxxii. 12, 2 Sam. i. 21, etc.), as the construct state singular is written שָׂרָא even in this book (ver. 6 and chap. iv. 3). The use of the singular in these passages for the land of the Moabites by no means proves that שָׂרָא must also be a singular, but may be explained from the fact that the expression "the field (= the territory) of Moab" alternates with the plural, "the fields of Moab."—Vers. 2, 3. מִדְּבַר מוֹאָב, the plural of מִדְּבַר, an adjective

formation, not from אֶפְרַיִם, as in Judg. xii. 5, but from אֶפְרָתָה (Gen. xlviii. 7) or אֶפְרָתָה (chap. iv. 11, Gen. xxxv. 19), the old name for Bethlehem, *Ephrathite*, i.e. sprung from Bethlehem, as in 1 Sam. xvii. 12. The names—*Elimelech*, i.e. to whom God is King; *Naomi* (נְעֻמִּי, a contraction of נְעֻמִּית, LXX. *Noomeli*, *Vulg. Noëmi*), i.e. the gracious; *Machlon*, i.e. the weakly; and *Chilion*, pining—are genuine Hebrew names; whereas the names of the Moabitish women, *Orpah* and *Ruth*, who were married to Elimelech's sons, cannot be satisfactorily explained from the Hebrew, as the meaning given to *Orpah*, "turning the back," is very arbitrary, and the derivation of *Ruth* from רֵעִית, a friend, is quite uncertain. According to chap. iv. 10, Ruth was the wife of the elder son Mahlon. Marriage with daughters of the Moabites was not forbidden in the law, like marriages with Canaanitish women (Deut. vii. 3); it was only the reception of Moabites into the congregation of the Lord that was forbidden (Deut. xxiii. 4).—Ver. 5. "*Thus the woman (Naomi) remained left (alone) of her two sons and her husband.*"

Vers. 6–14. After the loss of her husband and her two sons, Naomi rose up out of the fields of Moab to return into the land of Judah, as she had heard that Jehovah had visited His people, i.e. had turned His favour towards them again to give them bread. From the place where she had lived Naomi went forth, along with her two daughters-in-law. These three went on the way to return to the land of Judah. The expression "to return," if taken strictly, only applies to Naomi, who really returned to Judah, whilst her daughters-in-law simply wished to accompany her thither.—Vers. 8 sqq. "*On the way,*" i.e. when they had gone a part of the way, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "*Go, return each one to her mother's house,*"—not her father's, though, according to chap. ii. 11, Ruth's father at any rate was still living, but her mother's, because maternal love knows best how to comfort a daughter in her affliction. "*Jehovah grant you that ye may find a resting-place, each one in the house of her husband,*" i.e. that ye may both be happily married again. She then kissed them, to take leave of them (*vid.* Gen. xxxi. 28). The daughters-in-law, however, began to weep aloud, and said, "*We will return with thee to thy people.*" וְ before a direct statement serves to strengthen it, and is almost equivalent to a positive assurance.—Ver. 11. Naomi endeavoured to dissuade them from this resolution, by setting before them the fact, that if they went with her, there would be no hope of their being married again, and enjoying the pleasures of life once more. "*Have I yet sons in my womb, that they may be your hus-*

bands?" Her meaning is: I am not pregnant with sons, upon whom, as the younger brothers of Mahlon and Chilion, there would rest the obligation of marrying you, according to the Levirate law (Deut. xxv. 5; Gen. xxxviii. 8). And not only have I no such hope as this, but, continues Naomi, in vers. 12, 13, I have no prospect of having a husband and being blessed with children: "*for I am too old to have a husband;*" yea, even if I could think of this altogether improbable thing as taking place, and assume the impossible as possible; "*if I should say, I have hope (of having a husband), yea, if I should have a husband to-night, and should even bear sons, would ye then wait till they were grown, would ye then abstain from having husbands?*" The כִּי (if) before אֲמַרְתִּי refers to both the perfects which follow. לָהֶן is the third pers. plur. neuter suffix נָה with the prefix לָ, as in Job xxx. 24, where נָה is pointed with seghol, on account of the toned syllable which follows, as here in pause in ver. 9: *lit.* in these things, in that case, and hence in the sense of *therefore* = לָכֵן, as in Chaldee (*e.g.* Dan. ii. 6, 9, 24, etc.). תַּעֲנִינָה (*vid.* Isa. lx. 4, and *Ewald*, § 195, a.), from עָנָן *ἀπ. λει.* in Hebrew, which signifies in Aramæan to hold back, shut in; hence in the Talmud עֲנִינָה, a woman who lived retired in her own house without a husband. Naomi supposes three cases in ver. 12, of which each is more improbable, or rather more impossible, than the one before; and even if the impossible circumstance should be possible, that she should bear sons that very night, she could not in that case expect or advise her daughters-in-law to wait till these sons were grown up and could marry them, according to the Levirate law. In this there was involved the strongest persuasion to her daughters-in-law to give up their intention of going with her into the land of Judah, and a most urgent appeal to return to their mothers' houses, where, as young widows without children, they would not be altogether without the prospect of marrying again. One possible case Naomi left without notice, namely, that her daughters-in-law might be able to obtain other husbands in Judah itself. She did not hint at this, in the first place, and perhaps chiefly, from delicacy on account of the Moabitish descent of her daughters-in-law, in which she saw that there would be an obstacle to their being married in the land of Judah; and secondly, because Naomi could not do anything herself to bring about such a connection, and wished to confine herself therefore to the one point, of making it clear to her daughters that in her present state it was altogether out of her power to provide connubial and domestic happiness for them in the land of Judah.

She therefore merely fixed her mind upon the different possibilities of a Levirate marriage.¹ אַל בָּנָי, "not my daughters," i.e. do not go with me; "for it has gone much more bitterly with me than with you." מֵרַר relates to her mournful lot. מִפְּנֵי is comparative, "before you;" not "it grieveth me much on your account," for which עָלֶיְכֶם would be used, as in 2 Sam. i. 26. Moreover, this thought would not be in harmony with the following clause: "for the hand of the Lord has gone out against me," i.e. the Lord has sorely smitten me, namely by taking away not only my husband, but also my two sons.—Ver. 14. At these dissuasive words the daughters-in-law broke out into loud weeping again (וַתֵּשְׁכַח with the א dropped for וַתֵּשְׁכַח, ver. 9), and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, and took leave of her to return to her mother's house; but Ruth clung to her (וַתִּדְבַק as in Gen. ii. 24), forsaking her father and mother to go with Naomi into the land of Judah (vid. chap. ii. 11).

Vers. 15-22. To the repeated entreaty of Naomi that she would follow her sister-in-law and return to her people and her God, Ruth replied: "*Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return away behind thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou stayest, I will stay; thy people is my people, and thy God my God! where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried. Jehovah do so to me, and*

¹ The objections raised by J. B. Carpzov against explaining vers. 12 and 13 as referring to a Levirate marriage,—namely, that this is not to be thought of, because a Levirate marriage was simply binding upon brothers of the deceased by the same father and mother, and upon brothers who were living when he died, and not upon those born afterwards,—have been overthrown by Bertheau as being partly without foundation, and partly beside the mark. In the first place, the law relating to the Levirate marriage speaks only of brothers of the deceased, by which, according to the design of this institution, we must certainly think of sons by one father, but not necessarily of sons by the same mother. Secondly, the law does indeed expressly require marriage with the sister-in-law only of a brother who should be in existence when her husband died, but it does not distinctly exclude a brother born afterwards; and this is the more evident from the fact that, according to the account in Gen. xxxviii. 11, this duty was binding upon brothers who were not grown up at the time, as soon as they should be old enough to marry. Lastly, Naomi merely says, in ver. 12a, that she was not with child by her deceased husband; and when she does take into consideration, in vers. 12b and 13, the possibility of a future pregnancy, she might even then be simply thinking of an alliance with some brother of her deceased husband, and therefore of sons who would legally be regarded as sons of Elimelech. When Carpzov therefore defines the meaning of her words in this manner, "I have indeed no more children to hope for, to whom I could marry you in time, and I have no command over others," the first thought does not exhaust the meaning of the words, and the last is altogether foreign to the text.

more also (*lit.* and so may He add to do)! *Death alone shall divide between me and thee.*" The words *וְיָשָׁה יְהוָה יִסְּרֵנִי* are a frequently recurring formula in connection with an oath (cf. 1 Sam. iii. 17, xiv. 44, xx. 13, etc.), by which the person swearing called down upon himself a severe punishment in case he should not keep his word or carry out his resolution. The following *וְ* is not a particle used in swearing instead of *אִם* in the sense of "if," equivalent to "surely not," as in 1 Sam. xx. 12, in the oath which precedes the formula, but answers to *εἰ* in the sense of *quod* introducing the declaration, as in Gen. xxii. 16, 1 Sam. xx. 13, 1 Kings ii. 23, 2 Kings iii. 14, etc., signifying, I swear that death, and nothing else than death, shall separate us. Naomi was certainly serious in her intentions, and sincere in the advice which she gave to Ruth, and did not speak in this way merely to try her and put the state of her heart to the proof, "that it might be made manifest whether she would adhere stedfastly to the God of Israel and to herself, despising temporal things and the hope of temporal possessions" (*Seb. Schmidt*). She had simply the earthly prosperity of her daughter-in-law in her mind, as she herself had been shaken in her faith in the wonderful ways and gracious guidance of the faithful covenant God by the bitter experience of her own life.¹ With Ruth, however, it was evidently not merely strong affection and attachment by which she felt herself so drawn to her mother-in-law that she wished to live and die with her, but a leaning of her heart towards the God of Israel and His laws, of which she herself was probably not yet fully conscious, but which she had acquired so strongly in her conjugal relation and her intercourse with her Israelitish connections, that it was her earnest wish never to be separated from this people and its God (cf. chap. ii. 11).—Ver. 18. As she insisted strongly upon going with her (*וְהָלַכְתִּי*, to stiffen one's self firmly upon a thing), Naomi gave up persuading her any more to return.—Ver. 19. So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived, the whole town was in commotion on their account (*וַיִּהְיֶה*, imperf. *Niph.* of *הָיָה*, as in 1 Sam. iv. 5, 1 Kings i. 45). They said, "*Is this Naomi?*" The subject to *וַיִּשְׁאָלוּ* is the inhabitants of the town, but chiefly the female portion

¹ "She thought of earthly things alone; and as at that time the Jews almost universally were growing lax in the worship of God, so she, having spent ten years among the Moabites, thought it of little consequence whether they adhered to the religion of their fathers, to which they had been accustomed from their infancy, or went over to the Jewish religion."—*Carpzov*.

of the inhabitants, who were the most excited at Naomi's return. This is the simplest way of explaining the use of the feminine in the verbs *הִקְרָאתָהּ* and *הֵאֱמָרְתָהּ*. In these words there was an expression of amazement, not so much at the fact that Naomi was still alive, and had come back again, as at her returning in so mournful a condition, as a solitary widow, without either husband or sons; for she replied (ver. 20), "*Call me not Naomi (i.e. gracious), but Marah*" (the bitter one), i.e. one who has experienced bitterness, "*for the Almighty has made it very bitter to me. I, I went away full, and Jehovah has made me come back again empty. Why do ye call me Naomi, since Jehovah testifies against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?*" "*Full*," i.e. rich, not in money and property, but in the possession of a husband and two sons; a rich mother, but now deprived of all that makes a mother's heart rich, bereft of both husband and sons. "*Testified against me*," by word and deed (as in Ex. xx. 16, 2 Sam. i. 16). The rendering "*He hath humbled me*" (LXX., *Vulg.*, *Bertheau*, etc.) is incorrect, as *עָנָה* with *וְ* and the construct state simply means to trouble one's self with anything (Eccl. i. 13), which is altogether unsuitable here.—With ver. 22 the account of the return of Naomi and her daughter-in-law is brought to a close, and the statement that "*they came to Bethlehem in the time of the barley harvest*" opens at the same time the way for the further course of the history. *הַשָּׂבִיבָה* is pointed as a third pers. perf. with the article in a relative sense, as in chap. ii. 6 and iv. 3. Here and at chap. ii. 6 it applies to Ruth; but in chap. iv. 3 to Naomi. *הַזָּכָר*, the masculine, is used here, as it frequently is, for the feminine *הַנְּקִיָּה*, as being the more common gender. The harvest, as a whole, commenced with the barley harvest (see at Lev. xxiii. 10, 11).

RUTH GLEANS IN THE FIELD OF BOAZ.—CHAP. II.

Ruth went to the field to glean ears of corn, for the purpose of procuring support for herself and her mother-in-law, and came by chance to the field of Boaz, a relative of Naomi, who, when he heard that she had come with Naomi from Moabitis, spoke kindly to her, and gave her permission not only to glean ears in his field and even among the sheaves, but to appease her hunger and thirst with the food and drink of his reapers (vers. 1–16), so that in the evening she returned to her mother-in-law with a plentiful glean-
ing, and told her of the gracious reception she had met with from

this man, and then learned from her that Boaz was a relation of her own (vers. 17-23).

Vers. 1-7. The account of this occurrence commences with a statement which was necessary in order to make it perfectly intelligible, namely that Boaz, to whose field Ruth went to glean, was a relative of Naomi through her deceased husband Elimelech. The *Kethibh* מִידַע is to be read מִיָּדַע, an acquaintance (cf. Ps. xxxi. 12, lv. 14). The *Keri* מוֹדַע is the construct state of מוֹדַע, *lit.* acquaintanceship, then an acquaintance or friend (Prov. vii. 4), for which מוֹדַע occurs afterwards in chap. iii. 2 with the same meaning. That the acquaintance or friend of Naomi through her husband was also a relation, is evident from the fact that he was "of the family of Elimelech." According to the rabbinical tradition, which is not well established however, Boaz was a nephew of Elimelech. The ל before מִיָּדַע is used instead of the simple construct state, because the reference is not to *the* relation, but to *a* relation of her husband; at the same time, the word מוֹדַע has taken the form of the construct state notwithstanding this ל (compare *Ewald*, § 292, *a.*, with § 289, *b.*).. גִּבּוֹר חַיִל generally means the brave man of war (Judg. vi. 12, xi. 1, etc.); but here it signifies a man of property. The name *Boaz* is not formed from בָּזָא, in whom is strength, but from a root, בָּזָא, which does not occur in Hebrew, and signifies *alacrity*.—Vers. 2, 3. Ruth wished to go to the field and glean at (among) the ears, *i.e.* whatever ears were left lying upon the harvest field (cf. ver. 7), אַחֲרֵי אֲשֶׁר, behind him in whose eyes she should find favour. The Mosaic law (Lev. xix. 9, xxiii. 22, compared with Deut. xxiv. 19) did indeed expressly secure to the poor the right to glean in the harvest fields, and prohibited the owners from gleaning themselves; but hard-hearted farmers and reapers threw obstacles in the way of the poor, and even forbade their gleaning altogether. Hence Ruth proposed to glean after him who should generously allow it. She carried out this intention with the consent of Naomi, and chance led her to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, a relation of Elimelech, without her knowing the owner of the field, or being at all aware of his connection with Elimelech. וַיִּקַּר מִקְרָהָ, *lit.* "her chance chanced to hit upon the field."—Vers. 4 sqq. When Boaz came from the town to the field, and had greeted his reapers with the blessing of a genuine Israelite, "*Jehovah be with you*," and had received from them a corresponding greeting in return, he said to the overseer of the reapers, "*Whose damsel is this?*" to which he replied, "*It is the Moabitish damsel who*

came back with Naomi from the fields of Moab, and she has said (asked), *Pray, I will glean* (i.e. pray allow me to glean) *and gather among the sheaves after the reapers, and has come and stays* (here) *from morning till now; her sitting in the house that is little.*" מִן, lit. a conjunction, here used as a preposition, is stronger than מִן, "from then," from the time of the morning onwards (see Ewald, § 222, c.). It is evident from this answer of the servant who was placed over the reapers, (1) that Boaz did not prohibit any poor person from gleaning in his field; (2) that Ruth asked permission of the overseer of the reapers, and availed herself of this permission with untiring zeal from the first thing in the morning, that she might get the necessary support for her mother-in-law and herself; and (3) that her history was well known to the overseer, and also to Boaz, although Boaz saw her now for the first time.

Vers. 8-16. The good report which the overlooker gave of the modesty and diligence of Ruth could only strengthen Boaz in his purpose, which he had probably already formed from his affection as a relation towards Naomi, to make the acquaintance of her daughter-in-law, and speak kindly to her. With fatherly kindness, therefore, he said to her (vers. 8, 9), "*Dost thou hear, my daughter?*" (i.e. 'thou hearest, dost thou not?' *interrogatio blande affirmat*;) *go not to reap in another field, and go not away from here, and keep so to my maidens* (i.e. remaining near them in the field). *Thine eyes* (directed) *upon the field which they reap, go behind them* (i.e. behind the maidens, who probably tied up the sheaves, whilst the men-servants cut the corn). *I have commanded the young men not to touch thee* (to do thee no harm); *and if thou art thirsty* מֵצָמָה, from מֵצָמָה = צָמָה: see Ewald, § 195, b.), *go to the vessels, and drink of what the servants draw.*"—Ver. 10. Deeply affected by this generosity, Ruth fell upon her face, bowing down to the ground (as in 1 Sam. xxv. 23, 2 Sam. i. 2; cf. Gen. xxiii. 7), to thank him reverentially, and said to Boaz, "*Why have I found favour in thine eyes, that thou regardest me, who am only a stranger?*" הִבִּיר, to look at with sympathy or care, to receive a person kindly (cf. ver. 19).—Vers. 11, 12. Boaz replied, "*Everything has been told me that thou hast done to* (אֵלַי, prep. as in Zech. vii. 9, 2 Sam. xvi. 17) *thy mother-in-law since the death of thy husband, that thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and thy kindred, and hast come to a people that thou knewest not heretofore*" (hast therefore done what God commanded Abraham to do, Gen. xii. 1). "*The Lord recompense thy work, and let thy reward be perfect* (recalling Gen. xv. 1) *from*

the Lord the God of Israel, to whom thou hast come to seek refuge under His wings !” For this figurative expression, which is derived from Deut. xxxii. 11, compare Ps. xci. 4, xxxvi. 8, lvii. 2. In these words of Boaz we see the genuine piety of a true Israelite. —Ver. 13. Ruth replied with true humility, “*May I find favour in thine eyes ; for thou hast comforted me, and spoken to the heart of thy maiden* (see Judg. xix. 3), *though I am not like one of thy maidens,*” i.e. though I stand in no such near relation to thee, as to have been able to earn thy favour. In this last clause she restricts the expression “thy maiden.” *Carpzov* has rightly pointed this out : “But what am I saying when I call myself thy maiden ? since I am not worthy to be compared to the least of thy maidens.” The word מַיְדָן is to be taken in an optative sense, as expressive of the wish that Boaz might continue towards her the kindness he had already expressed. To take it as a present, “I find favour” (*Clericus* and *Bertheau*), does not tally with the modesty and humility shown by Ruth in the following words.—Ver. 14. This unassuming humility on the part of Ruth made Boaz all the more favourably disposed towards her, so that at meal-time he called her to eat along with his people (מִן without *Mappik*, as in Num. xxxii. 42, Zech. v. 11 ; cf. *Ewald*, § 94, b. 3). “*Dip thy morsel in the vinegar.*” *Chomez*, a sour beverage composed of vinegar (wine vinegar or sour wine) mixed with oil ; a very refreshing drink, which is still a favourite beverage in the East (see *Rosenmüller*, A. and N. *Morgenland*, iv. p. 68, and my *Bibl. Archäologie*, ii. p. 16). “*And he reached her parched corn.*” The subject is Boaz, who, judging from the expression “come hither,” either joined in the meal, or at any rate was present at it. מִן are roasted grains of wheat (see at Lev. ii. 14, and my *Bibl. Arch.* ii. p. 14), which are still eaten by the reapers upon the harvest field, and also handed to strangers.¹ Boaz gave her an abundant supply of it, so that she was not only satisfied, but left some, and was able to take it home to her mother (ver. 18).—Vers. 15, 16. When she rose up to glean again after eating, Boaz commanded his people, saying, “*She may*

¹ Thus *Robinson* (Pal. ii. p. 394) gives the following description of a harvest scene in the neighbourhood of Kubeibeh : “In one field nearly two hundred reapers and gleaners were at work, the latter being nearly as numerous as the former. A few were taking their refreshment, and offered us some of their ‘parched corn.’ In the season of harvest, the grains of wheat not yet fully dry and hard, are roasted in a pan or on an iron plate, and constitute a very palatable article of food ; this is eaten along with bread, or instead of it.”

also glean between the sheaves (which was not generally allowed), and ye shall not shame her (do her any injury, Judg. xviii. 7); and ye shall also draw out of the bundles for her, and let them lie (the ears drawn out), that she may glean them, and shall not scold her," *sc.* for picking up the ears that have been drawn out. These directions of Boaz went far beyond the bounds of generosity and compassion for the poor; and show that he felt a peculiar interest in Ruth, with whose circumstances he was well acquainted, and who had won his heart by her humility, her faithful attachment to her mother-in-law, and her love to the God of Israel,—a fact important to notice in connection with the further course of the history.

Vers. 17-23. Thus Ruth gleaned till the evening in the field; and when she knocked out the ears, she had about an ephah (about 20-25 lbs.) of barley.—Ver. 18. This she brought to her mother-in-law in the city, and "*drew out* (*sc.* from her pocket, as the Chaldee has correctly supplied) *what she had left from her sufficiency,*" *i.e.* of the parched corn which Boaz had reached her (ver. 14).—Ver. 19. The mother inquired, "*Where hast thou gleaned to-day, and where wroughtest thou?*" and praised the benefactor, who, as she conjectured from the quantity of barley collected and the food brought home, had taken notice of Ruth: "*blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee!*" When she heard the name of the man, Boaz, she saw that this relative of her husband had been chosen by God to be a benefactor of herself and Ruth, and exclaimed, "*Blessed be he of the Lord, that he has not left off* (withdrawn) *his favour towards the living and the dead!*" On עֵיב חֶסֶד see Gen. xxiv. 27. This verb is construed with a double accusative here; for לִי cannot be a preposition, as in that case לִי would be used like לִי in Gen. l.c. "*The living,*" etc., forms a second object: as regards (with regard to) the living and the dead, in which Naomi thought of herself and Ruth, and of her husband and sons, to whom God still showed himself gracious, even after their death, through His care for their widows. In order to enlighten Ruth still further upon the matter, she added, "*The man (Boaz) is our relative, and one of our redeemers.*" He "*stands near to us,*" *sc.* by relationship. וְאֵלֵי, a defective form for וְאֵלֵי, which is found in several mss. and editions. On the significance of the *goēl*, or redeemer, see at Lev. xxv. 26, 48, 49, and the introduction to chap. iii.—Ver. 21. Ruth proceeded to inform her of his kindness: וְיָדָעְתִּי, "*also (know) that he said to me, Keep with my people, till the harvest is all ended.*" The masculine הַיְעָרִים, for which we should rather expect the

feminine נְעֻמָּה in accordance with vers. 8, 22, 23, is quite in place as the more comprehensive gender, as a designation of the reapers generally, both male and female; and the expression לִי אֲשֶׁר in this connection in the sense of *my* is more exact than the possessive pronoun: the people who belong to my house, as distinguished from the people of other masters.—Ver. 22. Naomi declared herself fully satisfied with this, because Ruth would be thereby secured from insults, which she might receive when gleaning in strange fields. “*That they meet thee not,*” *lit.* “that they do not fall upon thee.” אֲפַיֵּס signifies to fall upon a person, to smite and ill-treat him.—Ver. 23. After this Ruth kept with the maidens of Boaz during the whole of the barley and wheat harvests gleaning ears of corn, and lived with her mother-in-law, *sc.* when she returned in the evening from the field. In this last remark there is a tacit allusion to the fact that a change took place for Ruth when the harvest was over.

RUTH SEEKS FOR MARRIAGE WITH BOAZ.—CHAP. III.

After the harvest Naomi advised Ruth to visit Boaz on a certain night, and ask him to marry her as redeemer (vers. 1–5). Ruth followed this advice, and Boaz promised to fulfil her request, provided the nearer redeemer who was still living would not perform this duty (vers. 6–13), and sent her away in the morning with a present of wheat, that she might not return empty to her mother-in-law (vers. 14–18). To understand the advice which Naomi gave to Ruth, and which Ruth carried out, and in fact to form a correct idea of the further course of the history generally, we must bear in mind the legal relations which came into consideration here. According to the theocratical rights, Jehovah was the actual owner of the land which He had given to His people for an inheritance; and the Israelites themselves had merely the usufruct of the land which they received by lot for their inheritance, so that the existing possessor could not part with the family portion or sell it at his will, but it was to remain for ever in his family. When any one therefore was obliged to sell his inheritance on account of poverty, and actually did sell it, it was the duty of the nearest relation to redeem it as *goēl*. But if it should not be redeemed, it came back, in the next year of jubilee, to its original owner or his heirs without compensation. Consequently no actual sale took place in our sense of the word, but simply a sale of the yearly produce till the year of

jubilee (see Lev. xxv. 10, 13-16, 24-28). There was also an old customary right, which had received the sanction of God, with certain limitations, through the Mosaic law,—namely, the custom of Levirate marriage, or the marriage of a brother-in-law, which we meet with as early as Gen. xxxviii., viz. that if an Israelite who had been married died without children, it was the duty of his brother to marry the widow, that is to say, his sister-in-law, that he might establish his brother's name in Israel, by begetting a son through his sister-in-law, who should take the name of the deceased brother, that his name might not become extinct in Israel. This son was then the legal heir of the landed property of the deceased uncle (cf. Deut. xxv. 5 sqq.). These two institutions are not connected together in the Mosaic law; nevertheless it was a very natural thing to place the Levirate duty in connection with the right of redemption. And this had become the traditional custom. Whereas the law merely imposed the obligation of marrying the childless widow upon the brother, and even allowed him to renounce the obligation if he would take upon himself the disgrace connected with such a refusal (see Deut. xxv. 7-10); according to chap. iv. 5 of this book it had become a traditional custom to require the Levirate marriage of the redeemer of the portion of the deceased relative, not only that the landed possession might be permanently retained in the family, but also that the family itself might not be suffered to die out.

In the case before us Elimelech had possessed a portion at Bethlehem, which Naomi had sold from poverty (chap. iv. 3); and Boaz, a relation of Elimelech, was the redeemer of whom Naomi hoped that he would fulfil the duty of a redeemer,—namely, that he would not only ransom the purchased field, but marry her daughter-in-law Ruth, the widow of the rightful heir of the landed possession of Elimelech, and thus through this marriage establish the name of her deceased husband or son (Elimelech or Mahlon) upon his inheritance. Led on by this hope, she advised Ruth to visit Boaz, who had shown himself so kind and well-disposed towards her, during the night, and by a species of bold artifice, which she assumed that he would not resist, to induce him as redeemer to grant to Ruth this Levirate marriage. The reason why she adopted this plan for the accomplishment of her wishes, and did not appeal to Boaz directly, or ask him to perform this duty of affection to her deceased husband, was probably that she was afraid lest she should fail to attain her end in this way, partly because the duty of

a Levirate marriage was not legally binding upon the redeemer, and partly because Boaz was not so closely related to her husband that she could justly require this of him, whilst there was actually a nearer redeemer than he (chap. iii. 12). According to our customs, indeed, this act of Naomi and Rûth appears a very objectionable one from a moral point of view, but it was not so when judged by the customs of the people of Israel at that time. Boaz, who was an honourable man, and, according to chap. iii. 10, no doubt somewhat advanced in years, praised Ruth for having taken refuge with him, and promised to fulfil her wishes when he had satisfied himself that the nearer redeemer would renounce his right and duty (chap. iii. 10, 11). As he acknowledged by this very declaration, that under certain circumstances it would be his duty as redeemer to marry Ruth, he took no offence at the manner in which she had approached him and proposed to become his wife. On the contrary, he regarded it as a proof of feminine virtue and modesty, that she had not gone after young men, but offered herself as a wife to an old man like him. This conduct on the part of Boaz is a sufficient proof that women might have confidence in him that he would do nothing unseemly. And he justified such confidence. "The modest man," as *Bertheau* observes, "even in the middle of the night did not hesitate for a moment what it was his duty to do with regard to the young maiden (or rather woman) towards whom he felt already so strongly attached; he made his own personal inclinations subordinate to the traditional custom, and only when this permitted him to marry Ruth was he ready to do so. And not knowing whether she might not have to become the wife of the nearer *goël*, he was careful for her and her reputation, in order that he might hand her over unblemished to the man who had the undoubted right to claim her as his wife."

Vers. 1-5. As Naomi conjectured, from the favour which Boaz had shown to Ruth, that he might not be disinclined to marry her as *goël*, she said to her daughter-in-law, "*My daughter, I must seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee.*" In the question *וְהָאֵל אֵיךְ*, the word *אֵל* is here, as usual, an expression of general admission or of undoubted certainty, in the sense of "Is it not true, I seek for thee? it is my duty to seek for thee." *סְנוּחָה* = *סְנוּחָה* (chap. i. 9) signifies the condition of a peaceful life, a peaceful and well-secured condition, "a secure life under the guardian care of a husband" (*Rosenmüller*). "*And now is not Boaz our relation, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he is winnowing the barley*

floor (barley on the threshing-floor) *to-night*," i.e. till late in the night, to avail himself of the cool wind, which rises towards evening (Gen. iii. 8), for the purpose of cleansing the corn. The threshing-floors of the Israelites were, and are still in Palestine, made under the open heaven, and were nothing more than level places in the field stamped quite hard.¹—Vers. 3, 4. "*Wash and anoint thyself* (כִּי־סָבַח, from סָבַח = כִּי־סָבַח), *and put on thy clothes* (thy best clothes), *and go down* (from Bethlehem, which stood upon the ridge of a hill) *to the threshing-floor*; *let not thyself be noticed by the man* (Boaz) *till he has finished eating and drinking. And when he lies down, mark the place where he will sleep, and go* (when he has fallen asleep) *and uncover the place of his feet, and lay thyself down*; *and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.*"—Ver. 5. Ruth promised to do this. The *וְכִי*, which the Masorites have added to the text as *Keri non scriptum*, is quite unnecessary. From the account which follows of the carrying out of the advice given to her, we learn that Naomi had instructed Ruth to ask Boaz to marry her as her redeemer (cf. ver. 9).

Vers. 6–13. Ruth went accordingly to the threshing-floor and did as her mother-in-law had commanded; i.e. she noticed where Boaz went to lie down to sleep, and then, when he had eaten and drunken, and lay down cheerfully, at the end of the heap of sheaves or corn, and, as we may supply from the context, had fallen asleep, came to him quietly, uncovered the place of his feet, i.e. lifted up the covering over his feet, and lay down.—Ver. 8. About midnight the man was startled, namely, because on awaking he observed that there was some one lying at his feet; and he "bent himself" forward, or on one side, to feel who was lying there, "*and behold a woman was lying at his feet.*" כִּי־רָאָהּ is *accus. loci*.—Ver. 9. In answer to his inquiry, "*Who art thou?*" she said, "*I am Ruth, thine handmaid*; *spread thy wing over thine handmaid, for thou art a redeemer.*" כִּי־רָאָהּ is a dual according to the Masoretic pointing, as we cannot look upon it as a pausal form on account of the position of the word, but it is most probably to be regarded as a singular; and the figurative expression is not taken from birds, which spread their wings over their young, i.e. to protect them, but refers, according to Deut. xxiii. 1, xxvii. 20, and Ezek. xvi. 8, to the wing, i.e. the corner of the counterpane, referring to the fact that a man

¹ "A level spot is selected for the threshing-floors, which are then constructed near each other, of a circular form, perhaps fifty feet in diameter, merely by beating down the earth hard."—Robinson, Pal. ii. p. 277.

spreads this over his wife as well as himself. Thus Ruth entreated Boaz to marry her because he was a redeemer. On this reason for the request, see the remarks in the introduction to the chapter.—Ver. 10. Boaz praised her conduct: “*Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter* (see chap. ii. 20); *thou hast made thy later love better than the earlier, that thou hast not gone after young men, whether poor or rich.*” Ruth’s earlier or first love was the love she had shown to her deceased husband and her mother-in-law (comp. chap. ii. 11, where Boaz praises this love); the later love she had shown in the fact, that as a young widow she had not sought to win the affections of young men, as young women generally do, that she might have a youthful husband, but had turned trustfully to the older man, that he might find a successor to her deceased husband, through a marriage with him, in accordance with family custom (*vid.* chap. iv. 10). “*And now,*” added Boaz (ver. 11), “*my daughter, fear not; for all that thou sayest I will do to thee: for the whole gate of my people* (i.e. all my city, the whole population of Bethlehem, who go in and out at the gate: see Gen. xxxiv. 24, Deut. xvii. 2) *knoweth that thou art a virtuous woman.*” Consequently Boaz saw nothing wrong in the fact that Ruth had come to him, but regarded her request that he would marry her as redeemer as perfectly natural and right, and was ready to carry out her wish as soon as the circumstances would legally allow it. He promised her this (vers. 12, 13), saying, “*And now truly I am a redeemer; but there is a nearer redeemer than I. Stay here this night* (or as it reads at the end of ver. 13, ‘lie till the morning’), *and in the morning, if he will redeem thee, well, let him redeem; but if it does not please him to redeem thee, I will redeem thee, as truly as Jehovah liveth.*” **דנ** **ו** (*Kethibh*, ver. 12), after a strong assurance, as after the formula used in an oath, “*God do so to me,*” etc., 2 Sam. iii. 35, xv. 21 (*Kethibh*), and 2 Kings v. 20, is to be explained from the use of this particle in the sense of *nisi*, except that, = only: “only I am redeemer,” equivalent to, assuredly I am redeemer (cf. *Ewald*, § 356, b.). Consequently there is no reason whatever for removing the **דנ** from the text, as the Masorites have done (in the *Keri*).¹ Ruth was to lie till morning, because she could not easily return to

¹ What the **ו** *majusc.* in **ו** signifies, is uncertain. According to the smaller Masora, it was only found among the eastern (i.e. Palestinian) Jews. Consequently *Hiller* (in his *Arcanum Keri et Ctibh*, p. 163) conjectures that they used it to point out a various reading, viz. that **ו** should be the reading here. But this is hardly correct.

the city in the dark at midnight; but, as is shown in ver. 14, she did not stay till actual daybreak, hut "*before one could know another, she rose up, and he said* (i.e. as Boaz had said), *It must not be known that the woman came to the threshing-floor.*" For this would have injured the reputation not only of Ruth, but also of Boaz himself.—Ver. 15. He then said, "Bring the cloak that thou hast on, and lay hold of it" (to hold it open), and measured for her six measures of barley into it as a present, that she might not go hack empty to her mother-in-law (ver. 17). מִצְנֶפֶת, here and Isa. iii. 22, is a broad upper garment, *pallium*, possibly only a large shawl. "As the cloaks worn by the ancients were so full, that one part was thrown upon the shoulder, and another gathered up under the arm, Ruth, by holding a certain part, could receive into her bosom the corn which Boaz gave her" (*Schröder*, *De vestit. mul.* p. 264). *Six* (measures of) *barley*: the measure is not given. According to the Targum and the Rabbins, it was six seahs = two ephahs. This is certainly incorrect; for Ruth would not have been able to carry that quantity of barley home. When Boaz had given her the barley he measured out, and had sent her away, he also went into the city. This is the correct rendering, as given by the *Chaldee*, to the words וַיָּבֹא הָעִיר; though Jerome referred the words to Ruth, but certainly without any reason, as יָבֹא cannot stand for וַיָּבֹא. This reading is no doubt found in some of the MSS., hut it merely owes its origin to a mistaken interpretation of the words.—Vers. 16–18. When Ruth returned home, her mother-in-law asked her, "*Who art thou?*" i.e. as what person, in what circumstances dost thou come? The real meaning is, What hast thou accomplished? Whereupon she related all that the man had done (cf. vers. 10–14), and that he had given her six measures of barley for her mother. The Masorites have supplied אֵל after אִמִּי, as at ver. 5, hut without any necessity. The mother-in-law drew from this the hope that Boaz would now certainly carry out the matter to the desired end. "*Sit still,*" i.e. remain quietly at home (see Gen. xxxviii. 11), "*till thou hearest how the affair turn out,*" namely, whether the nearer redeemer mentioned by Boaz, or Boaz himself, would grant her the Levirate marriage. The expression "fall," in this sense, is founded upon the idea of the falling of the lot to the ground; it is different in Ezra vii. 20. "*For the man will not rest unless he has carried the affair to an end this day.*" אֵל, except that, as in Lev. xxii. 6, etc. (see *Ewald*, § 356, b.).

BOAZ MARRIES RUTH.—CHAP. IV.

To redeem the promise he had given to Ruth, Boaz went the next morning to the gate of the city, and calling to the nearer redeemer as he passed by, asked him, before the elders of the city, to redeem the piece of land which belonged to Elimelech and had been sold by Naomi; and if he did this, at the same time to marry Ruth, to establish the name of the deceased upon his inheritance (vers. 1-5). But as he renounced the right of redemption on account of the condition attached to the redemption of the field, Boaz undertook the redemption before the assembled people, together with the obligation to marry Ruth (vers. 6-12). The marriage was blessed with a son, who became the father of Jesse, the father of David (vers. 13-17). The book closes with a genealogical proof of the descent of David from Perez (vers. 18-22).

Vers. 1-5. "*Boaz had gone up to the gate, and had sat down there.*" This circumstantial clause introduces the account of the further development of the affair. The gate, *i.e.* the open space before the city gate, was the forum of the city, the place where the public affairs of the city were discussed. The expression "went up" is not to be understood as signifying that Boaz went up from the threshing-floor where he had slept to the city, which was situated upon higher ground, for, according to chap. iii. 15, he had already gone to the city before he went up to the gate; but it is to be explained as referring to the place of justice as an ideal eminence to which a man went up (*vid.* Deut. xvii. 8). The redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken—that is to say, the nearer relation of Elimelech—then went past, and Boaz requested him to come near and sit down. סוּר as in Gen. xix. 2, etc.: "*Sit down here, such a one.*" בְּלִי אִלְמִי, any one, a certain person, whose name is either unknown or not thought worth mentioning (cf. 1 Sam. xxi. 3, 2 Kings vi. 8). Boaz would certainly call him by his name; but the historian had either not heard the name, or did not think it necessary to give it.—Ver. 2. Boaz then called ten of the elders of the city as witnesses of the business to be taken in hand, and said to the redeemer in their presence, "*The piece of field which belonged to our brother (i.e. our relative) Elimelech (as an hereditary family possession), Naomi has sold, and I have thought (lit. 'I said,' sc. to myself; cf. Gen. xvii. 17, xxvii. 41), I will open thine ear (i.e. make it known, disclose it): get it before those who sit here, and (indeed) before the elders of my people.*" As the field had been sold

to another, getting it (קָנָה) could only be accomplished by virtue of the right of redemption. Boaz therefore proceeded to say, "*If thou wilt redeem, redeem; but if thou wilt not redeem, tell me, that I may know it: for there is not beside thee (any one more nearly entitled) to redeem, and I am (the next) after thee.*" הַיִּשְׁכִּימִים is rendered by many, those dwelling, and supposed to refer to the inhabitants of Bethlehem. But we could hardly think of the inhabitants generally as present, as the word "before" would require, even if, according to ver. 9, there were a number of persons present besides the elders. Moreover they would not have been mentioned first, but, like "*all the people*" in ver. 9, would have been placed after the elders as the principal witnesses. On these grounds, the word must be taken in the sense of sitting, and, like the verb in ver. 2, be understood as referring to the elders present; and the words "before the elders of my people" must be regarded as explanatory. The expression אֲנִי (third pers.) is striking, as we should expect the second person, which is not only found in the Septuagint, but also in several codices, and is apparently required by the context. It is true that the third person may be defended, as it has been by *Seb. Schmidt* and others, on the assumption that Boaz turned towards the elders and uttered the words as addressed to them, and therefore spoke of the redeemer as a third person: "*But if he, the redeemer there, will not redeem.*" But as the direct appeal to the redeemer himself is resumed immediately afterwards, the supposition, to our mind at least, is a very harsh one. The person addressed said, "*I will redeem.*" Boaz then gave him this further explanation (ver. 5): "*On the day that thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou buyest it of the hand of Ruth the Moabitess, of the wife of the deceased (Mahlon, the rightful heir of the field), to set up (that thou mayest set up) the name of the deceased upon his inheritance.*" From the meaning and context, the form קָנִיתִי must be the second pers. masc.; the *yod* at the end no doubt crept in through an error of the pen, or else from a *y*, so that the word is either to be read קָנִיתָ (according to the *Keri*) or קָנִיתִי, "*thou buyest it.*" So far as the fact itself was concerned, the field, which Naomi had sold from want, was the hereditary property of her deceased husband, and ought therefore to descend to her sons according to the standing rule of right; and in this respect, therefore, it was Ruth's property quite as much as Naomi's. From the negotiation between Boaz and the nearer redeemer, it is very evident that Naomi had sold the field which was the hereditary property of her husband, and was

lawfully entitled to sell it. But as landed property did not descend to wives according to the Israelitish law, but only to children, and when there were no children, to the nearest relatives of the husband (Num. xxvii. 8-11), when Elimelech died his field properly descended to his sons; and when they died without children, it ought to have passed to his nearest relations. Hence the question arises, what right had Naomi to sell her husband's field as her own property? The Rabbins suppose that the field had been presented to Naomi and Ruth by their husbands (*vid. Selden*, de success. in bona def. c. 15). But Elimelech could not lawfully give his hereditary property to his wife, as he left sons behind him when he died, and they were the lawful heirs; and Mahlon also had no more right than his father to make such a gift. There is still less foundation for the opinion that Naomi was an heiress, since even if this were the case, it would be altogether inapplicable to the present affair, where the property in question was not a field which Naomi had inherited from her father, but the field of Elimelech and his sons. The true explanation is no doubt the following: The law relating to the inheritance of the landed property of Israelites who died childless did not determine the time when such a possession should pass to the relatives of the deceased, whether immediately after the death of the owner, or not till after the death of the widow who was left behind (*vid. Num. xxvii. 9 sqq.*). No doubt the latter was the rule established by custom, so that the widow remained in possession of the property as long as she lived; and for that length of time she had the right to sell the property in case of need, since the sale of a field was not an actual sale of the field itself, but simply of the yearly produce until the year of jubilee. Consequently the field of the deceased Elimelech would, strictly speaking, have belonged to his sons, and after their death to Mahlon's widow, since Chilion's widow had remained behind in her own country Moab. But as Elimelech had not only emigrated with his wife and children and died abroad, but his sons had also been with him in the foreign land, and had married and died there, the landed property of their father had not descended to them, but had remained the property of Naomi, Elimelech's widow, in which Ruth, as the widow of the deceased Mahlon, also had a share. Now, in case a widow sold the field of her deceased husband for the time that it was in her possession, on account of poverty, and a relation of her husband redeemed it, it was evidently his duty not only to care for the maintenance of the impoverished widow, but if

she were still young, to marry her, and to let the first son born of such a marriage enter into the family of the deceased husband of his wife, so as to inherit the redeemed property, and perpetuate the name and possession of the deceased in Israel. Upon this right, which was founded upon traditional custom, Boaz based this condition, which he set before the nearer redeemer, that if he redeemed the field of Naomi he must also take Ruth, with the obligation to marry her, and through this marriage to set up the name of the deceased upon his inheritance.

Vers. 6-13. The redeemer admitted the justice of this demand, from which we may see that the thing passed as an existing right in the nation. But as he was not disposed to marry Ruth, he gave up the redemption of the field.—Ver. 6. "*I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance.*" The redemption would cost money, since the yearly produce of the field would have to be paid for up to the year of jubilee. Now, if he acquired the field by redemption as his own permanent property, he would have increased by so much his own possessions in land. But if he should marry Ruth, the field so redeemed would belong to the son whom he would beget through her, and he would therefore have parted with the money that he had paid for the redemption merely for the son of Ruth, so that he would have withdrawn a certain amount of capital from his own possession, and to that extent have detracted from its worth. "*Redeem thou for thyself my redemption,*" i.e. the field which I have the first right to redeem.—Vers. 7, 8. This declaration he confirmed by what was a usual custom at that time in renouncing a right. This early custom is described in ver. 7, and there its application to the case before us is mentioned afterwards. "*Now this was (took place) formerly in Israel in redeeming and exchanging, to confirm every transaction: A man took off his shoe and gave it to another, and this was a testimony in Israel.*" From the expression "*formerly,*" and also from the description given of the custom in question, it follows that it had gone out of use at the time when our book was composed. The custom itself, which existed among the Indians and the ancient Germans, arose from the fact that fixed property was taken possession of by treading upon the soil, and hence taking off the shoe and handing it to another was a symbol of the transfer of a possession or right of ownership (see the remarks on Deut. xxv. 9 and my Bibl. Archäol. ii. p. 66). The *Piel* פִּיל is rarely met with in Hebrew; in the present instance it was probably taken from the old legal phraseology.

The only other places in which it occurs are Ezek. xiii. 6, Ps. cxix. 28, 106, and the book of Esther, where it is used more frequently as a Chaldaism.—Vers. 9, 10. After the nearest redeemer had thus renounced the right of redemption with all legal formality, Boaz said to the elders and all the (rest of the) people, “*Ye are witnesses this day, that I have acquired this day all that belonged to Elimelech, and to Mahlon and Chilion (i.e. the field of Elimelech, which was the rightful inheritance of his sons Mahlon and Chilion), at the hand of Naomi; and also Ruth the Moabiteess, the wife of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to raise up the name of the deceased upon his inheritance, that the name of the deceased may not be cut off among his brethren and from the gate of his people*” (i.e. from his native town Bethlehem; cf. chap. iii. 11). On the fact itself, see the introduction to chap. iii.; also the remarks on the Levirate marriages at Deut. xxv. 5 sqq.—Ver. 11. The people and the elders said, “*We are witnesses*,” and desired for Boaz the blessing of the Lord upon this marriage. For Boaz had acted as unselfishly as he had acted honourably in upholding a laudable family custom in Israel. The blessing desired is the greatest blessing of marriage: “*The Lord make the woman that shall come into thine house (the participle נָסַף refers to what is immediately about to happen) like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel (“build” as in Gen. xvi. 2, xxx. 3); and do thou get power in Ephratah, and make to thyself a name in Bethlehem.*” וְיָשָׁה חַיִּל does not mean “get property or wealth,” as in Deut. viii. 17, but get power, as in Ps. lx. 14 (cf. Prov. xxxi. 29), sc. by begetting and training worthy sons and daughters. “*Make thee a name*,” literally “call out a name.” The meaning of this phrase, which is only used here in this peculiar manner, must be the following: “Make to thyself a well-established name through thy marriage with Ruth, by a host of worthy sons who shall make thy name renowned.”—Ver. 12. “*May thy house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah*” (Gen. xxxviii.). It was from Perez that the ancestors of Boaz, enumerated in vers. 18 sqq. and 1 Chron. ii. 5 sqq., were descended. As from Perez, so also from the seed which Jehovah would give to Boaz through Ruth, there should grow up a numerous posterity.

Vers. 13-17. This blessing began very speedily to be fulfilled. When Boaz had married Ruth, Jehovah gave her conception, and she bare a son.—Ver. 14. At his birth the women said to Naomi, “*Blessed be the Lord, who hath not let a redeemer be wanting to thee*

to-day." This redeemer was not Boaz, but the son just born. They called him a redeemer of Naomi, not because he would one day redeem the whole of Naomi's possessions (*Carpzov, Rosenmüller*, etc.), but because as the son of Ruth he was also the son of Naomi (ver. 17), and as such would take away the reproach of childlessness from her, would comfort her, and tend her in her old age, and thereby become her true *goël*, i.e. her deliverer (*Bertheau*). "*And let his name be named in Israel*," i.e. let the boy acquire a celebrated name, one often mentioned in Israel.—Ver. 15. "*And may the boy come to thee a refresher of the soul, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, who loveth thee* (who hath left her family, her home, and her gods, out of love to thee), *hath born him; she is better to thee than seven sons.*" *Seven*, as the number of the works of God, is used to denote a large number of sons of a mother whom God has richly blessed with children (*vid.* 1 Sam. ii. 5). A mother of so many sons was to be congratulated, inasmuch as she not only possessed in these sons a powerful support to her old age, but had the prospect of the permanent continuance of her family. Naomi, however, had a still more valuable treasure in her mother-in-law, inasmuch as through her the loss of her own sons had been supplied in her old age, and the prospect was now presented to her of becoming in her childless old age the tribe-mother of a numerous and flourishing family.—Ver. 16. Naomi therefore adopted this grandson as her own child; she took the boy into her bosom, and became his nurse.—Ver. 17. And the neighbours said, "*A son is born to Naomi*," and gave him the name of *Obed*. This name was given to the boy (the context suggests this) evidently with reference to what he was to become to his grandmother. *Obed*, therefore, does not mean "servant of Jehovah" (*Targum*), but "*the serving one*," as one who lived entirely for his grandmother, and would take care of her, and rejoice her heart (*O. v. Gerlach*, after *Josephus*, Ant. v. 9, 4). The last words of ver. 17, "*he is the father of Jesse, the father of David*," show the object which the author kept in view in writing down these events, or composing the book itself. This conjecture is raised into a certainty by the genealogy which follows, and with which the book closes.

Vers. 18–20. "*These are the generations of Perez*," i.e. the families descended from Perez in their genealogical order (*toledoth*: see at Gen. ii. 4). The genealogy only goes back as far as *Perez*, because he was the founder of the family of Judah which was named after him (Num. xxvi. 20), and to which *Elimelech* and *Boaz* belonged.

Perez, a son of Judah by Tamar (Gen. xxxviii. 29), begat *Hezrom*, who is mentioned in Gen. xlv. 12 among the sons of Judah who emigrated with Jacob into Egypt, although (as we have shown in our comm. on the passage) he was really born in Egypt. Of this son *Ram* (called *Aram* in the *Sept. Cod. Al.*, and from that in Matt. i. 3) nothing further is known, as he is only mentioned again in 1 Chron. ii. 9. His son *Amminadab* was the father-in-law of Aaron, who had married his daughter (Ex. vi. 23), and the father of *Nahesson* (*Nahshon*), the tribe-prince of the house of Judah in the time of Moses (Num. i. 7, ii. 3, vii. 12). According to this there are only four or five generations to the 430 years spent by the Israelites in Egypt, if we include both Perez and Nahesson; evidently not enough for so long a time, so that some of the intermediate links must have been left out even here. But the omission of unimportant members becomes still more apparent in the statement which follows, viz. that Nahshon begat *Salmah*, and *Salmah Boaz*, in which only two generations are given for a space of more than 250 years, which intervened between the death of Moses and the time of Gideon. *Salmah* (שַׁלְמָה or שַׁלְמָה, 1 Chron. ii. 11) is called *Salmon* in ver. 21; a double form of the name, which is to be explained from the fact that *Salmah* grew out of *Salmon* through the elision of the *n*, and that the terminations *an* and *on* are used promiscuously, as we may see from the form שַׁלְמָה in Job xli. 18 when compared with שַׁרְיָן in 1 Kings xxii. 34, and שַׁרְיָן in 1 Sam. xvii. 5, 38 (see *Ewald*, § 163-4). According to the genealogy of Christ in Matt. i. 5, Salmon married Rahab; consequently he was a son, or at any rate a grandson, of Nahshon, and therefore all the members between Salmon and Boaz have been passed over. Again, the generations from Boaz to David (vers. 21, 22) may possibly be complete, although in all probability one generation has been passed over even here between Obed and Jesse (see p. 471). It is also worthy of notice that the whole chain from *Perez* to *David* consists of ten links, five of which (from Perez to Nahshon) belong to the 430 years of the sojourn in Egypt, and five (from Salmon to David) to the 476 years between the exodus from Egypt and the death of David. This symmetrical division is apparently as intentional as the limitation of the whole genealogy to ten members, for the purpose of stamping upon it through the number ten as the seal of completeness the character of a perfect, concluded, and symmetrical whole.

The genealogy closes with David, an evident proof that the

book was intended to give a family picture from the life of the pious ancestors of this great and godly king of Israel. But for us the history which points to David acquires a still higher significance, from the fact that all the members of the genealogy of David whose names occur here are also found in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. "The passage is given by Matthew word for word in the genealogy of Christ, that we may see that this history looks not so much to David as to Jesus Christ, who was proclaimed by all as the Saviour and Redeemer of the human race, and that we may learn with what wonderful compassion the Lord raises up the lowly and despised to the greatest glory and majesty" (*Brentius*).

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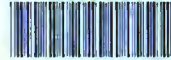
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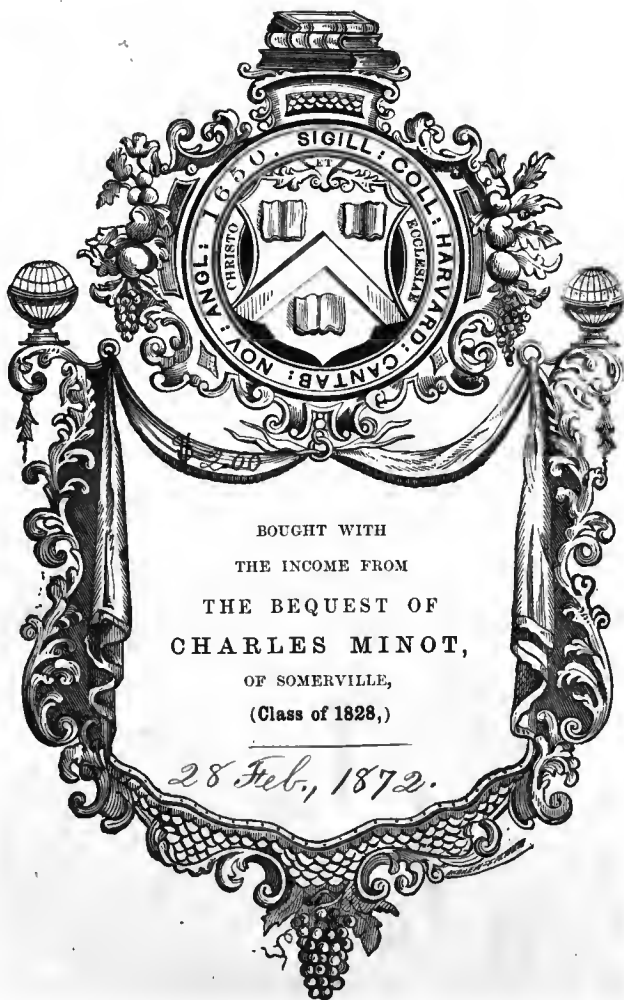
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ON

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PROFESSORS OF THEOLOGY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
BY THE
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THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

INTRODUCTION.

TITLE, CONTENTS, CHARACTER, AND ORIGIN OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.



THE books of Samuel originally formed one undivided work, and in the Hebrew MSS. they do so still. The division into two books originated with the Alexandrian translators (LXX.), and was not only adopted in the Vulgate and other versions, but in the sixteenth century it was introduced by Daniel Bomberg into our editions of the Hebrew Bible itself. In the Septuagint and Vulgate, these books are reckoned as belonging to the books of the Kings, and have the heading, *Βασιλειῶν πρώτη, δευτέρα* (*Regum, i. et ii.*). In the Septuagint they are called "books of the kingdoms," evidently with reference to the fact that each of these works contains an account of the history of a double kingdom, viz.: the books of Samuel, the history of the kingdoms of Saul and David; and the books of Kings, that of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. This title does not appear unsuitable, so far as the books before us really contain an account of the rise of the monarchy in Israel. Nevertheless, we cannot regard it as the original title, or even as a more appropriate heading than the one given in the Hebrew canon, viz. "*the book of Samuel*," since this title not only originated in the fact that the first half (*i.e.* our first book) contains an account of the acts of the prophet Samuel, but was also intended to indicate that the spirit of Samuel formed the soul of the true kingdom in Israel, or that the earthly throne of the Israelitish kingdom of God derived its

strength and perpetuity from the Spirit of the Lord which lived in the prophet. The division into two books answers to the contents, since the death of Saul, with which the first book closes, formed a turning-point in the development of the kingdom.

The books of Samuel contain the history of the kingdom of God in Israel, from the termination of the age of the judges to the close of the reign of king David, and embrace a period of about 125 years, viz. from about 1140 to 1015 B.C. The *first* book treats of the judgeship of the prophet Samuel and the reign of king Saul, and is divided into three sections, answering to the three epochs formed by the judicial office of Samuel (ch. i.-vii.), the reign of Saul from his election till his rejection (ch. viii.-xv.), and the decline of his kingdom during his conflict with David, whom the Lord had chosen to be the leader of His people in the place of Saul (ch. xvi.-xxxi.). The renewal of the kingdom of God, which was now thoroughly disorganized both within and without, commenced with Samuel. When the pious Hannah asked for a son from the Lord, and Samuel was given to her, the sanctuary of God at Shiloh was thoroughly desecrated under the decrepit high priest Eli by the base conduct of his worthless sons, and the nation of Israel was given up to the power of the Philistines. If Israel, therefore, was to be delivered from the bondage of the heathen, it was necessary that it should be first of all redeemed from the bondage of sin and idolatry, that its false confidence in the visible pledges of the gracious presence of God should be shaken by heavy judgments, and the way prepared for its conversion to the Lord its God by deep humiliation. At the very same time, therefore, at which Samuel was called to be the prophet of God, the judgment of God was announced upon the degraded priesthood and the desecrated sanctuary. The *first* section of our book, which describes the history of the renewal of the theocracy by Samuel, does not commence with the call of Samuel as prophet, but with an account on the one hand of the character of the national religion in the time of Eli, and on the other hand of the piety of the parents of Samuel, especially of his mother, and with an announcement of the judgment that was to fall upon Eli's house (ch. i. ii.). Then follow first of all the call of Samuel as prophet (ch. iii.), and the fulfilment of the judgment upon the house of

Eli and the house of God (ch. iv.); secondly, the manifestation of the omnipotence of God upon the enemies of His people, by the chastisement of the Philistines for carrying off the ark of the covenant, and the victory which the Israelites gained over their oppressors through Samuel's prayer (ch. v.-vii. 14); and lastly, a summary of the judicial life of Samuel (ch. vii. 15-17). The *second* section contains, first, the negotiations of the people with Samuel concerning the appointment of a king, the anointing of Saul by the prophet, and his election as king, together with the establishment of his kingdom (ch. viii.-xii.); and secondly, a brief survey of the history of his reign, in connection with which the only events that are at all fully described are his first successful conflicts with the Philistines, and the war against the Amalekites which occasioned his ultimate rejection (ch. xiii.-xv.). In the *third* section (ch. xvi.-xxxi.) there is a much more elaborate account of the history of Saul from his rejection till his death, since it not only describes the anointing of David and his victory over Goliath, but contains a circumstantial account of his attitude towards Saul, and the manifold complications arising from his long-continued persecution on the part of Saul, for the purpose of setting forth the gradual accomplishment of the counsels of God, both in the rejection of Saul and the election of David as king of Israel, to warn the ungodly against hardness of heart, and to strengthen the godly in their trust in the Lord, who guides His servants through tribulation and suffering to glory and honour. The *second* book contains the history of the reign of David, arranged in four sections: (1) his reign over Judah in Hebron, and his conflict with Ishbosheth the son of Saul, whom Abner had set up as king over the other tribes of Israel (ch. i.-iv.): (2) the anointing of David as king over all Israel, and the firm establishment of his kingdom through the conquest of the citadel of Zion, and the elevation of Jerusalem into the capital of the kingdom; the removal of the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem; the determination to build a temple to the Lord; the promise given him by the Lord of the everlasting duration of his dominion; and lastly, the subjugation of all the enemies of Israel (ch. v.-viii. 14), to which there is appended a list of the principal officers of state (ch. viii. 15-18), and an account of the favour shown to the house of Saul in the person of Mephibosheth (ch. ix.): (3) the disturbance of his

reign through his adultery with Bathsheba during the Ammonitish and Syrian war, and the judgments which came upon his house in consequence of this sin through the wickedness of his sons, viz. the incest of Amnon and rebellion of Absalom, and the insurrection of Sheba (ch. x.-xx.): (4) the close of his reign, his song of thanksgiving for deliverance out of the hand of all his foes (ch. xxii.), and his last prophetic words concerning the just ruler in the fear of God (ch. xxiii. 1-7). The way is prepared for these, however, by an account of the expiation of Saul's massacre of the Gibeonites, and of various heroic acts performed by his generals during the wars with the Philistines (ch. xxi.); whilst a list of his several heroes is afterwards appended in ch. xxiii. 8-39, together with an account of the numbering of the people and consequent pestilence (ch. xxiv.), which is placed at the close of the work, simply because the punishment of this sin of David furnished the occasion for the erection of an altar of burnt-offering upon the site of the future temple. His death is not mentioned here, because he transferred the kingdom to his son Solomon before he died; and the account of this transfer forms the introduction to the history of Solomon in the first book of Kings, so that the close of David's life was most appropriately recorded there.

So far as the *character* of the historical writing in the books of Samuel is concerned, there is something striking in the contrast which presents itself between the fulness with which the writer has described many events of apparently trifling importance, in connection with the lives of persons through whom the Lord secured the deliverance of His people and kingdom from their foes, and the summary brevity with which he disposes of the greatest enterprises of Saul and David, and the fierce and for the most part tedious wars with the surrounding nations; so that, as Thenius says, "particular portions of the work differ in the most striking manner from all the rest, the one part being very brief, and written almost in the form of a chronicle, the other elaborate, and in one part composed with really biographical fulness." This peculiarity is not to be accounted for from the nature of the sources which the author had at his command; for even if we cannot define with precision the nature and extent of these sources, yet when we compare the accounts contained in these books of the wars

between David and the Ammonites and Syrians with those in the books of Chronicles (2 Sam. viii. and x. with 1 Chron. xviii. xix.), we see clearly enough that the sources from which those accounts were derived embraced more than our books have given, since there are several places in which the chronicler gives fuller details of historical facts, the truth of which is universally allowed. The preparations for the building of the temple and the organization of the army, as well as the arrangement of the official duties of the Levites which David undertook, according to 1 Chron. xxii.-xxviii., in the closing years of his life, cannot possibly have been unknown to the author of our books. Moreover, there are frequent allusions in the books before us to events which are assumed as known, though there is no record of them in the writings which have been handed down to us, such as the removal of the tabernacle from Shiloh, where it stood in the time of Eli (1 Sam. i. 3, 9, etc.), to Nob, where David received the shewbread from the priests on his flight from Saul (ch. xxi. 1 sq.); the massacre of the Gibeonites by Saul, which had to be expiated under David (2 Sam. xxi.); the banishment of the necromancers out of the land in the time of Saul (1 Sam. xxviii. 3); and the flight of the Beerothites to Gittaim (2 Sam. iv. 3). From this also we must conclude, that the author of our books knew more than he thought it necessary to mention in his work. But we certainly cannot infer from these peculiarities, as has often been done, that our books are to be regarded as a compilation. Such an inference as this simply arises from an utter disregard of the plan and object, which run through both books and regulate the selection and arrangement of the materials they contain. That the work has been composed upon a definite plan, is evident from the grouping of the historical facts, in favour of which the chronological order generally observed in both the books has now and then been sacrificed. Thus, in the history of Saul and the account of his wars (1 Sam. xiv. 47, 48), the fact is also mentioned, that he smote the Amalekites; whereas the war itself, in which he smote them, is first described in detail in ch. xv., because it was in that war that he forfeited his kingdom through his transgression of the divine command, and brought about his own rejection on the part of God. The sacrifice of the chronological order to the material grouping of kindred

events, is still more evident in the history of David. In 2 Sam. viii. all his wars with foreign nations are collected together, and even the wars with the Syrians and Ammonites are included, together with an account of the booty taken in these wars; and then after this, viz. in ch. x.-xii., the war with the Ammonites and Syrians is more fully described, including the circumstances which occasioned it, the course which it took, and David's adultery which occurred during this war. Moreover, the history of Saul, as well as that of David, is divided into two self-contained periods, answering indeed to the historical course of the reigns of these two kings, but yet so distinctly marked off by the historian, that not only is the turning-point distinctly given in both instances, viz. the rejection of Saul and the grievous fall of David, but each of these periods is rounded off with a comprehensive account of the wars, the family, and the state officials of the two kings (1 Sam. xiv. 47-52, and 2 Sam. viii.). So likewise in the history of Samuel, after the victory which the Israelites obtained over the Philistines through his prayer, everything that had to be related concerning his life as judge is grouped together in ch. vii. 15-17, before the introduction of the monarchy is described; although Samuel himself lived till nearly the close of the reign of Saul, and not only instituted Saul as king, but afterwards announced his rejection, and anointed David as his successor. These comprehensive accounts are anything but proofs of compilations from sources of different kinds, which ignorance of the peculiarities of the Semitic style of writing history has led some to regard them as being; they simply serve to round off the different periods into which the history has been divided, and form resting-places for the historical review, which neither destroy the material connection of the several groups, nor throw any doubt upon the unity of the authorship of the books themselves. And even where separate incidents appear to be grouped together, without external connection or any regard to chronological order, on a closer inspection it is easy to discover the relation in which they stand to the leading purpose of the whole book, and the reason why they occupy this position and no other (see the introductory remarks to 2 Sam. ix. xxi.-xxiv.).

If we look more closely, however, at the contents of these books, in order to determine their character more precisely, we

find at the very outset, in Hannah's song of praise, a prophetic glance at the anointed of the Lord (ch. ii. 10), which foretells the establishment of the monarchy that was afterwards accomplished under Saul and David. And with this there is associated the rise of the new name, *Jehovah Sabaoth*, which is never met with in the Pentateuch or in the books of Joshua and Judges; whereas it occurs in the books before us from the commencement (ch. i. 3, 11, etc.) to the close. (For further remarks on the origin and signification of this divine name, see at ch. i. 3.) When Israel received a visible representative of its invisible God-king in the person of an earthly monarch; Jehovah, the God of Israel, became the God of the heavenly hosts. Through the establishment of the monarchy, the people of Jehovah's possession became a "world-power;" the kingdom of God was elevated into a kingdom of the world, as distinguished from the other ungodly kingdoms of the world, which it was eventually to overcome in the power of its God. In this conflict Jehovah manifested himself as the Lord of hosts, to whom all the nations and kingdoms of this world were to become subject. Even in the times of Saul and David, the heathen nations were to experience a foretaste of this subjection. When Saul had ascended the throne of Israel, he fought against all his enemies round about, and extended his power in every direction in which he turned (ch. i. 14, 47, 48). But David made all the nations who bordered upon the kingdom of God tributary to the people of the Lord, as the Lord gave him victory wherever he went (ch. ii. 8, 14, 15); so that his son Solomon reigned over all the kingdoms, from the stream (the Euphrates) to the boundary of Egypt, and they all brought him presents, and were subject to him (1 Kings v. 1). But the Israelitish monarchy could never thus acquire the power to secure for the kingdom of God a victory over all its foes, except as the king himself was diligent in his endeavours to be at all times simply the instrument of the God-king, and exercise his authority solely in the name and according to the will of Jehovah. And as the natural selfishness and pride of man easily made this concentration of the supreme earthly power in a single person merely an occasion for self-aggrandisement, and therefore the Israelitish kings were exposed to the temptation to use the plenary authority entrusted to them even in opposition to the

will of God; the Lord raised up for Himself organs of His own Spirit, in the persons of the prophets, to stand by the side of the kings, and make known to them the will and counsel of God. The introduction of the monarchy was therefore preceded by the development of the prophetic office into a spiritual power in Israel, in which the kingdom was to receive not only a firm support to its own authority, but a strong bulwark against royal caprice and tyranny. Samuel was called by the Lord to be His prophet, to convert the nation that was sunk in idolatry to the Lord its God, and to revive the religious life by the establishment of associations of prophets, since the priests had failed to resist the growing apostasy of the nation, and had become unfaithful to their calling to instruct and establish the congregation in the knowledge and fear of the Lord. Even before the call of Samuel as a prophet, there was foretold to the high priest Eli by a man of God, not only the judgment that would fall upon the degenerate priesthood, but the appointment of a faithful priest, for whom the Lord would build a permanent house, that he might ever walk before His anointed (1 Sam. ii. 27-36). And the first revelation which Samuel received from God had reference to the fulfilment of all that the Lord had spoken against the house of Eli (ch. iii. 11 sqq.). The announcement of a faithful priest, who would walk before the anointed of the Lord, also contained a prediction of the establishment of the monarchy, which foreshadowed its worth and great significance in relation to the further development of the kingdom of God. And whilst these predictions of the anointed of the Lord, before and in connection with the call of Samuel, show the deep spiritual connection which existed between the prophetic order and the regal office in Israel; the insertion of them in these books is a proof that from the very outset the author had this new organization of the Israelitish kingdom of God before his mind, and that it was his intention not simply to hand down biographies of Samuel, Saul, and David, but to relate the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God at the time of its elevation out of a deep inward and outward decline into the full authority and power of a kingdom of the Lord, before which all its enemies were to be compelled to bow.

Israel was to become a kingship of priests, *i.e.* a kingdom whose citizens were priests and kings. The Lord had announced

this to the sons of Israel before the covenant was concluded at Sinai, as the ultimate object of their adoption as the people of His possession (Ex. xix. 5, 6). Now although this promise reached far beyond the times of the Old Covenant, and will only receive its perfect fulfilment in the completion of the kingdom of God under the New Covenant, yet it was to be realized even in the people of Israel so far as the economy of the Old Testament allowed. Israel was not only to become a priestly nation, but a royal nation also; not only to be sanctified as a congregation of the Lord, but also to be exalted into a kingdom of God. The establishment of the earthly monarchy, therefore, was not only an eventful turning-point, but also an "epoch-making" advance in the development of Israel towards the goal set before it in its divine calling. And this advance became the pledge of the ultimate attainment of the goal, through the promise which David received from God (2 Sam. vii. 12-16), that the Lord would establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. With this promise God established for His anointed the eternal covenant, to which David reverted at the close of his reign, and upon which he rested his divine announcement of the just ruler over men, the ruler in the fear of God (2 Sam. xxiii. 1-7). Thus the close of these books points back to their commencement. The prophecy of the pious mother of Samuel, that the Lord would give strength unto His king, and exalt the horn of His anointed (1 Sam. ii. 10), found a fulfilment in the kingdom of David, which was at the same time a pledge of the ultimate completion of the kingdom of God under the sceptre of the Son of David, the promised Messiah.

This is one, and in fact the most conspicuous, arrangement of the facts connected with the history of salvation, which determined the plan and composition of the work before us. By the side of this there is another, which does not stand out so prominently indeed, but yet must not be overlooked. At the very beginning, viz. in ch. i., the inward decay of the house of God under the high priest Eli is exhibited; and in the announcement of the judgment upon the house of Eli, a long-continued oppression of the dwelling-place (of God) is foretold (ch. ii. 32). Then, in the further course of the narrative, not only is the fulfilment of these threats pointed out, in the events

described in 1 Sam. iv., vi. 19–vii. 2, and xxii. 11–19; but it is also shown how David first of all brought the ark of the covenant, about which no one had troubled himself in the time of Saul, out of its concealment, had a tent erected for it in the capital of his kingdom upon Mount Zion, and made it once more the central point of the worship of the congregation; and how after that, when God had given him rest from his enemies, he wished to build a temple for the Lord to be the dwelling-place of His name; and lastly, when God would not permit him to carry out this resolution, but promised that his son would build the house of the Lord, how, towards the close of his reign, he consecrated the site for the future temple by building an altar upon Mount Moriah (2 Sam. xxiv. 25). Even in this series of facts the end of the work points back to the beginning, so that the arrangement and composition of it according to a definite plan, which has been consistently carried out, are very apparent. If, in addition to this, we take into account the deep-seated connection between the building of the temple as designed by David, and the confirmation of his monarchy on the part of God as exhibited in 2 Sam. vii., we cannot fail to observe that the historical development of the true kingdom, in accordance with the nature and constitution of the Old Testament kingdom of God, forms the leading thought and purpose of the work to which the name of Samuel has been attached, and that it was by this thought and aim that the writer was influenced throughout in his selection of the historical materials which lay before him in the sources that he employed.

The full accounts which are given of the birth and youth of Samuel, and the life of David, are in the most perfect harmony with this design. The lives and deeds of these two men of God were of significance as laying the foundation for the development and organization of the monarchical kingdom in Israel. Samuel was the model and type of the prophets; and embodied in his own person the spirit and nature of the prophetic office, whilst his attitude towards Saul foreshadowed the position which the prophet was to assume in relation to the king. In the life of David, the Lord himself educated the king of His kingdom, the prince over His people, to whom He could continue His favour and grace even when he had fallen so deeply that it was necessary that he should be chastised for

his sins. Thus all the separate parts and sections are fused together as an organic whole in the fundamental thought of the work before us. And this unity is not rendered at all questionable by differences such as we find in the accounts of the mode of Saul's death as described in 1 Sam. xxxi. 4 and 2 Sam. i. 9, 10, or by such repetitions as the double account of the death of Samuel, and other phenomena of a similar kind, which can be explained without difficulty; whereas the assertion sometimes made, that there are some events of which we have two different accounts that contradict each other, has never yet been proved, and, as we shall see when we come to the exposition of the passages in question, has arisen partly from unscriptural assumptions, partly from ignorance of the formal peculiarities of the Hebrew mode of writing history, and partly from a mistaken interpretation of the passages themselves.

With regard to the *origin* of the books of Samuel, all that can be maintained with certainty is, that they were not written till after the division of the kingdom under Solomon's successor. This is evident from the remark in 1 Sam. xxvii. 6, that "*Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.*" For although David was king over the tribe of Judah alone for seven years, it was not till after the falling away of the ten tribes from the house of David that there were really "kings of Judah." On the other hand, nothing can be inferred with certainty respecting the date of composition, either from the distinction drawn between Israel and Judah in 1 Sam. xi. 8, xvii. 52, xviii. 16, and 2 Sam. iii. 10, xxiv. 1, which evidently existed as early as the time of David, as we may see from 2 Sam. ii. 9, 10, v. 1-5, xix. 41, xx. 2; or from the formula "*to this day,*" which we find in 1 Sam. v. 5, vi. 18, xxx. 25, 2 Sam. iv. 3, vi. 18, xviii. 18, since the duration of the facts to which it is applied is altogether unknown; or lastly, from such passages as 1 Sam. ix. 9, 2 Sam. xiii. 18, where explanations are given of expressions and customs belonging to the times of Saul and David, as it is quite possible that they may have been altogether changed by the time of Solomon. In general, the contents and style of the books point to the earliest times after the division of the kingdom; since we find no allusions whatever to the decay of the kingdoms which afterwards took place, and still

less to the captivity; whilst the style and language are classical throughout, and altogether free from Chaldaisms and later forms, such as we meet with in the writings of the Chaldean period, and even in those of the time of the captivity. The author himself is quite unknown; but, judging from the spirit of his writings, he was a prophet of the kingdom of Judah. It is unanimously admitted, however, that he made use of written documents, particularly of prophetic records made by persons who were contemporaries of the events described, not only for the history of the reigns of Saul and David, but also for the life and labours of Samuel, although no written sources are quoted, with the exception of the "book of Jasher," which contained the elegy of David upon Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. i. 18); so that the sources employed by him cannot be distinctly pointed out. The different attempts which have been made to determine them minutely, from the time of Eichhorn down to G. Em. Karo (*de fontibus librorum qui feruntur Samuelis Dissert. Berol.* 1862), are lacking in the necessary proofs which hypotheses must bring before they can meet with adoption and support. If we confine ourselves to the historical evidence, according to 1 Chron. xxix. 29, the first and last acts of king David, *i.e.* the events of his entire reign, were recorded in the "*dibre* of Samuel the seer, of Nathan the prophet, and of Gad the seer." These prophetic writings formed no doubt the leading sources from which our books of Samuel were also drawn, since, on the one hand, apart from sundry deviations arising from differences in the plan and object of the two authors, the two accounts of the reign of David in 2 Sam. viii.-xxiv. and 1 Chron. xi.-xxi. agree for the most part so thoroughly word for word, that they are generally regarded as extracts from one common source; whilst, on the other hand, the prophets named not only lived in the time of David but throughout the whole of the period referred to in the books before us, and took a very active part in the progressive development of the history of those times (see not only 1 Sam. i.-iii. vii.-x. xii. xv. xvi., but also 1 Sam. xix. 18-24, xxii. 5, 2 Sam. vii. 12, xxiv. 11-18). Moreover, in 1 Chron. xxvii. 24, there are "chronicles (diaries or annals) of king David" mentioned, accompanied with the remark that the result of the census appointed by David was not inserted in them, from

which we may infer that all the principal events of his reign were included in these chronicles. And they may also have formed one of the sources for our books, although nothing certain can be determined concerning the relation in which they stood to the writings of the three prophets that have been mentioned. Lastly, it is very evident from the character of the work before us, that the author had sources composed by eye-witnesses of the events at his command, and that these were employed with an intimate knowledge of the facts and with historical fidelity, inasmuch as the history is distinguished by great perspicuity and vividness of description, by a careful delineation of the characters of the persons engaged, and by great accuracy in the accounts of localities, and of subordinate circumstances connected with the historical events.

EXPOSITION.

I. HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL UNDER THE PROPHET SAMUEL.

1 SAM. I.-VII.

THE call of Samuel to be the prophet and judge of Israel formed a turning-point in the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God. As the prophet of Jehovah, Samuel was to lead the people of Israel out of the times of the judges into those of the kings, and lay the foundation for a prosperous development of the monarchy. Consecrated like Samson as a Nazarite from his mother's womb, Samuel accomplished the deliverance of Israel out of the power of the Philistines, which had been only commenced by Samson; and that not by the physical might of his arm, but by the spiritual power of his word and prayer, with which he led Israel back from the worship of dead idols to the Lord its God. And whilst as one of the judges, among whom he classes himself in 1 Sam. xii. 11, he brought the office of judge to a close, and introduced the monarchy; as a prophet, he laid the foundation of the prophetic office, inasmuch as he was the first to naturalize it, so

to speak, in Israel, and develope it into a power that continued henceforth to exert the strongest influence, side by side with the priesthood and monarchy, upon the development of the covenant nation and kingdom of God. For even if there were prophets before the time of Samuel, who revealed the will of the Lord at times to the nation, they only appeared sporadically, without exerting any lasting influence upon the national life; whereas, from the time of Samuel onwards, the prophets sustained and fostered the spiritual life of the congregation, and were the instruments through whom the Lord made known His purposes to the nation and its rulers. To exhibit in its origin and growth the new order of things which Samuel introduced, or rather the deliverance which the Lord sent to His people through this servant of His, the prophetic historian goes back to the time of Samuel's birth, and makes us acquainted not only with the religious condition of the nation, but also with the political oppression under which it was suffering at the close of the period of the judges, and during the high-priesthood of Eli. At the time when the pious parents of Samuel were going year by year to the house of God at Shiloh to worship and offer sacrifice before the Lord, the house of God was being profaned by the abominable conduct of Eli's sons (ch. i. ii.). When Samuel was called to be the prophet of Jehovah, Israel lost the ark of the covenant, the soul of its sanctuary, in the war with the Philistines (ch. iii. iv.). And it was not till after the nation had been rendered willing to put away its strange gods and worship Jehovah alone, through the influence of Samuel's exertions as prophet, that the faithful covenant God gave it, in answer to Samuel's intercession, a complete victory over the Philistines (ch. vii.). In accordance with these three prominent features, the history of the judicial life of Samuel may be divided into three sections, viz.: ch. i. ii.; iii.-vi.; and vii.

**SAMUEL'S BIRTH AND DEDICATION TO THE LORD. HANNAH'S
SONG OF PRAISE.—CHAP. I.—II. 10.**

While Eli the high priest was judging Israel, and at the time when Samson was beginning to fight against the Philistines, a pious Israelitish woman prayed to the Lord for a son (vers.

1-18). Her prayer was heard. She bore a son, to whom she gave the name of Samuel, because he had been asked for from the Lord. As soon as he was weaned, she dedicated him to the Lord for a lifelong service (vers. 19-28), and praised the Lord in a song of prophetic character for the favour which He had shown to His people through hearkening to her prayer (ch. ii. 1-10).

*Vers. 1-8. *Samuel's pedigree*.—Ver. 1. His father was a man of Ramathaim-Zophim, on the mountains of Ephraim, and named Elkanah. *Ramathaim-Zophim*, which is only mentioned here, is the same place, according to ver. 3 (comp. with ver. 19 and ch. ii. 11), which is afterwards called briefly *ha-Ramah*, i.e. the height. For since Elkanah of Ramathaim-Zophim went year by year out of his city to Shiloh, to worship and sacrifice there, and after he had done this, returned to his house to Ramah (ver. 19, ch. ii. 11), there can be no doubt that he was not only a native of Ramathaim-Zophim, but still had his home there; so that Ramah, where his house was situated, is only an abbreviated name for Ramathaim-Zophim.¹ This Ramah (which is invariably written with the article, *ha-Ramah*), where Samuel was not only born (vers. 19 sqq.), but lived, laboured, died (ch. vii. 17, xv. 34, xvi. 13, xix. 18, 19, 22, 23), and was buried (ch. xxv. 1, xxviii. 3), is not a different place, as has been frequently assumed,² from the Ramah in Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 25), and is not to be sought for in Ramleh near Joppa (v. Schubert, etc.), nor in Soba on the north-west of Jerusalem (Robinson, *Pal.* ii. p. 329), nor three-quarters of an hour to the north of Hebron (Wolcott, v. de Velde), nor anywhere else in the tribe of Ephraim, but is identical with Ramah of Benjamin,

¹ The argument lately adduced by Valentiner in favour of the difference between these two names, viz. that "examples are not wanting of a person being described according to his original descent, although his dwelling-place had been already changed," and the instance which he cites, viz. Judg. xix. 16, show that he has overlooked the fact, that in the very passage which he quotes the temporary dwelling-place is actually mentioned along with the native town. In the case before us, on the contrary, Ramathaim-Zophim is designated, by the use of the expression "from his city," in ver. 3, as the place where Elkanah lived, and where "his house" (ver. 19) was still standing.

² For the different views which have been held upon this point, see the article "Ramah," by Pressel, in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*.

and was situated upon the site of the present village of er-Râm, two hours to the north-west of Jerusalem, upon a conical mountain to the east of the Nablus road (see at Josh. xviii. 25). This supposition is neither at variance with the account in ch. ix. x. (see the commentary upon these chapters), nor with the statement that Ramathaim-Zophim was upon the mountains of Ephraim, since the mountains of Ephraim extended into the tribe-territory of Benjamin, as is indisputably evident from Judg. iv. 5, where Deborah the prophetess is said to have dwelt between Ramah and Bethel in the mountains of Ephraim. The name Ramathaim-Zophim, *i.e.* "the two heights (of the) Zophites," appears to have been given to the town to distinguish it from other Ramahs, and to have been derived from the Levitical family of Zuph or Zophai (see 1 Chron. vi. 26, 35), which emigrated thither from the tribe of Ephraim, and from which Elkanah was descended. The full name, therefore, is given here, in the account of the descent of Samuel's father; whereas in the further history of Samuel, where there was no longer the same reason for giving it, the simple name Ramah is invariably used.¹ The connection between Zophim and Zuph is confirmed by the fact that Elkanah's ancestor, Zuph, is called Zophai in 1 Chron. vi. 26, and Zuph or Ziph in 1 Chron. vi. 35. Zophim therefore signifies the descendants of Zuph or Zophai, from which the name "land of Zuph," in ch. ix. 5, was also derived (see the commentary on this passage). The tracing back of Elkanah's family through four generations to Zuph agrees with the family registers in 1 Chron. vi., where the ancestors of Elkanah are mentioned twice,—first of all in the genealogy of the Kohathites (ver. 26), and then in that of Heman, the leader of the singers, a grandson of Samuel (ver.

¹ The fuller and more exact name, however, appears to have been still retained, and the use of it to have been revived after the captivity, in the *Ῥαμαθὶμ* of 1 Macc. xi. 34, for which the Codd. have *Ῥαθαμὶν* and *Ῥαμαθαίμ*, and Josephus *Ῥαμαθῆ*, and in the Arimathæa of the gospel history (Matt. xxvii. 57). "For the opinion that this Ramathaim is a different place from the city of Samuel, and is to be sought for in the neighbourhood of Lydda, which Robinson advocates (*Pal.* iii. pp. 41 sqq.), is a hasty conclusion, drawn from the association of Ramathaim with Lydda in 1 Macc. xi. 34,—the very same conclusion which led the author of the *Onomasticon* to transfer the city of Samuel to the neighbourhood of Lydda" (Grimm on 1 Macc. xi. 34).

33),—except that the names Elihu, Tohu, and Zuph, are given as Eliab, Nahath, and Zophai in the first instance, and Eliel, Toah, and Ziph (according to the *Chethibh*) in the second,—various readings, such as often occur in the different genealogies, and are to be explained partly from the use of different forms for the same name, and partly from their synonymous meanings. *Tohu* and *Toah*, which occur in Arabic, with the meaning to press or sink in, are related in meaning to *nachath* or *nuach*, to sink or settle down. From these genealogies in the Chronicles, we learn that Samuel was descended from Kohath, the son of Levi, and therefore was a Levite. It is no valid objection to the correctness of this view, that his Levitical descent is never mentioned, or that Elkanah is called an Ephraimite. The former of these can very easily be explained from the fact, that Samuel's work as a reformer, which is described in this book, did not rest upon his Levitical descent, but simply upon the call which he had received from God, as the prophetic office was not confined to any particular class, like that of priest, but was founded exclusively upon the divine calling and endowment with the Spirit of God. And the difficulty which Nägelsbach expresses in Herzog's *Cycl.*, viz. that "as it was stated of those two Levites (Judg. xvii. 7, xix. 1), that they lived in Bethlehem and Ephraim, but only after they had been expressly described as Levites, we should have expected to find the same in the case of Samuel's father," is removed by the simple fact, that in the case of both those Levites it was of great importance, so far as the accounts which are given of them are concerned, that their Levitical standing should be distinctly mentioned, as is clearly shown by Judg. xvii. 10, 13, and xix. 18; whereas in the case of Samuel, as we have already observed, his Levitical descent had no bearing upon the call which he received from the Lord. The word *Ephraimite* does not belong, so far as the grammatical construction is concerned, either to *Zuph* or *Elkanah*, but to "a certain man," the subject of the principal clause, and signifies an Ephraimite, as in Judg. xii. 5 and 1 Kings xi. 26, and not an inhabitant of Ephraim, i.e. a Bethlehemite, as in ch. xvii. 12 and Ruth i. 2; for in both these passages the word is more precisely defined by the addition of the expression "of Bethlehem-Judah," whereas in this verse the explanation is to be found in the expression "of

Mount Ephraim." Elkanah the Levite is called an Ephraimite, because, so far as his civil standing was concerned, he belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, just as the Levite in Judg. xvii. 7 is described as belonging to the family of Judah. The Levites were reckoned as belonging to those tribes in the midst of which they lived, so that there were Judæan Levites, Ephraimitish Levites, and so on (see Hengstenberg, *Diss.* vol. ii. p. 50). It by no means follows, however, from the application of this term to Elkanah, that Ramathaim-Zophim formed part of the tribe-territory of Ephraim, but simply that Elkanah's family was incorporated in this tribe, and did not remove till afterwards to Ramah in the tribe of Benjamin. On the division of the land, dwelling-places were allotted to the Levites of the family of Kohath, in the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and Manasseh (Josh. xxi. 5, 21 sqq.). Still less is there anything at variance with the Levitical descent of Samuel, as Thenius maintains, in the fact that he was dedicated to the Lord by his mother's vow, for he was not dedicated to the service of Jehovah generally through this vow, but was set apart to a lifelong service at the house of God as a Nazarite (vers. 11, 22); whereas other Levites were not required to serve till their twenty-fifth year, and even then had not to perform an uninterrupted service at the sanctuary. On the other hand, the Levitical descent of Samuel receives a very strong confirmation from his father's name. All the Elkanahs that we meet with in the Old Testament, with the exception of the one mentioned in 2 Chron. xxviii. 7, whose genealogy is unknown, can be proved to have been Levites; and most of them belong to the family of Korah, from which Samuel was also descended (see Simonis, *Onomast.* p. 493). This is no doubt connected in some way with the meaning of the name *Elkanah*, the man whom God has bought or acquired; since such a name was peculiarly suitable to the Levites, whom the Lord had set apart for service at the sanctuary, in the place of the first-born of Israel, whom He had sanctified to himself when He smote the first-born of Egypt (Num. iii. 13 sqq., 44 sqq.; see Hengstenberg, *ut sup.*).—Vers. 2, 3. Elkanah had two wives, Hannah (grace or gracefulness) and Peninnah (coral), the latter of whom was blessed with children, whereas the first was childless. He went with his wives year by year (מִמֵּי שָׁנָה מִמֵּי שָׁנָה, as in Ex. xiii. 10, Judg. xi. 40), according to the instructions

of the law (Ex. xxxiv. 23, Deut. xvi. 16), to the tabernacle at Shiloh (Josh. xviii. 1), to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of hosts. "*Jehovah Zebaoth*" is an abbreviation of "*Jehovah Elohe Zebaoth*," or יהוה אֱלֹהֵי הַצְבָּאוֹת; and the connection of *Zebaoth* with *Jehovah* is not to be regarded as the construct state, nor is *Zebaoth* to be taken as a genitive dependent upon *Jehovah*. This is not only confirmed by the occurrence of such expressions as "*Elohim Zebaoth*" (Ps. lix. 6, lxxx. 5, 8, 15, 20, lxxxiv. 9) and "*Adonai Zebaoth*" (Isa. x. 16), but also by the circumstance that *Jehovah*, as a proper name, cannot be construed with a genitive. The combination "*Jehovah Zebaoth*" is rather to be taken as an ellipsis, where the general term *Elohe* (God of), which is implied in the word *Jehovah*, is to be supplied in thought (see Hengstenberg, *Christol.* i. p. 375, English translation); for frequently as this expression occurs, especially in the case of the prophets, *Zebaoth* is never used alone in the Old Testament as one of the names of God. It is in the Septuagint that the word is first met with occasionally as a proper name (*Σαβαώθ*), viz. throughout the whole of the first book of Samuel, very frequently in Isaiah, and also in Zech. xiii. 2. In other passages, the word is translated either κύριος, or θεὸς τῶν δυνάμεων, or παντοκράτωρ; whilst the other Greek versions use the more definite phrase κύριος στρατιῶν instead.

This expression, which was not used as a divine name until the age of Samuel, had its roots in Gen. ii. 1, although the title itself was unknown in the Mosaic period, and during the times of the judges (see p. 7). It represented *Jehovah* as ruler over the heavenly hosts (*i.e.* the angels, according to Gen. xxxii. 2, and the stars, according to Isa. xl. 26), who are called the "armies" of *Jehovah* in Ps. ciii. 21, cxlviii. 2; but we are not to understand it as implying that the stars were supposed to be inhabited by angels, as Gesenius (*Thes. s. v.*) maintains, since there is not the slightest trace of any such notion in the whole of the Old Testament. It is simply applied to *Jehovah* as the God of the universe, who governs all the powers of heaven, both visible and invisible, as He rules in heaven and on earth. It cannot even be proved that the epithet Lord, or God of *Zebaoth*, refers chiefly and generally to the sun, moon, and stars, on account of their being so peculiarly adapted, through their visible splendour, to keep alive the consciousness of the

omnipotence and glory of God (Hengstenberg on Ps. xxiv. 10). For even though the expression צְבָאוֹת (their host), in Gen. ii. 1, refers to the heavens only, since it is only to the heavens (*vid.* Isa. xl. 26), and never to the earth, that a "host" is ascribed, and in this particular passage it is probably only the stars that are to be thought of, the creation of which had already been mentioned in Gen. i. 14 sqq.; yet we find the idea of an army of angels introduced in the history of Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 2, 3), where Jacob calls the angels of God who appeared to him the "camp of God," and also in the blessing of Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 2), where the "ten thousands of saints" (*Kodesh*) are not stars, but angels, or heavenly spirits; whereas the fighting of the stars against Sisera in the song of Deborah probably refers to a natural phenomenon, by which God had thrown the enemy into confusion, and smitten them before the Israelites (see at Judg. v. 20). We must also bear in mind, that whilst on the one hand the tribes of Israel, as they came out of Egypt, are called Zebaoth Jehovah, "the hosts of Jehovah" (Ex. vii. 4, xii. 41), on the other hand the angel of the Lord, when appearing in front of Jericho in the form of a warrior, made himself known to Joshua as "the prince of the army of Jehovah," *i.e.* of the angelic hosts. And it is in this appearance of the heavenly leader of the people of God to the earthly leader of the hosts of Israel, as the prince of the angelic hosts, not only promising him the conquest of Jericho, but through the miraculous overthrow of the walls of this strong bulwark of the Canaanitish power, actually giving him at the same time a practical proof that the prince of the angelic hosts was fighting for Israel, that we have the material basis upon which the divine epithet "Jehovah God of hosts" was founded, even though it was not introduced immediately, but only at a later period, when the Lord began to form His people Israel into a kingdom, by which all the kingdoms of the heathen were to be overcome. It is certainly not without significance that this title is given to God for the first time in these books, which contain an account of the founding of the kingdom, and (as Auberlen has observed) that it was by Samuel's mother, the pious Hannah, when dedicating her son to the Lord, and prophesying of the king and anointed of the Lord in her song of praise (ch. ii. 10), that this name was employed for the first time, and that God

was addressed in prayer as "Jehovah of hosts" (ver. 11). Consequently, if this name of God goes hand in hand with the prophetic announcement and the actual establishment of the monarchy in Israel, its origin cannot be attributed to any antagonism to Sabæism, or to the hostility of pious Israelites to the worship of the stars, which was gaining increasing ground in the age of David, as Hengstenberg (on Ps. xxiv. 10) and Strauss (on Zeph. ii. 9) maintain; to say nothing of the fact, that there is no historical foundation for such an assumption at all. It is a much more natural supposition, that when the invisible sovereignty of Jehovah received a visible manifestation in the establishment of the earthly monarchy, the sovereignty of Jehovah, if it did possess and was to possess any reality at all, necessarily claimed to be recognised in its all-embracing power and glory, and that in the title "God of (the heavenly) hosts" the fitting expression was formed for the universal government of the God-king of Israel,—a title which not only served as a bulwark against any eclipsing of the invisible sovereignty of God by the earthly monarchy in Israel, but overthrew the vain delusion of the heathen, that the God of Israel was simply the national deity of that particular nation.¹

The remark introduced in ver. 3b, "*and there were the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, priests of the Lord,*" i.e. performing the duties of the priesthood, serves as a preparation for what follows. This reason for the remark sufficiently explains why the sons of Eli only are mentioned here, and not Eli himself, since, although the latter still presided over the sanctuary as high priest, he was too old to perform the duties connected with the offering of sacrifice. The addition made by the LXX., 'Ἡλ και, is an arbitrary interpolation, occasioned by a misapprehension of the reason for mentioning the sons of Eli.—Vers. 4, 5. "*And it came to pass, the day, and he*

¹ This name of God was therefore held up before the people of the Lord even in their war-songs and pæans of victory, but still more by the prophets, as a banner under which Israel was to fight and to conquer the world. Ezekiel is the only prophet who does not use it, simply because he follows the Pentateuch so strictly in his style. And it is not met with in the book of Job, just because the theocratic constitution of the Israelitish nation is never referred to in the problem of that book.

offered sacrifice" (for, "on which he offered sacrifice"), that he gave to Peninnah and her children portions of the flesh of the sacrifice at the sacrificial meal; but to Hannah he gave **כֶּזַיִם אֶחָת**, "*one portion for two persons*," i.e. a double portion, because he loved her, but Jehovah had shut up her womb: i.e. he gave it as an expression of his love to her, to indicate by a sign, "thou art as dear to me as if thou hadst born me a child" (O. v. Gerlach). This explanation of the difficult word **כֶּזַיִם**, of which very different interpretations have been given, is the one adopted by Tanchum Hieros., and is the only one which can be grammatically sustained, or yields an appropriate sense. The meaning *face* (*facies*) is placed beyond all doubt by Gen. iii. 19 and other passages; and the use of **כֶּזַיִם** as a synonym for **אִנְשִׁים** in ch. xxv. 23, also establishes the meaning "person," since **אִנְשִׁים** is used in this sense in 2 Sam. xvii. 11. It is true that there are no other passages that can be adduced to prove that the singular **כֶּזַיִם** was also used in this sense; but as the word was employed promiscuously in both singular and plural in the derivative sense of anger, there is no reason for denying that the singular may also have been employed in the sense of *face* (*πρόσωπον*). The combination of **כֶּזַיִם** with **אֶחָת** in the absolute state is supported by many other examples of the same kind (see Ewald, § 287, h). The meaning *double* has been correctly adopted in the Syriac, whereas Luther follows the *tristis* of the Vulgate, and renders the word *traurig*, or sad. But this meaning, which Fr. Böttcher has lately taken under his protection, cannot be philologically sustained either by the expression **נָפְלִי כֶּזַיִם** (Gen. iv. 6), or by Dan. xi. 20, or in any other way. **כֶּזַיִם** and **אִנְשִׁים** do indeed signify anger, but anger and sadness are two very different ideas. But when Böttcher substitutes "angrily or unwillingly" for sadly, the incongruity strikes you at once: "he gave her a portion unwillingly, because he loved her!" For the custom of singling out a person by giving double or even large portions, see the remarks on Gen. xliii. 34.—Ver. 6. "*And her adversary (Peninnah) also provoked her with provocation, to irritate her.*" The **כִּי** is placed before the noun belonging to the verb, to add force to the meaning. **רָעַם** (*Hiphil*), to excite, put into (inward) commotion, not exactly to make angry.—Ver. 7. "*So did he (Elkanah) from year to year*

(namely give to Hannah a double portion at the sacrificial meal), *as often as she went up to the house of the Lord. So did she* (Peninnah) *provoke her* (Hannah), *so that she wept, and did not eat.*" The two וַיִּזְכֹּר correspond to one another. Just as Elkanah showed his love to Hannah at every sacrificial festival, so did Peninnah repeat her provocation, the effect of which was that Hannah gave vent to her grief in tears, and did not eat.—Ver. 8. Elkanah sought to comfort her in her grief by the affectionate appeal: "*Am I not better to thee* (טוֹב, i.e. dearer) *than ten children?*" Ten is a round number for a large number.

Vers. 9-18. *Hannah's prayer for a son.*—Vers. 9-11. "*After the eating at Shiloh, and after the drinking,*" i.e. after the sacrificial meal was over, Hannah rose up with a troubled heart, to pour out her grief in prayer before God, whilst Eli was sitting before the door-posts of the palace of Jehovah, and vowed this vow: "*Lord of Zebaoth, if Thou regardest the distress of Thy maiden, and givest men's seed to Thy maiden, I will give him to the Lord all his life long, and no razor shall come upon his head.*" The choice of the infinitive absolute וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה instead of the infinitive construct is analogous to the combination of two nouns, the first of which is defined by a suffix, and the second written absolutely (see e.g. עָנִי וְחִמְרָה, Ex. xv. 2; cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5, and Ewald, § 339, b). The words from וַיֵּלֶךְ onwards to וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה form two circumstantial clauses inserted in the main sentence, to throw light upon the situation and the further progress of the affair. The tabernacle is called "*the palace of Jehovah*" (cf. ch. ii. 22), not on account of the magnificence and splendour of the building, but as the dwelling-place of Jehovah of hosts, the God-king of Israel, as in Ps. v. 8, etc. וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה is probably a porch, which had been placed before the curtain that formed the entrance into the holy place, when the tabernacle was erected permanently at Shiloh. וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, troubled in soul (cf. 2 Kings iv. 27). וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה is really subordinate to וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, in the sense of "weeping much during her prayer." The depth of her trouble was also manifest in the crowding together of the words in which she poured out the desire of her heart before God: "*If Thou wilt look upon the distress of Thine handmaid, and remember and not forget,*" etc. "*Men's seed*" (*semen virorum*), i.e. a male child. וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה

is the plural of **אִישׁ**, a man (see Ewald, § 186-7), from the root **אִשׂ**, which combines the two ideas of fire, regarded as life, and giving life and firmness. The vow contained two points: (1) she would give the son she had prayed for to be the Lord's all the days of his life, *i.e.* would dedicate him to the Lord for a lifelong service, which, as we have already observed at p. 18, the Levites as such were not bound to perform; and (2) no razor should come upon his head, by which he was set apart as a Nazarite for his whole life (see at Num. vi. 2 sqq., and Judg. xiii. 5). The Nazarite, again, was neither bound to perform a lifelong service nor to remain constantly at the sanctuary, but was simply consecrated for a certain time, whilst the sacrifice offered at his release from the vow shadowed forth a complete surrender to the Lord. The second point, therefore, added a new condition to the first, and one which was not necessarily connected with it, but which first gave the true consecration to the service of the Lord at the sanctuary. At the same time, the qualification of Samuel for priestly functions, such as the offering of sacrifice, can neither be deduced from the first point in the vow, nor yet from the second. If, therefore, at a later period, when the Lord had called him to be a prophet, and had thereby placed him at the head of the nation, Samuel officiated at the presentation of sacrifice, he was not qualified to perform this service either as a Levite or as a lifelong Nazarite, but performed it solely by virtue of his prophetic calling.—Vers. 12-14. But when Hannah prayed much (*i.e.* a long time) before the Lord, and Eli noticed her mouth, and, as she was praying inwardly, only saw her lips move, but did not hear her voice, he thought she was drunken, and called out to her: "*How long dost thou show thyself drunken? put away thy wine from thee,*" *i.e.* go away and sleep off thine intoxication (cf. ch. xxv. 37). **מְדַבֵּרָה עַל לִבָּהּ**, *lit.* speaking to her heart. **עַל** is not to be confounded with **אֵל** (Gen. xxiv. 45), but has the subordinate idea of a comforting address, as in Gen. xxxiv. 3, etc.—Vers. 15, 16. Hannah answered: "*No, my lord, I am a woman of an oppressed spirit. I have not drunk wine and strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord* (see Ps. xlii. 5). *Do not count thine handmaid for a worthless woman, for I have spoken hitherto out of great sighing and grief.*" **נָתַן לְפָנַי**, to set or lay before a person, *i.e.* generally to give a person up to

another; here to place him in thought in the position of another, *i.e.* to take him for another. Ψ , meditation, inward movement of the heart, sighing.—Ver. 17. Eli then replied: “Go in peace, and the God of Israel give (grant) thy request (Ψ for Ψ), which thou hast asked of Him.” This word of the high priest was not a prediction, but a pious wish, which God in His grace most gloriously fulfilled.—Ver. 18. Hannah then went her way, saying, “Let thine handmaid find grace in thine eyes,” *i.e.* let me be honoured with thy favour and thine intercession, and was strengthened and comforted by the word of the high priest, which assured her that her prayer would be heard by God; and she did eat, “and her countenance was no more,” *sc.* troubled and sad, as it had been before. This may be readily supplied from the context, through which the word countenance (Ψ) acquires the sense of a troubled countenance, as in Job ix. 27.

Vers. 19-28. *Samuel's birth, and dedication to the Lord.*—

Vers. 19, 20. The next morning Elkanah returned home to Ramah (see at ver. 1) with his two wives, having first of all worshipped before the Lord; after which he knew his wife Hannah, and Jehovah remembered her, *i.e.* heard her prayer. “In the revolution of the days,” *i.e.* of the period of her conception and pregnancy, Hannah conceived and bare a son, whom she called Samuel; “for (she said) I have asked him of the Lord.” The name Ψ ($\Sigma\alpha\mu\upsilon\eta\lambda$, LXX.) is not formed from Ψ = Ψ and Ψ , name of God (Ges. *Thes.* p. 1434), but from Ψ , heard of God, a *Deo exauditus*, with an elision of the y (see Ewald, § 275, a, Not. 3); and the words “because I have asked him of the Lord” are not an etymological explanation of the name, but an exposition founded upon the facts. Because Hannah had asked him of Jehovah, she gave him the name, “the God-he d,” as a memorial of the hearing of her prayer.—Vers. 21, 22. When Elkanah went up again with his family to Shiloh, to present his yearly sacrifice and his vow to the Lord, Hannah said to her husband that she would not go up till she had weaned the boy, and could present him to the Lord, that he might remain there for ever. Ψ , the sacrifice of the days, *i.e.* which he was accustomed to offer on the days when he went up to the sanctuary; really, therefore, the annual sacrifice. It follows from the expression “and his vow,” that Elkanah

had also vowed a vow to the Lord, in case the beloved Hannah should have a son. The vow referred to the presentation of a sacrifice. And this explains the combination of אֶת־יְיָ with לְיָנִי.¹ Weaning took place very late among the Israelites. According to 2 Macc. vii. 28, the Hebrew mothers were in the habit of suckling their children for three years. When the weaning had taken place, Hannah would bring her son up to the sanctuary, to appear before the face of the Lord, and remain there for ever, *i.e.* his whole life long. The Levites generally were only required to perform service at the sanctuary from their twenty-fifth to their fiftieth year (Num. viii. 24, 25); but Samuel was to be presented to the Lord immediately after his weaning had taken place, and to remain at the sanctuary for ever, *i.e.* to belong entirely to the Lord. To this end he was to receive his training at the sanctuary, that at the very earliest waking up of his spiritual susceptibilities he might receive the impressions of the sacred presence of God. There is no necessity, therefore, to understand the word נָמַל (wean) as including what followed the weaning, namely, the training of the child up to

¹ The LXX. add to τὰς εἰχλὰς αὐτοῦ the clause καὶ πάσας τὰς δεκάτας τῆς γῆς αὐτοῦ ("and all the tithes of his land"). This addition is just as arbitrary as the alteration of the singular יְיָ into the plural τὰς εἰχλὰς αὐτοῦ. The translator overlooked the special reference of the word יְיָ to the child desired by Elkanah, and imagined—probably with Deut. xii. 26, 27 in his mind, where vows are ordered to be paid at the sanctuary in connection with slain offerings and sacrificial meals—that when Elkanah made his annual journey to the tabernacle he would discharge all his obligations to God, and consequently would pay his tithes. The genuineness of this additional clause cannot be sustained by an appeal to Josephus (*Ant.* v. 10, 3), who also has δεκάτας τε ἔφερον, for Josephus wrote his work upon the basis of the Alexandrian version. This statement of Josephus is only worthy of notice, inasmuch as it proves the incorrectness of the conjecture of Thénius, that the allusion to the tithes was intentionally dropped out of the Hebrew text by copyists, who regarded Samuel's Levitical descent as clearly established by 1 Chron. vi. 7–13 and 19–21. For Josephus (*l. c.* § 2) expressly describes Elkanah as a Levite, and takes no offence at the offering of tithes attributed to him in the Septuagint, simply because he was well acquainted with the law, and knew that the Levites had to pay to the priests a tenth of the tithes that they received from the other tribes, as a heave-offering of Jehovah (Num. xviii. 26 sqq.; cf. Neh. x. 38). Consequently the presentation of tithe on the part of Elkanah, if it were really well founded in the biblical text, would not furnish any argument against his Levitical descent.

his thirteenth year (Seb. Schmidt), on the ground that a child of three years old could only have been a burden to Eli: for the word never has this meaning, not even in 1 Kings xi. 20; and, as O. v. Gerlach has observed, his earliest training might have been superintended by one of the women who worshipped at the door of the tabernacle (ch. ii. 22).—Ver. 23. Elkanah expressed his approval of Hannah's decision, and added, "*only the Lord establish His word,*" i.e. fulfil it. By "His word" we are not to understand some direct revelation from God respecting the birth and destination of Samuel, as the Rabbins suppose, but in all probability the word of Eli the high priest to Hannah, "The God of Israel grant thy petition" (ver. 17), which might be regarded by the parents of Samuel after his birth as a promise from Jehovah himself, and therefore might naturally excite the wish and suggest the prayer that the Lord would graciously fulfil the further hopes, which the parents cherished in relation to the son whom they had dedicated to the Lord by a vow. The paraphrase of יִבְרִי in the rendering given by the LXX., τὸ ἐξελεθὼν ἐκ τοῦ στόματός σου, is the subjective view of the translator himself, and does not warrant an emendation of the original text.—Vers. 24, 25. As soon as the boy was weaned, Hannah brought him, although still a נֶסֶר, i.e. a tender boy, to Shiloh, with a sacrifice of three oxen, an ephah of meal, and a pitcher of wine, and gave him up to Eli when the ox (bullock) had been slain, i.e. offered in sacrifice as a burnt-offering. The striking circumstance that, according to ver. 24, Samuel's parents brought three oxen with them to Shiloh, and yet in ver. 25 the ox (הַפָּר) alone is spoken of as being slain (or sacrificed), may be explained very simply on the supposition that in ver. 25 that particular sacrifice is referred to, which was associated with the presentation of the boy, that is to say, the burnt-offering by virtue of which the boy was consecrated to the Lord as a spiritual sacrifice for a lifelong service at His sanctuary, whereas the other two oxen served as the yearly festal offering, i.e. the burnt-offerings and thank-offerings which Elkanah presented year by year, and the presentation of which the writer did not think it needful to mention, simply because it followed partly from ver. 3 and partly from the Mosaic law.¹—Vers.

¹ The interpretation of בְּפָרִים שְׁלֵשָׁה by ἐν μέσσοις τριετίστοις (LXX.), upon which Thenius would found an alteration of the text, is proved to be

26-28. When the boy was presented, his mother made herself known to the high priest as the woman who had previously prayed to the Lord at that place (see vers. 11 sqq.), and said, "*For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath granted me my request which I asked of Him: therefore I also make him one asked of the Lord all the days that he liveth; he is asked of the Lord.*" *וְהָיָה אֲנִי: I also; et ego vicissim* (Cler.). *לְשׂוֹאֵל*, to let a person ask, to grant his request, to give him what he asks (Ex. xii. 36), signifies here to make a person "asked" (*שׂוֹאֵל*). The meaning to lend, which the lexicons give to the word both here and Ex. xii. 36, has no other support than the false rendering of the LXX., and is altogether unsuitable both in the one and the other. Jehovah had not *lent* the son to Hannah, but had *given* him (see ver. 11); still less could a man *lend* his son to the Lord. The last clause of ver. 28, "*and he worshipped the Lord there,*" refers to Elkanah, *qui in votum Hannæ consenserat*, and not to Samuel. On a superficial glance, the plural *שִׁשְׁתָּהוּ*, which is found in some Codd., and in the Vulgate, Syriac, and Arabic, appears the more suitable; but when we look more closely at the connection in which the clause stands, we see at once that it does not wind up the foregoing account, but simply introduces the closing act of the transference of Samuel. Consequently the singular is perfectly appropriate; and notwithstanding the fact that the subject is not mentioned, the allusion to Samuel is placed beyond all doubt. When Hannah had given up her son to the high priest, his father Elkanah first of all worshipped before the Lord in the sanctuary, and then Hannah worshipped in the song of praise, which follows in ch. ii. 1-10.

both arbitrary and wrong by the fact that the translators themselves afterwards mention the *θυσία*, which Elkanah brought year by year, and the *μύσχος*, and consequently represent him as offering at least two animals, in direct opposition to the *μύσχος τριετιζοντι*. This discrepancy cannot be removed by the assertion that in ver. 24 the sacrificial animal intended for the dedication of the boy is the only one mentioned; and the presentation of the regular festal sacrifice is taken for granted, for an ephah of meal would not be the proper quantity to be offered in connection with a single ox, since, according to the law in Num. xv. 8, 9, only three-tenths of an ephah of meal were required when an ox was presented as a burnt-offering or slain offering. The presentation of an ephah of meal presupposes the offering of three oxen, and therefore shows that in ver. 24 the materials are mentioned for all the sacrifices that Elkanah was about to offer.

Chap. ii. 1-10. *Hannah's song of praise*.—The prayer in which Hannah poured out the feelings of her heart, after the dedication of her son to the Lord, is a song of praise of a prophetic and Messianic character. After giving utterance in the introduction to the rejoicing and exulting of her soul at the salvation that had reached her (ver. 1), she praises the Lord as the only holy One, the only rock of the righteous, who rules on earth with omniscience and righteousness, brings down the proud and lofty, kills and makes alive, maketh poor and maketh rich (vers. 2-8). She then closes with the confident assurance that He will keep His saints, and cast down the rebellious, and will judge the ends of the earth, and exalt the power of His king (vers. 9, 10).

This psalm is the mature fruit of the Spirit of God. The pious woman, who had gone with all the earnest longings of a mother's heart to pray to the Lord God of Israel for a son, that she might consecrate him to the lifelong service of the Lord, "discerned in her own individual experience the general laws of the divine economy, and its signification in relation to the whole history of the kingdom of God" (Auberlen, p. 564). The experience which she, bowed down and oppressed as she was, had had of the gracious government of the omniscient and holy covenant God, was a pledge to her of the gracious way in which the nation itself was led by God, and a sign by which she discerned how God not only delivered at all times the poor and wretched who trusted in Him out of their poverty and distress, and set them up, but would also lift up and glorify His whole nation, which was at that time so deeply bowed down and oppressed by its foes. Acquainted as she was with the destination of Israel to be a *kingdom*, from the promises which God had given to the patriarchs, and filled as she was with the longing that had been awakened in the nation for the realization of these promises, she could see in spirit, and through the inspiration of God, the *king* whom the Lord was about to give to His people, and through whom He would raise it up to might and dominion.

The refusal of modern critics to admit the genuineness of this song is founded upon an *a priori* and utter denial of the supernatural saving revelations of God, and upon a consequent inability to discern the prophetic illumination of the pious

Hannah, and a complete misinterpretation of the contents of her song of praise. The "proud and lofty," whom God humbles and casts down, are not the heathen or the national foes of Israel, and the "poor and wretched" whom He exalts and makes rich are not the Israelites as such; but the former are the *ungodly*, and the latter the *pious*, in Israel itself. And the description is so well sustained throughout, that it is only by the most arbitrary criticism that it can be interpreted as referring to definite historical events, such as the victory of David over Goliath (Thenius), or a victory of the Israelites over heathen nations (Ewald and others). Still less can any argument be drawn from the words of the song in support of its later origin, or its composition by David or one of the earliest of the kings of Israel. On the contrary, not only is its genuineness supported by the general consideration that the author of these books would never have ascribed a song to Hannah, if he had not found it in the sources he employed; but still more decisively by the circumstance that the songs of praise of Mary and Zechariah, in Luke i. 46 sqq. and 68 sqq., show, through the manner in which they rest upon this ode, in what way it was understood by the pious Israelites of every age, and how, like the pious Hannah, they recognised and praised in their own individual experience the government of the holy God in the midst of His kingdom.

The first verse forms the introduction to the song. Holy joy in the Lord at the blessing which she had received impelled the favoured mother to the praise of God :

Ver. 1. My heart is joyful in the Lord,
 My horn is exalted in the Lord,
 My mouth is opened wide over mine enemies :
 For I rejoice in Thy salvation.

Of the four members of this verse, the first answers to the third, and the second to the fourth. The heart rejoices at the lifting up of her horn, the mouth opens wide to proclaim the salvation before which the enemies would be dumb. "*My horn is high*" does not mean 'I am proud' (Ewald), but "my power is great in the Lord." The horn is the symbol of strength, and is taken from oxen whose strength is in their horns (*vid.* Deut. xxxiii. 17; Ps. lxxv. 5, etc.). The power was high or exalted by the salvation which the Lord had mani-

fested to her. To Him all the glory was due, because He had proved himself to be the holy One, and a rock upon which a man could rest his confidence.

Ver. 2. None is holy as the Lord ; for there is none beside Thee ;
And no rock is as our God.

3. Speak ye not much lofty, lofty ;
Let (not) insolence go out of thy mouth !
For the Lord is an omniscient God,
And with Him deeds are weighed.

God manifests himself as holy in the government of the kingdom of His grace by His guidance of the righteous to salvation (see at Ex. xix. 6). But holiness is simply the moral reflection of the glory of the one absolute God. This explains the reason given for His holiness, viz. "there is not one (a God) beside thee" (cf. 2 Sam. xxii. 32). As the holy and only One, God is the rock (*vid.* Deut. xxxii. 4, 15 ; Ps. xviii. 3) in which the righteous can always trust. The wicked therefore should tremble before His holiness, and not talk in their pride of the *lofty* things which they have accomplished or intend to perform. נְבוֹהָה is defined more precisely in the following clause, which is also dependent upon אֵל by the word עֲתָק, as insolent words spoken by the wicked against the righteous (see Ps. xxxi. 19). For Jehovah hears such words ; He is "*a God of knowledge*" (*Deus scientiarum*), a God who sees and knows every single thing. The plural דְּעוֹת has an intensive signification. לֹא נִתְבַּשְׁט עֲלֵלּוֹת might be rendered "deeds are not weighed, or equal" (cf. Ezek. xviii. 25, 26, xxxiii. 17). But this would only apply to the actions of men ; for the acts of God are always just, or weighed. But an assertion respecting the actions of men does not suit the context. Hence this clause is reckoned in the Masora as one of the passages in which לֹא stands for לֵ (see at Ex. xxi. 8). "*To Him (with Him) deeds are weighed.*" that is to say, the acts of God are weighed, *i.e.* equal or just. This is the real meaning according to the passages in Ezekiel, and not "the actions of men are weighed by Him" (De Wette, Maurer, Ewald, etc.): for God weighs the minds and hearts of men (Prov. xvi. 2, xxi. 2, xxiv. 12), not their actions. This expression never occurs. The weighed or righteous acts of God are described in vers. 4-8 in great and general traits, as displayed in the government of His kingdom

through the marvellous changes which occur in the circumstances connected with the lives of the righteous and the wicked.

- Ver. 4. Bow-heroes are confounded,
And stumbling ones gird themselves with strength ;
5. Full ones hire themselves out for bread,
And hungry ones cease to be.
Yea, the barren beareth seven (children),
And she that is rich in children pines away.
6. The Lord kills and makes alive ;
Leads down into hell, and leads up.
7. The Lord makes poor and makes rich,
Humbles and also exalts.
8. He raises mean ones out of the dust,
He lifts up poor ones out of the dunghill,
To set them beside the noble ;
And He apportioneth to them the seat of glory :
For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,
And He sets the earth upon them.

In ver. 4, the predicate *הָתִיתִּים* is construed with the *nomen rectum* *נִפְלִיִּים*, not with the *nomen regens* *קָשָׁת*, because the former is the leading term (*vid.* Ges. § 148, 1, and Ewald, § 317, *d*). The thought to be expressed is, not that the bow itself is to be broken, but that the heroes who carry the bow are to be confounded or broken inwardly. "*Bows of the heroes*" stands for heroes carrying bows. For this reason the verb is to be taken in the sense of confounded, not broken, especially as, apart from Isa. li. 56, *הָתִיתִּים* is not used to denote the breaking of outward things, but the breaking of men.—Ver. 5. *שְׂבָעִים* are the rich and well to do ; these would become so poor as to be obliged to hire themselves out for bread. *חֵלֵל*, to cease to be what they were before. The use of *וְ* as a conjunction, in the sense of "yea" or "in fact," may be explained as an elliptical expression, signifying "it comes to this, that." "*Seven children*" are mentioned as the full number of the divine blessing in children (see Ruth iv. 15). "*The mother of many children*" pines away, because she has lost all her sons, and with them her support in her old age (see Jer. xv. 9). This comes from the Lord, who kills, etc. (*cf.* Deut. xxxii. 39). The words of ver. 6 are figurative. God hurls down into death and the danger of death, and also rescues therefrom (see Ps. xxx. 3, 4).

The first three clauses of ver. 8 are repeated *verbatim* in Ps. cxiii. 7, 8. *Dust* and the *dunghill* are figures used to denote the deepest degradation and ignominy. The antithesis to this is, sitting upon the chair or throne of glory, the seat occupied by noble princes. The Lord does all this, for He is the creator and upholder of the world. *The pillars* (עֲמֻדֹת, from עָמַד = עָמַד) *of the earth are the Lord's*; i.e. they were created or set up by Him, and by Him they are sustained. Now as Jehovah, the God of Israel, the Holy One, governs the world with His almighty power, the righteous have nothing to fear. With this thought the last strophe of the song begins :

Ver. 9. The feet of His saints He will keep,
And the wicked perish in darkness;
For by power no one becomes strong.

10. The Lord—those who contend against Him are confounded.
He thunders above him in the heavens;
The Lord will judge the ends of the earth,
That He may lend might to His king,
And exalt the horn of His anointed.

The Lord keeps the feet of the righteous, so that they do not tremble and stumble, i.e. so that the righteous do not fall into adversity and perish therein (*vid.* Ps. lvi. 14, cxvi. 8, cxxi. 3). But the wicked, who oppress and persecute the righteous, will perish in darkness, i.e. in adversity, when God withdraws the light of His grace, so that they fall into distress and calamity. For no man can be strong through his own power, so as to meet the storms of life. All who fight against the Lord are destroyed. To bring out the antithesis between man and God, "Jehovah" is written absolutely at the commencement of the sentence in ver. 10: "*As for Jehovah, those who contend against Him are broken,*" both inwardly and outwardly (תָּהָה, as in ver. 4). The word עָלָיו, which follows, is not to be changed into עֲלֵיהֶם. There is simply a rapid alternation of the numbers, such as we frequently meet with in excited language. "*Above him,*" i.e. above every one who contends against God, He thunders. Thunder is a premonitory sign of the approach of the Lord to judgment. In the thunder, man is made to feel in an alarming way the presence of the omnipotent God. In the words, "*The Lord will judge the ends of the earth,*" i.e. the earth to its utmost extremities, or the whole world, Hannah's

prayer rises up to a prophetic glance at the consummation of the kingdom of God. As certainly as the Lord God keeps the righteous at all times, and casts down the wicked, so certainly will He judge the whole world, to hurl down all His foes, and perfect His kingdom which He has founded in Israel. And as every kingdom culminates in its throne, or in the full might and government of a king, so the kingdom of God can only attain its full perfection in the king whom the Lord will give to His people, and endow with His might. *The king*, or the *anointed of the Lord*, of whom Hannah prophesies in the spirit, is not one single king of Israel, either David or Christ, but an ideal king, though not a mere personification of the throne about to be established, but the actual king whom Israel received in David and his race, which culminated in the Messiah. The exaltation of the horn of the anointed of Jehovah commenced with the victorious and splendid expansion of the power of David, was repeated with every victory over the enemies of God and His kingdom gained by the successive kings of David's house, goes on in the advancing spread of the kingdom of Christ, and will eventually attain to its eternal consummation in the judgment of the last day, through which all the enemies of Christ will be made His footstool.

SAMUEL'S SERVICE BEFORE ELI. UNGODLINESS OF ELI'S SONS.
 DENUNCIATION OF JUDGMENT UPON ELI AND HIS HOUSE.
 —CHAP. II. 11-36.

Vers. 11-17. *Samuel the servant of the Lord under Eli. Ungodliness of the sons of Eli.*—Ver. 11 forms the transition to what follows. After Hannah's psalm of thanksgiving, Elkanah went back with his family to his home at Ramah, and the boy (Samuel) was serving, *i.e.* ministered to the Lord, in the presence of Eli the priest. The fact that nothing is said about Elkanah's wives going with him, does not warrant the interpretation given by Thenius, that Elkanah went home alone. It was taken for granted that his wives went with him, according to ch. i. 21 ("all his house"). שָׂרַת אֶת־יְהוָה, which signifies literally, both here and in ch. iii. 1, to serve the Lord, and which is used interchangeably with 'שָׂרַת אֶת־פָּנַי' (ver. 18), to serve in the presence of the Lord, is used to denote the duties

performed both by priests and Levites in connection with the worship of God, in which Samuel took part, as he grew up, under the superintendence of Eli and according to his instructions.—Ver. 12. But Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas (ver. 34), were *בְּנֵי בָלִיעַל*, worthless fellows, and knew not the Lord, *sc.* as He should be known, *i.e.* did not fear Him, or trouble themselves about Him (*vid.* Job xviii. 21; Hos. viii. 2, xiii. 4).—Vers. 13, 14. “*And the right of the priests towards the people was (the following). Mishpat signifies the right which they had usurped to themselves in relation to the people. “If any one brought a sacrifice (כֹּל־אִישׁ וְבָחַ וְבָחַ) is placed first, and construed absolutely: ‘as for every one who brought a slain-offering’), the priest’s servant (lit. young man) came while the flesh was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand, and thrust into the kettle, or pot, or bowl, or saucepan. All that the fork brought up the priest took. This they did to all the Israelites who came thither to Shiloh.*”—Vers. 15, 16. They did still worse. “*Even before the fat was consumed,*” *i.e.* before the fat portions of the sacrifice had been placed in the altar-fire for the Lord (Lev. iii. 3-5), the priest’s servant came and demanded flesh of the person sacrificing, to be roasted for the priest; “*for he will not take boiled flesh of thee, but only רָךְ, raw, i.e. fresh meat.*” And if the person sacrificing replied, “*They will burn the fat directly (lit. ‘at this time,’ as in Gen. xxv. 31, 1 Kings xxii. 5), then take for thyself, as thy soul desireth,*” he said, “*No (לֹא for אֵל), but thou shalt give now; if not, I take by force.*” These abuses were practised by the priests in connection with the thank-offerings, with which a sacrificial meal was associated. Of these offerings, the portion which legally fell to the priest as his share was the heave-leg and wave-breast. And this he was to receive after the fat portions of the sacrifice had been burned upon the altar (see Lev. vii. 30-34). To take the flesh of the sacrificial animal and roast it before this offering had been made, was a crime which was equivalent to a robbery of God, and is therefore referred to here with the emphatic particle *כִּי*, as being the worst crime that the sons of Eli committed. Moreover, the priests could not claim any of the flesh which the offerer of the sacrifice boiled for the sacrificial meal, after burning the fat portions upon the altar and giving up the portions which belonged to them, to say nothing of their taking it forcibly out

of the pots while it was being boiled.—Ver. 17. Such conduct as this on the part of the young men (the priests' servants), was a great sin in the sight of the Lord, as they thereby brought the sacrifice of the Lord into contempt. וַיְבִיאוּ, causative, to bring into contempt, furnish occasion for blaspheming (as in 2 Sam. xii. 14). "The robbery which they committed was a small sin in comparison with the contempt of the sacrifices themselves, which they were the means of spreading among the people" (O. v. Gerlach). *Minchah* does not refer here to the meat-offering as the accompaniment to the slain-offerings, but to the sacrificial offering generally, as a gift presented for the Lord.

Vers. 18–21. *Samuel's service before the Lord*.—Ver. 18. Samuel served as a boy before the Lord by the side of the worthless sons of Eli, girt with an ephod of white material (וְהָיָה, see at Ex. xxviii. 42). The ephod was a shoulder-dress, no doubt resembling the high priest's in shape (see Ex. xxviii. 6 sqq.), but altogether different in the material of which it was made, viz. simple white cloth, like the other articles of clothing that were worn by the priests. At that time, according to ch. xxii. 18, all the priests wore clothing of this kind; and, according to 2 Sam. vi. 14, David did the same on the occasion of a religious festival. Samuel received a dress of this kind even when a boy, because he was set apart to a lifelong service before the Lord. וְהָיָה is the technical expression for putting on the ephod, because the two pieces of which it was composed were girt round the body with a girdle.—Ver. 19. The small וְהָיָה also (*Angl.* "coat"), which Samuel's mother made and brought him every year, when she came with her husband to Shiloh to the yearly sacrifice, was probably a coat resembling the *metl* of the high priest (Ex. xxviii. 31 sqq.), but was made of course of some simpler material, and without the symbolical ornaments attached to the lower hem, by which that official dress was distinguished.—Ver. 20. The priestly clothing of the youthful Samuel was in harmony with the spiritual relation in which he stood to the high priest and to Jehovah. Eli blessed his parents for having given up the boy to the Lord, and expressed this wish to the father: "*The Lord lend thee seed of this woman in the place of the one asked for* (וְהָיָה), *whom they* (one) *asked for from the Lord.*" The striking use of the third pers. masc. וְהָיָה instead of the second singular or plural may be

accounted for on the supposition that it is an indefinite form of speech, which the writer chose because, although it was Hannah who prayed to the Lord for Samuel in the sight of Eli, yet Eli might assume that the father, Elkanah, had shared the wishes of his pious wife. The apparent harshness disappears at once if we substitute the passive; whereas in Hebrew active constructions were always preferred to passive, wherever it was possible to employ them (Ewald, § 294, b). The singular suffix attached to *מְקוֹמוֹ* after the plural *הֵלְכִי* may be explained on the simple ground, that a dwelling-place is determined by the husband, or master of the house.—Ver. 21. The particle *וְ*, “for” (Jehovah visited), does not mean *if*, *as*, or *when*, nor is it to be regarded as a copyist’s error. It is only necessary to supply the thought contained in the words, “*Eli blessed Elkanah*,” viz. that Eli’s blessing was not an empty fruitless wish; and to understand the passage in some such way as this: Eli’s word was fulfilled, or still more simply, *they went to their home blessed*; for *Jehovah visited Hannah*, blessed her with “*three sons and two daughters*; but the boy Samuel grew up with the Lord,” i.e. near to Him (at the sanctuary), and under His protection and blessing.

Vers. 22-26. *Eli’s treatment of the sins of his sons*.—Ver. 22. The aged Eli reproved his sons with solemn warnings on account of their sins; but without his warnings being listened to. From the reproof itself we learn, that beside the sin noticed in vers. 12-17, they also committed the crime of lying with the women who served at the tabernacle (see at Ex. xxxviii. 8), and thus profaned the sanctuary with whoredom. But Eli, with the infirmities of his old age, did nothing further to prevent these abominations than to say to his sons, “*Why do ye according to the sayings which I hear, sayings about you which are evil, of this whole people*.” *אֶת־דְּבָרֵיכֶם רָעִים* is inserted to make the meaning clearer, and *מֵאֵת כָּל־הָעָם* is dependent upon *רָעִים*. “*This whole people*” signifies all the people that came to Shiloh, and heard and saw the wicked doings there.—Ver. 24. *אֵל פָּנַי*, “not, my sons,” i.e. do not such things, “for the report which I hear is not good; they make the people of Jehovah to transgress.” *מֵעֲבָרִים* is written without the pronoun *אֲנִי* in an indefinite construction, like *מִשְׁלָחִים* in ch. vi. 3 (Maurer). Ewald’s rendering as given by Thenius, “The report which I

hear the people of God bring," is just as inadmissible as the one proposed by Böttcher, "The report which, as I hear, the people of God are spreading." The assertion made by Thenius, that *העביר*, without any further definition, cannot mean to cause to sin or transgress, is correct enough no doubt; but it does not prove that this meaning is inadmissible in the passage before us, since the further definition is actually to be found in the context.—Ver. 25. "*If man sins against man, God judges him; but if a man sins against Jehovah, who can interpose with entreaty for him?*" In the use of *העביר* and *העביר* there is a paronomasia which cannot be reproduced in our language. *העביר* signifies to decide or pass sentence (Gen. xlviii. 11), then to arbitrate, to settle a dispute as arbitrator (Ezek. xvi. 52, Ps. cvi. 30), and in the *Hithpael* to act as mediator, hence to entreat. And these meanings are applicable here. In the case of one man's sin against another, God settles the dispute as arbitrator through the proper authorities; whereas, when a man sins against God, no one can interpose as arbitrator. Such a sin cannot be disposed of by intercession: But Eli's sons did not listen to this admonition, which was designed to reform daring sinners with mild words and representations; "*for,*" adds the historian, "*Jehovah was resolved to slay them.*" The father's reproof made no impression upon them, because they were already given up to the judgment of hardening. (On hardening as a divine sentence, see the discussions at Ex. iv. 21.)—Ver. 26. The youthful Samuel, on the other hand, continued to grow in stature, and in favour with God and man (see Lev. ii. 52).

Vers. 27–36. *Announcement of the judgment upon Eli and his house.*—Ver. 27. Before the Lord interposed in judgment, He sent a prophet (a "*man of God,*" as in Judg. xiii. 6) to the aged Eli, to announce as a warning for all ages the judgment which was about to fall upon the worthless priests of his house. In order to arouse Eli's own conscience, he had pointed out to him, on the one hand, the grace manifested in the choice of his father's house, *i.e.* the house of Aaron, to keep His sanctuary (vers. 27b and 28), and, on the other hand, the desecration of the sanctuary by the wickedness of his sons (ver. 29). Then follows the sentence: The choice of the family of Aaron still stood fast, but the deepest disgrace would come upon the despisers of the Lord (ver. 30): the strength of his house

would be broken ; all the members of his house were to die early deaths. They were not, however, to be removed entirely from service at the altar, but to their sorrow were to survive the fall of the sanctuary (vers. 31-34). But the Lord would raise up a faithful priest, and cause him to walk before His anointed, and from him all that were left of the house of Eli would be obliged to beg their bread (vers. 35, 36). To arrive at the true interpretation of this announcement of punishment, we must picture to ourselves the historical circumstances that come into consideration here. Eli the high priest was a descendant of Ithamar, the younger son of Aaron, as we may see from the fact that his great-grandson Ahimelech was "of the sons of Ithamar" (1 Chron. xxiv. 3). In perfect agreement with this, Josephus (*Ant.* v. 11, 5) relates, that after the high priest Ozi of the family of Eleazar, Eli of the family of Ithamar received the high-priesthood. The circumstances which led to the transfer of this honour from the line of Eleazar to that of Ithamar are unknown. We cannot imagine it to have been occasioned by an extinction of the line of Eleazar, for the simple reason that, in the time of David, Zadok the descendant of Eleazar is spoken of as high priest along with Abiathar and Ahimelech, the descendants of Eli (2 Sam. viii. 17, xx. 25). After the deposition of Abiathar he was reinstated by Solomon as sole high priest (1 Kings ii. 27), and the dignity was transmitted to his descendants. This fact also overthrows the conjecture of Clericus, that the transfer of the high-priesthood to Eli took place by the command of God on account of the grievous sins of the high priests of the line of Eleazar ; for in that case Zadok would not have received this office again in connection with Abiathar. We have, no doubt, to search for the true reason in the circumstances of the times of the later judges, namely in the fact that at the death of the last high priest of the family of Eleazar before the time of Eli, the remaining son was not equal to the occasion, either because he was still an infant, or at any rate because he was too young and inexperienced, so that he could not enter upon the office, and Eli, who was probably related by marriage to the high priest's family, and was no doubt a vigorous man, was compelled to take the oversight of the congregation ; and, together with the supreme administration of the affairs of the nation as

judge, received the post of high priest as well, and filled it till the time of his death, simply because in those troublous times there was not one of the descendants of Eleazar who was able to fill the supreme office of judge, which was combined with that of high priest. For we cannot possibly think of an unjust usurpation of the office of high priest on the part of Eli, since the very judgment denounced against him and his house presupposes that he had entered upon the office in a just and upright way, and that the wickedness of his sons was all that was brought against him. For a considerable time after the death of Eli the high-priesthood lost almost all its significance. All Israel turned to Samuel, whom the Lord established as His prophet by means of revelations, and whom He also chose as the deliverer of His people. The tabernacle at Shiloh, which ceased to be the scene of the gracious presence of God after the loss of the ark, was probably presided over first of all after Eli's death by his grandson Ahitub, the son of Phinehas, as his successor in the high-priesthood. He was followed in the time of Saul by his son Ahijah or Ahimelech, who gave David the shew-bread to eat at Nob, to which the tabernacle had been removed in the meantime, and was put to death by Saul in consequence, along with all the priests who were found there. His son Abiathar, however, escaped the massacre, and fled to David (ch. xxii. 9-20, xxiii. 6). In the reign of David he is mentioned as high priest along with Zadok; but he was afterwards deposed by Solomon (2 Sam. xv. 24, xvii. 15, xix. 12, xx. 25; 1 Kings ii. 27).

Different interpretations have been given of these verses. The majority of commentators understand them as signifying that the loss of the high-priesthood is here foretold to Eli, and also the institution of Zadok in the office. But such a view is too contracted, and does not exhaust the meaning of the words. The very introduction to the prophet's words points to something greater than this: "*Thus saith the Lord, Did I reveal myself to thy father's house, when they were in Egypt at the house of Pharaoh?*" The interrogative is not used for הֲלֹא (*nonne*), but is emphatic, as in Jer. xxxi. 20. The question is an appeal to Eli's conscience, which he cannot deny, but is obliged to confirm. By Eli's father's house we are not to understand Ithamar and his family, but Aaron, from whom Eli

was descended through Ithamar. God revealed himself to the tribe-father of Eli by appointing Aaron to be the spokesman of Moses before Pharaoh (Ex. iv. 14 sqq. and 27), and still more by calling Aaron to the priesthood, for which the way was prepared by the fact that, from the very beginning, God made use of Aaron, in company with Moses, to carry out His purpose of delivering Israel out of Egypt, and entrusted Moses and Aaron with the arrangements for the celebration of the passover (Ex. xii. 1, 43). This occurred when they, the fathers of Eli, Aaron and his sons, were still in Egypt at the house of Pharaoh, *i.e.* still under Pharaoh's rule.—Ver. 28. "*And did I choose him out of all the tribes for a priest to myself?*" The interrogative particle is not to be repeated before וַיִּבְחֹר, but the construction becomes affirmative with the inf. abs. instead of the perfect. "*Him*" refers back to "*thy father*" in ver. 27, and signifies Aaron. The expression "*for a priest*" is still further defined by the clauses which follow: לָעֹלֹת עָלַי, "*to ascend upon mine altar,*" *i.e.* to approach my altar of burnt-offering and perform the sacrificial worship; "*to kindle incense,*" *i.e.* to perform the service in the holy place, the principal feature in which was the daily kindling of the incense, which is mentioned *instar omnium*; "*to wear the ephod before me,*" *i.e.* to perform the service in the holy of holies, which the high priest could only enter when wearing the ephod to represent Israel before the Lord (Ex. xxviii. 12). "*And have given to thy father's house all the firings of the children of Israel*" (see at Lev. i. 9). These words are to be understood, according to Deut. xviii. 1, as signifying that the Lord had given to the house of Aaron, *i.e.* to the priesthood, the sacrifices of Jehovah to eat in the place of any inheritance in the land, according to the portions appointed in the sacrificial law in Lev. vi. vii., and Num. xviii.—Ver. 29. With such distinction conferred upon the priesthood, and such careful provision made for it, the conduct of the priests under Eli was an inexcusable crime. "*Why do ye tread with your feet my slain-offerings and meat-offerings, which I have commanded in the dwelling-place?*" Slain-offering and meat-offering are general expressions embracing all the altar-sacrifices. מִעֹל is an accusative ("*in the dwelling*"), like בַּיֵּת, in the house. "*The dwelling*" is the tabernacle. This reproof applied to the priests generally, including

Eli, who had not vigorously resisted these abuses. The words which follow, "*and thou honourest thy sons more than me,*" relate to Eli himself, and any other high priest who like Eli should tolerate the abuses of the priests. "*To fatten yourselves with the first of every sacrificial gift of Israel, of my people.*" לַעֲמִי serves as a periphrasis for the genitive, and is chosen for the purpose of giving greater prominence to the idea of עַמִּי (my people). רֵאשִׁית, the first of every sacrificial gift (*minchah*, as in ver. 17), which Israel offered as the nation of Jehovah, ought to have been given up to its God in the altar-fire because it was the best; whereas, according to vers. 15, 16, the sons of Eli took away the best for themselves.—Ver. 30. For this reason, the saying of the Lord, "*Thy house (i.e. the family of Eli) and thy father's house (Eli's relations in the other lines, i.e. the whole priesthood) shall walk before me for ever*" (Num. xxv. 13), should henceforth run thus: "*This be far from me; but them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be despised.*" The first declaration of the Lord is not to be referred to Eli particularly, as it is by C. a Lapede and others, and understood as signifying that the high-priesthood was thereby transferred from the family of Eleazar to that of Ithamar, and promised to Eli for his descendants for all time. This is decidedly at variance with the fact, that although "walking before the Lord" is not a general expression denoting a pious walk with God, as in Gen. xvii. 1, but refers to the service of the priests at the sanctuary as walking before the face of God, yet it cannot possibly be specially and exclusively restricted to the right of entering the most holy place, which was the prerogative of the high priest alone. These words of the Lord, therefore, applied to the whole priesthood, or the whole house of Aaron, to which the priesthood had been promised, "*for a perpetual statute*" (Ex. xxix. 9). This promise was afterwards renewed to Phinehas especially, on account of the zeal which he displayed for the honour of Jehovah in connection with the idolatry of the people at Shittim (Num. xxv. 13). But even this renewed promise only secured to him an eternal *priesthood* as a covenant of peace with the Lord, and not specially the high-priesthood, although that was included as the culminating point of the priesthood. Consequently it was not abrogated by the temporary transfer of the high-priest-

hood from the descendants of Phinehas to the priestly line of Ithamar, because even then they still retained the priesthood. By the expression "*be it far from me,*" *sc.* to permit this to take place, God does not revoke His previous promise, but simply denounces a false trust therein as irreconcilable with His holiness. That promise would only be fulfilled so far as the priests themselves honoured the Lord in their office, whilst despisers of God, who dishonoured Him by sin and presumptuous wickedness, would be themselves despised.

This contempt would speedily come upon the house of Eli.—Ver. 31. "*Behold, days come,*"—a formula with which prophets were accustomed to announce future events (see 2 Kings xx. 17; Isa. xxxix. 6; Amos iv. 2, viii. 11, ix. 13; Jer. vii. 32, etc.),—"then will I cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall be no old man in thine house." To cut off the arm means to destroy the strength either of a man or of a family (see Job xxii. 9; Ps. xxxvii. 17). The strength of a family, however, consists in the vital energy of its members, and shows itself in the fact that they reach a good old age, and do not pine away early and die. This strength was to vanish in Eli's house; no one would ever again preserve his life to old age.—Ver. 32. "*And thou wilt see oppression of the dwelling in all that He has shown of good to Israel.*" The meaning of these words, which have been explained in very different ways, appears to be the following: In all the benefits which the Lord would confer upon His people, Eli would see only distress for the dwelling of God, inasmuch as the tabernacle would fall more and more into decay. In the person of Eli, the high priest at that time, the high priest generally is addressed as the custodian of the sanctuary; so that what is said is not to be limited to him personally, but applies to all the high priests of his house. *בְּעֵינָיו* is not Eli's dwelling-place, but the dwelling-place of God, *i.e.* the tabernacle, as in ver. 29, and is a genitive dependent upon *יִצְחָק*, in the sense of benefiting a person, doing him good, is construed with the accusative of the person, as in Deut. xxviii. 63, viii. 16, xxx. 5. The subject to the verb *יִצְחָק* is *Jehovah*, and is not expressly mentioned, simply because it is so clearly implied in the words themselves. This threat began to be fulfilled even in Eli's own days. The distress or tribulation for the tabernacle began with

the capture of the ark by the Philistines (ch. iv. 11), and continued during the time that the Lord was sending help and deliverance to His people through the medium of Samuel, in their spiritual and physical oppression. The ark of the covenant—the heart of the sanctuary—was not restored to the tabernacle in the time of Samuel; and the tabernacle itself was removed from Shiloh to Nob, probably in the time of war; and when Saul had had all the priests put to death (ch. xxi. 2, xxii. 11 sqq.), it was removed to Gibeon, which necessarily caused it to fall more and more into neglect. Among the different explanations, the rendering given by Aquila (καὶ ἐπιβλέψει (? ἐπιβλέψης) ἀντίζηλον κατοικητηρίου) has met with the greatest approval, and has been followed by Jerome (*et videbis œmulum tuum*), Luther, and many others, including De Wette. According to this rendering, the words are either supposed to refer to the attitude of Samuel towards Eli, or to the deposition of Abiathar, and the institution of Zadok by Solomon in his place (1 Kings ii. 27). But עֹיֵב does not mean the antagonist or rival, but simply the oppressor or enemy; and Samuel was not an enemy of Eli any more than Zadok was of Abiathar. Moreover, if this be adopted as the rendering of עֹיֵב, it is impossible to find any suitable meaning for the following clause. In the second half of the verse the threat of ver. 31 is repeated with still greater emphasis. כָּל־יְמֵי־יָמֶיךָ, all the time, *i.e.* so long as thine house shall exist.—Ver. 33. “*And I will not cut off every one to thee from mine altar, that thine eyes may languish, and thy soul consume away; and all the increase of thine house shall die as men.*” The two leading clauses of this verse correspond to the two principal thoughts of the previous verse, which are hereby more precisely defined and explained. Eli was to see the distress of the sanctuary; for to him, *i.e.* of his family, there would always be some one serving at the altar of God, that he might look upon the decay with his eyes, and pine away with grief in consequence. כָּל־אֶחָד signifies every one, or any one, and is not to be restricted, as Thenius supposes, to Ahitub, the son of Phinehas, the brother of Ichabod; for it cannot be shown from ch. xiv. 3 and xxii. 20, that he was the only one that was left of the house of Eli. And secondly, there was to be no old man, no one advanced in life, in his house; but all the increase of the house was to die in the full

bloom of manhood. עֲשָׂרָה, in contrast with יָלֵף, is used to denote men in the prime of life.

Ver. 34. "*And let this be the sign to thee, what shall happen to (come upon) thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall both die.*" For the fulfilment of this, see ch. iv. 11. This occurrence, which Eli lived to see, but did not long survive (ch. iv. 17 sqq.), was to be the sign to him that the predicted punishment would be carried out in its fullest extent.—Ver. 35. But the priesthood itself was not to fall with the fall of Eli's house and priesthood; on the contrary, the Lord would raise up for himself a tried priest, who would act according to His heart. "*And I will build for him a lasting house, and he will walk before mine anointed for ever.*"—Ver. 36. Whoever, on the other hand, should still remain of Eli's house, would come "*bowing before him (to get) a silver penny and a slice of bread,*" and would say, "*Put me, I pray, in one of the priests' offices, that I may get a piece of bread to eat.*" הָרִיחַ, that which is collected, signifies some small coin, of which a collection was made by begging single coins. Commentators are divided in their opinions as to the historical allusions contained in this prophecy. By the "tried priest," Ephraem Syrus understood both the prophet Samuel and the priest Zadok. "As for the facts themselves," he says, "it is evident that, when Eli died, Samuel succeeded him in the government, and that Zadok received the high-priesthood when it was taken from his family." Since his time, most of the commentators, including Theodoret and the Rabbins, have decided in favour of Zadok. Augustine, however, and in modern times Thenius and O. v. Gerlach, give the preference to Samuel. The fathers and earlier theologians also regarded Samuel and Zadok as the type of Christ, and supposed the passage to contain a prediction of the abrogation of the Aaronic priesthood by Jesus Christ.¹ This higher

¹ Theodoret, *qu. vii.* in 1 Reg. Οὐκοῦν ἡ πρόρρησις κυρίως μὲν ἀρμόττει τῷ σωτήρι Χριστῷ. κατὰ δὲ ἱστορίαν τῷ Σαδούκ, ὅς ἐκ τοῦ Ἐλεάζαρ κατὰ γένος, τὴν ἀρχιερασίην διὰ τοῦ Σολομῶνος ἰδέξατο. Augustine says (*De civit. Dei* xvii. 5, 2): "Although Samuel was not of a different tribe from the one which had been appointed by the Lord to serve at the altar, he was not of the sons of Aaron, whose descendants had been set apart as priests; and thus the change is shadowed forth, which was afterwards to be introduced through Jesus Christ." And again, § 3: "What follows (ver. 35) refers to

reference of the words is in any case to be retained ; for the rabbinical interpretation, by which Grotius, Clericus, and others abide,—namely, that the transfer of the high-priesthood from the descendants of Eli to Zadok, the descendant of Eleazar, is all that is predicted, and that the prophecy was entirely fulfilled when Abiathar was deposed by Solomon (1 Kings ii. 27),—is not in accordance with the words of the text. On the other hand, Theodoret and Augustine both clearly saw that the words of Jehovah, “I revealed myself to thy father’s house in Egypt,” and, “Thy house shall walk before me for ever,” do not apply to Ithamar, but to Aaron. “Which of his fathers,” says Augustine, “was in that Egyptian bondage, from which they were liberated when he was chosen to the priesthood, excepting Aaron? It is with reference to his posterity, therefore, that it is here affirmed that they would not be priests for ever ; and this we see already fulfilled.” The only thing that appears untenable is the manner in which the fathers combine this historical reference to Eli and Samuel, or Zadok, with the Messianic interpretation, viz. either by referring vers. 31–34 to Eli and his house, and then regarding the sentence pronounced upon Eli as simply a type of the Messianic fulfilment, or by admitting the Messianic allusion simply as an allegory. The true interpretation may be obtained from a correct insight into the relation in which the prophecy itself stands to its fulfilment. Just as, in the person of Eli and his sons, the threat announces deep degradation and even destruction to all the priests of the house of Aaron who should walk in the footsteps of the sons of Eli, and the death of the two sons of Eli in one day was to be merely a sign that the threatened punishment would be completely fulfilled upon the ungodly priests ; so, on the other hand, the promise of the raising up of the tried priest, for whom God would build a lasting house, also refers to all the priests whom

that priest, whose figure was borne by Samuel when succeeding to Eli.” So again in the Berleburger Bible, to the words, “I will raise me up a faithful priest,” this note is added : “Zadok, of the family of Phinehas and Eleazar, whom king Solomon, as the anointed of God, appointed high priest by his ordinance, setting aside the house of Eli (1 Kings ii. 35 ; 1 Chron. xxix. 22). At the same time, just as in the person of Solomon the Spirit of prophecy pointed to the true Solomon and Anointed One, so in this priest did He also point to Jesus Christ the great High Priest.”

the Lord would raise up as faithful servants of His altar, and only receives its complete and final fulfilment in Christ, the true and eternal High Priest. But if we endeavour to determine more precisely from the history itself, which of the Old Testament priests are included, we must not exclude either Samuel or Zadok, but must certainly affirm that the prophecy was partially fulfilled in both. Samuel, as the prophet of the Lord, was placed at the head of the nation after the death of Eli; so that he not only stepped into Eli's place as judge, but stood forth as priest before the Lord and the nation, and "had the important and sacred duty to perform of going before the anointed, the king, whom Israel was to receive through him; whereas for a long time the Aaronic priesthood fell into such contempt, that, during the general decline of the worship of God, it was obliged to go begging for honour and support, and became dependent upon the new order of things that was introduced by Samuel" (O. v. Gerlach). Moreover, Samuel acquired a strong house in the numerous posterity that was given to him by God. The grandson of Samuel was Heman, "the king's seer in the words of God," who was placed by David over the choir at the house of God, and had fourteen sons and three daughters (1 Chron. vi. 33, xxv. 4, 5). But the very fact that these descendants of Samuel did not follow their father in the priesthood, shows very clearly that a lasting house was not built to Samuel as a tried priest through them, and therefore that we have to seek for the further historical fulfilment of this promise in the priesthood of Zadok. As the word of the Lord concerning the house of Eli, even if it did not find its only fulfilment in the deposition of Abiathar (1 Kings ii. 27), was at any rate partially fulfilled in that deposition; so the promise concerning the tried priest to be raised up received a new fulfilment in the fact that Zadok thereby became the sole high priest, and transmitted the office to his descendants, though this was neither its last nor its highest fulfilment. This final fulfilment is hinted at in the vision of the new temple, as seen by the prophet Ezekiel, in connection with which the sons of Zadok are named as the priests, who, because they had not fallen away with the children of Israel, were to draw near to the Lord, and perform His service in the new organization of the kingdom of God as set forth in that vision

(Ezek. xl. 46, xliii. 19, xliv. 15, xlviii. 11). This fulfilment is effected in connection with Christ and His kingdom. Consequently, the anointed of the Lord, before whom the tried priest would walk for ever, is not Solomon, but rather David, and the Son of David, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.

SAMUEL CALLED TO BE A PROPHET.—CHAP. III.

Vers. 1-9. At the time when Samuel served the Lord before Eli, both as a boy and as a young man (ch. ii. 11, 21, 26), the word of the Lord had become *dear*, i.e. rare, in Israel, and "*prophecy was not spread*." נִפְרָץ, from פָּרַץ, to spread out strongly, to break through copiously (cf. Prov. iii. 10). The "*word of the Lord*" is the word of God announced by prophets: the "*vision*," "*visio prophetica*." It is true that Jehovah had promised His people, that He would send prophets, who should make known His will and purpose at all times (Deut. xviii. 15 sqq.; cf. Num. xxiii. 23); but as a revelation from God presupposed susceptibility on the part of men, the unbelief and disobedience of the people might restrain the fulfilment of this and all similar promises, and God might even withdraw His word to punish the idolatrous nation. Such a time as this, when revelations from God were universally rare, had now arisen under Eli, in whose days, as the conduct of his sons sufficiently proves, the priesthood had fallen into very deep corruption.—Vers. 2-4. The word of the Lord was then issued for the first time to Samuel. Vers. 2-4 form one period. The clause, "*it came to pass at that time*" (ver. 2a), is continued in ver. 4a, "*that the Lord called*," etc. The intervening clauses from וְלֵאמֹר to אֶתֵּן אֶלְהִים are circumstantial clauses, intended to throw light upon the situation. The clause, "*Eli was laid down in his place*," etc., may be connected logically with "*at that time*" by the insertion of "*when*" (as in the English version: Tr.). The dimness of Eli's eyes is mentioned, to explain Samuel's behaviour, as afterwards described. Under these circumstances, for example, when Samuel heard his own name called out in sleep, he might easily suppose that Eli was calling him to render some assistance. The "*lamp of God*" is the light of the candlestick in the tabernacle, the seven lamps of which were put up and lighted every evening, and burned

through the night till all the oil was consumed (see Ex. xxx. 8, Lev. xxiv. 2, 2 Chron. xiii. 11, and the explanation given at Ex. xxvii. 21). The statement that this light was not yet extinguished, is equivalent to "before the morning dawn." "*And Samuel was lying (sleeping) in the temple of Jehovah, where the ark of God was.*" הֵיכָל does not mean the holy place, as distinguished from the "most holy," as in 1 Kings vi. 5, vii. 50,¹ but the whole tabernacle, the tent with its court, as the palace of the God-king, as in ch. i. 9, Ps. xi. 4. Samuel neither slept in the holy place by the side of the candlestick and table of shew-bread, nor in the most holy place in front of the ark of the covenant, but in the court, where cells were built for the priests and Levites to live in when serving at the sanctuary (see at ver. 15). *The ark of God, i.e. the ark of the covenant, is mentioned as the throne of the divine presence, from which the call to Samuel proceeded.*—Vers. 5-9. As soon as Samuel heard his name called out, he hastened to Eli to receive his commands. But Eli bade him lie down again, as he had not called him. At first, no doubt, he thought the call which Samuel had heard was nothing more than a false impression of the youth, who had been fast asleep. But the same thing was repeated a second and a third time; for, as the historian explains in ver. 6, "*Samuel had not yet known Jehovah, and (for) the word of Jehovah was not yet revealed to him.*" (The perfect יָרַע after בָּרָא, though very rare, is fully supported by Ps. xc. 2 and Prov. viii. 25, and therefore is not to be altered into יָרָע, as Dietrich and Böttcher propose.) He therefore imagined again that Eli had called him. But when he came to Eli after the third call, Eli perceived that the Lord was calling, and directed Samuel, if the call were repeated, to answer, "*Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth.*"

Vers. 10-18. When Samuel had lain down again, "*Jehovah came and stood,*" *sc.* before Samuel. These words show that the revelation of God was an objectively real affair, and not a mere dream of Samuel's. "*And he called to him as at*

¹ The Masoretes have taken הֵיכָל in this sense, and therefore have placed the *Aithnach* under שֹׁכֵב, to separate אֶשְׁכְּנָאֵל from בְּהֵיכָל, and thus to guard against the conclusion, which might be drawn from this view of הֵיכָל, that Samuel slept in the holy place.

other times" (see Num. xxiv. 1; Judg. xvi. 20, etc.). When Samuel replied in accordance with Eli's instructions, the Lord announced to him that He would carry out the judgment that had been threatened against the house of Eli (vers. 11-14). "*Behold, I do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle,*" *sc.* with horror (see 2 Kings xxi. 12; Jer. xix. 3; Hab. i. 5).—Ver. 12. "*On that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house (see ch. ii. 30 sqq.), beginning and finishing it,*" *i.e.* completely. הָקִים אֶת-אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר, to set up the word spoken, *i.e.* to carry it out, or accomplish it. In ver. 13 this word is communicated to Samuel, so far as its essential contents are concerned. God would judge "*the house of Eli for ever because of the iniquity, that he knew his sons were preparing a curse for themselves and did not prevent them.*" To judge on account of a crime, is the same as to punish it. עֲרֵעוּלָם, *i.e.* without the punishment being ever stopped or removed. מִקְלָלִים לָהֶם, cursing themselves, *i.e.* bringing a curse upon themselves. "*Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli, that the iniquity of the house of Eli shall not (אֵם, a particle used in an oath, equivalent to assuredly not) be expiated by slain-offerings and meat-offerings (through any kind of sacrifice) for ever.*" The oath makes the sentence irrevocable. (On the facts themselves, see the commentary on ch. ii. 27-36.)—Ver. 15. Samuel then slept till the morning; and when he opened the doors of the house of Jehovah, he was afraid to tell Eli of the revelation which he had received. Opening the doors of the house of God appears to have been part of Samuel's duty. We have not to think of doors opening into the holy place, however, but of doors leading into the court. Originally, when the tabernacle was simply a tent, travelling with the people from place to place, it had only curtains at the entrance to the holy place and court. But when Israel had become possessed of fixed houses in the land of Canaan, and the dwelling-place of God was permanently erected at Shiloh, instead of the tents that were pitched for the priests and Levites, who encamped round about during the journey through the desert, there were erected fixed houses, which were built against or inside the court, and not only served as dwelling-places for the priests and Levites who were officiating, but were also used for the reception and custody of the gifts that

were brought as offerings to the sanctuary. These buildings in all probability supplanted entirely the original tent-like enclosure around the court; so that instead of the curtains at the entrance, there were folding doors, which were shut in the evening and opened again in the morning. It is true that nothing is said about the erection of these buildings in our historical books, but the fact itself is not to be denied on that account. In the case of Solomon's temple, notwithstanding the elaborate description that has been given of it, there is nothing said about the arrangement or erection of the buildings in the court; and yet here and there, principally in Jeremiah, the existence of such buildings is evidently assumed. *מַרְאֵה*, *visio*, a sight or vision. This expression is applied to the word of God which came to Samuel, because it was revealed to him through the medium of an inward sight or intuition.—Vers. 16-18. When Samuel was called by Eli and asked concerning the divine revelation that he had received, he told him all the words, without concealing anything; whereupon Eli bowed in quiet resignation to the purpose of God: "*It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good.*" Samuel's communication, however, simply confirmed to the aged Eli what God had already made known to him through a prophet. But his reply proves that, with all his weakness and criminal indulgence towards his wicked sons, Eli was thoroughly devoted to the Lord in his heart. And Samuel, on the other hand, through his unreserved and candid communication of the terribly solemn word of God with regard to the man, whom he certainly venerated with filial affection, not only as high priest, but also as his own parental guardian, proved himself to be a man possessing the courage and the power to proclaim the word of the Lord without fear to the people of Israel.

Vers. 19-21. Thus Samuel grew, and Jehovah was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground, *i.e.* left no word unfulfilled which He spoke through Samuel. (On *וְהָיָה*, see Josh. xxi. 45, xxiii. 14, 1 Kings viii. 56.) By this all Israel from Dan to Beersheba (see at Judg. xx. 1) perceived that Samuel was found trustworthy, or approved (see Num. xii. 7) as a prophet of Jehovah. And the Lord continued to appear at Shiloh; for He revealed himself there to Samuel "*in the word of Jehovah,*" *i.e.* through a prophetic announcement of

His word. These three verses form the transition from the call of Samuel to the following account of his prophetic labours in Israel. At the close of ver. 21, the LXX. have appended a general remark concerning Eli and his sons, which, regarded as a deduction from the context, answers no doubt to the paraphrastic treatment of our book in that version, but in a critical aspect is utterly worthless.

WAR WITH THE PHILISTINES. LOSS OF THE ARK. DEATH
OF ELI AND HIS SONS.—CHAP. IV.

At Samuel's word, the Israelites attacked the Philistines, and were beaten (vers. 1, 2). They then fetched the ark of the covenant into the camp according to the advice of the elders, that they might thereby make sure of the help of the almighty covenant God; but in the engagement which followed they suffered a still greater defeat, in which Eli's sons fell and the ark was taken by the Philistines (vers. 3-11). The aged Eli, terrified at such a loss, fell from his seat and broke his neck (vers. 12-18); and his daughter-in-law was taken in labour, and died after giving birth to a son (vers. 19-22). With these occurrences the judgment began to burst upon the house of Eli. But the disastrous result of the war was also to be a source of deep humiliation to all the Israelites. Not only were the people to learn that the Lord had departed from them, but Samuel also was to make the discovery that the deliverance of Israel from the oppression and dominion of its foes was absolutely impossible without its inward conversion to its God.

Vers. 1, 2. The two clauses, "*The word of Samuel came to all Israel,*" and "*Israel went out,*" etc., are to be logically connected together in the following sense: "At the word or instigation of Samuel, Israel went out against the Philistines to battle." The Philistines were ruling over Israel at that time. This is evident, apart from our previous remarks concerning the connection between the commencement of this book and the close of the book of Judges (see vol. iv. pp. 280 sqq.), from the simple fact that the land of Israel was the scene of the war, and that nothing is said about an invasion on the part of the Philistines. The Israelites encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines were encamped at Aphek. The name *Ebenezer*

("the stone of help") was not given to the place so designated till a later period, when Samuel set up a memorial stone there to commemorate a victory that was gained over the Philistines upon the same chosen battle-field after the lapse of twenty years (ch. vii. 12). According to this passage, the stone was set up between *Mizpeh* and *Shen*. The former was not the Mizpeh in the lowlands of Judah (Josh. xv. 38), but the *Mizpeh* of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 26), *i.e.*, according to Robinson, the present *Neby Samwil*, two hours to the north-west of Jerusalem, and half an hour to the south of Gibeon (see at Josh. xviii. 26). The situation of *Aphek* has not been discovered. It cannot have been far from Mizpeh and Ebenezer, however, and was probably the same place as the Canaanitish capital mentioned in Josh. xii. 18, and is certainly different from the *Aphekah* upon the mountains of Judah (Josh. xv. 53); for this was on the south or south-west of Jerusalem, since, according to the book of Joshua, it belonged to the towns that were situated in the district of Gibeon.—Ver. 2. When the battle was fought, the Israelites were defeated by the Philistines, and in battle-array four thousand men were smitten upon the field. עָרָה, *sc.* מִלְחָמָה, as in Judg. xx. 20, 22, etc. בַּמַּעֲרָה, in battle-array, *i.e.* upon the field of battle, not in flight. "*In the field*," *i.e.* the open field where the battle was fought.

Vers. 3-11. On the return of the people to the camp, the elders held a council of war as to the cause of the defeat they had suffered. "*Why hath Jehovah smitten us to-day before the Philistines?*" As they had entered upon the war by the word and advice of Samuel, they were convinced that Jehovah had smitten them. The question presupposes at the same time that the Israelites felt strong enough to enter upon the war with their enemies, and that the reason for their defeat could only be that the Lord, their covenant God, had withdrawn His help. This was no doubt a correct conclusion; but the means which they adopted to secure the help of their God in continuing the war were altogether wrong. Instead of feeling remorse and seeking the help of the Lord their God by a sincere repentance and confession of their apostasy from Him, they resolved to fetch the ark of the covenant out of the tabernacle at Shiloh into the camp, with the delusive idea that God had so inseparably bound up His gracious presence in the midst of His people

with this holy ark, which He had selected as the throne of His gracious appearance, that He would of necessity come with it into the camp and smite the foe. In ver. 4, the ark is called "*the ark of the covenant of Jehovah of hosts, who is enthroned above the cherubim*," partly to show the reason why the people had the ark fetched, and partly to indicate the hope which they founded upon the presence of this sacred object. (See the commentary on Ex. xxv. 20-22.) The remark introduced here, "*and the two sons of Eli were there with the ark of the covenant of God*," is not merely intended to show who the guardians of the ark were, viz. priests who had hitherto disgraced the sanctuary, but also to point forward at the very outset to the result of the measures adopted.—Ver. 5. On the arrival of the ark in the camp, the people raised so great a shout of joy that the earth rang again. This was probably the first time since the settlement of Israel in Canaan, that the ark had been brought into the camp, and therefore the people no doubt anticipated from its presence a renewal of the marvellous victories gained by Israel under Moses and Joshua, and for that reason raised such a shout when it arrived.—Vers. 6-8. When the Philistines heard the noise, and learned on inquiry that the ark of Jehovah had come into the camp, they were thrown into alarm, for "*they thought (lit. said), God (Elohim) is come into the camp, and said, 'Woe unto us! For such a thing has not happened yesterday and the day before (i.e. never till now). Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the very gods that smote Egypt with all kinds of plagues in the wilderness.'*" The Philistines spoke of the God of Israel in the plural, הָאֱלֹהִים הָאֲדִירִים, as heathen who only knew of *gods*, and not of one Almighty God. Just as all the heathen feared the might of the gods of other nations in a certain degree, so the Philistines also were alarmed at the might of the God of the Israelites, and that all the more because the report of His deeds in the olden time had reached their ears (see Ex. xv. 14, 15). The expression "*in the wilderness*" does not compel us to refer the words "*smote with all the plagues*" exclusively to the destruction of Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 23 sqq.). "*All the plagues*" include the rest of the plagues which God inflicted upon Egypt, without there being any necessity to supply the copula ו before בְּמִדְבָּר, as in the LXX. and Syriac.

By this addition an antithesis is introduced into the words, which, if it really were intended, would require to be indicated by a previous בְּאֵימָתָם or בְּאֵימָתָם. According to the notions of the Philistines, all the wonders of God for the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt took place in the desert, because even when Israel was in Goshen they dwelt on the border of the desert, and were conducted thence to Canaan.—Ver. 9. But instead of despairing, they encouraged one another, saying, “*Show yourselves strong, and be men, O Philistines, that we may not be obliged to serve the Hebrews, as they have served you; be men, and fight!*”—Vers. 10, 11. Stimulated in this way, they fought and smote Israel, so that every one fled home (“to his tent,” see at Josh. xxii. 8), and 30,000 men of Israel fell. The ark also was taken, and the two sons of Eli died, *i.e.* were slain when the ark was taken,—a practical proof to the degenerate nation, that Jehovah, who was enthroned above the cherubim, had departed from them, *i.e.* had withdrawn His gracious presence.¹

Vers. 12-22. The tidings of this calamity were brought by a Benjaminite, who came as a messenger of evil tidings, with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head—a sign of the deepest mourning (see Josh. vii. 6)—to Shiloh, where the aged Eli was sitting upon a seat by the side (ל is a copyist's error for ל) of the way watching; for his heart trembled for the ark of God, which had been taken from the sanctuary into the camp without the command of God. At these tidings the whole city cried out with terror, so that Eli heard the sound of the cry, and asked the reason of this loud noise (or tumult), whilst the messenger was hurrying towards him with the news.—Ver. 15. Eli was ninety-eight years old, and “*his eyes stood,*” *i.e.* were

¹ “It is just the same now, when we take merely a historical Christ outside us for our Redeemer. He must prove His help chiefly internally by His Holy Spirit, to redeem us out of the hand of the Philistines; though externally He must not be thrown into the shade, as accomplishing our justification. If we had not Christ, we could never stand. For there is no help in heaven and on earth beside Him. But if we have Him in no other way than merely without us and under us, if we only preach about Him, teach, hear, read, talk, discuss, and dispute about Him, take His name into our mouth, but will not let Him work and show His power in us, He will no more help us than the ark helped the Israelites.”—*Berleburger Bible*.

stiff, so that he could no more see (*vid.* 1 Kings xiv. 4). This is a description of the so-called black cataract (*amaurosis*), which generally occurs at a very great age from paralysis of the optic nerves.—Vers. 16 sqq. When the messenger informed him of the defeat of the Israelites, the death of his sons, and the capture of the ark, at the last news Eli fell back from his seat by the side of the gate, and broke his neck, and died. The loss of the ark was to him the most dreadful of all—more dreadful than the death of his two sons. Eli had judged Israel forty years. The reading *twenty* in the Septuagint does not deserve the slightest notice, if only because it is perfectly incredible that Eli should have been appointed judge of the nation in his seventy-eighth year.—Vers. 19–22. The judgment which fell upon Eli through this stroke extended still further. His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was with child (near) to be delivered. לֵילָה, contracted from לֵילָהָ (from יָלָה: see Ges. § 69, 3, note 1; Ewald, § 238, c). When she heard the tidings of the capture (אֶל־הַלְקָחָהּ, “with regard to the being taken away”) of the ark of God, and the death of her father-in-law and husband, she fell upon her knees and was delivered, for her pains had fallen upon her (*lit.* had turned against her), and died in consequence. Her death, however, was but a subordinate matter to the historian. He simply refers to it casually in the words, “*and about the time of her death,*” for the purpose of giving her last words, in which she gave utterance to her grief at the loss of the ark, as a matter of greater importance in relation to his object. As she lay dying, the women who stood round sought to comfort her, by telling her that she had brought forth a son; but “*she did not answer, and took no notice* (לֹא שָׁמָעָה = שָׁמָעָה לֹא, *animum advertere*; cf. Ps. lxii. 11), but called to the boy (*i.e.* named him), *Ichabod* (אִי־כָבוֹד, no glory), saying, *The glory of Israel is departed,*” referring to the capture of the ark of God, and also to her father-in-law and husband. She then said again, “*Gone* (נִלְכָה, wandered away, carried off) *is the glory of Israel, for the ark of God is taken.*” The repetition of these words shows how deeply the wife of the godless Phinehas had taken to heart the carrying off of the ark, and how in her estimation the glory of Israel had departed with it. Israel could not be brought lower. With the surrender of the earthly throne of His glory, the Lord appeared to have abolished

His covenant of grace with Israel; for the ark, with the tables of the law and the capporeth, was the visible pledge of the covenant of grace which Jehovah had made with Israel.

HUMILIATION OF THE PHILISTINES BY MEANS OF THE ARK
OF THE COVENANT.—CHAP. V.—VII. 1.

Whilst the Israelites were mourning over the loss of the ark of God, the Philistines were also to derive no pleasure from their booty, but rather to learn that the God of Israel, who had given up to them His greatest sanctuary to humble His own degenerate nation, was the only true God, beside Whom there were no other gods. Not only was the principal deity of the Philistines thrown down into the dust and dashed to pieces by the glory of Jehovah; but the Philistines themselves were so smitten, that their princes were compelled to send back the ark into the land of Israel, together with a trespass-offering, to appease the wrath of God, which pressed so heavily upon them.

Chap. v. THE ARK IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES.—Vers. 1-6. The Philistines carried the ark from Ebenezer, where they had captured it, into their capital, *Ashdod* (*Esdud*; see at Josh. xiii. 3), and placed it there in the temple of Dagon, by the side of the idol Dagon, evidently as a dedicatory offering to this god of theirs, by whose help they imagined that they had obtained the victory over both the Israelites and their God. With regard to the image of *Dagon*, compounded of man and fish, *i.e.* of a human body, with head and hands, and a fish's tail, see, in addition to Judg. xvi. 23, Stark's *Gaza*, pp. 248 sqq., 308 sqq., and Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*, pp. 466-7, where there is a bas-relief from Khorsabad, in which "a figure is seen swimming in the sea, with the upper part of the body resembling a bearded man, wearing the ordinary conical tiara of royalty, adorned with elephants' tusks, and the lower part resembling the body of a fish. It has the hand lifted up, as if in astonishment or fear, and is surrounded by fishes, crabs, and other marine animals" (Stark, p. 308). As this bas-relief represents, according to Layard, the war of an Assyrian king with the inhabitants of the coast of Syria, most probably of Sargon, who had to carry on a long conflict with

the Philistian towns, more especially with Ashdod, there can hardly be any doubt that we have a representation of the Philistian Dagon here. This deity was a personification of the generative and vivifying principle of nature, for which the fish with its innumerable multiplication was specially adapted, and set forth the idea of the giver of all earthly good.—Ver. 3. The next morning the Ashdodites found Dagon lying on his face upon the ground before the ark of Jehovah, and restored him to his place again, evidently supposing that the idol had fallen or been thrown down by some accident.—Ver. 4. But they were obliged to give up this notion when they found the god lying on his face upon the ground again the next morning in front of the ark of Jehovah, and in fact broken to pieces, so that Dagon's head and the two hollow hands of his arms lay severed upon the threshold, and nothing was left but the trunk of the fish (דָּגוֹן). The word *Dagon*, in this last clause, is used in an appellative sense, viz. the fishy part, or fish's shape, from דָּג, a fish. הַמַּסְפֵּת is no doubt the threshold of the door of the recess in which the image was set up. We cannot infer from this, however, as Thenius has done, that with the small dimensions of the recesses in the ancient temples, if the image fell forward, the pieces named might easily fall upon the threshold. This naturalistic interpretation of the miracle is not only proved to be untenable by the word בָּרַחַת, since בָּרַחַת means *cut off*, and not broken off, but is also precluded by the improbability, not to say impossibility, of the thing itself. For if the image of Dagon, which was standing by the side of the ark, was thrown down towards the ark, so as to lie upon its face in front of it, the pieces that were broken off, viz. the head and hands, could not have fallen sideways, so as to lie upon the threshold. Even the first fall of the image of Dagon was a miracle. From the fact that their god Dagon lay upon its face before the ark of Jehovah, i.e. lay prostrate upon the earth, as though worshipping before the God of Israel, the Philistines were to learn, that even their supreme deity had been obliged to fall down before the majesty of Jehovah, the God of the Israelites. But as they did not discern the meaning of this miraculous sign, the second miracle was to show them the annihilation of their idol through the God of Israel, in such a way as to preclude every thought of accident. The disgrace attending the annihilation of their

idol was probably to be heightened by the fact, that the pieces of Dagon that were smitten off were lying upon the threshold, inasmuch as what lay upon the threshold was easily trodden upon by any one who entered the house. This is intimated in the custom referred to in ver. 5, that in consequence of this occurrence, the priests of Dagon, and all who entered the temple of Dagon at Ashdod, down to the time of the historian himself, would not step upon the threshold of Dagon, *i.e.* the threshold where Dagon's head and hands had lain, but stepped over the threshold (not "leaped over," as many commentators assume on the ground of Zeph. i. 5, which has nothing to do with the matter), that they might not touch with their feet, and so defile, the place where the pieces of their god had lain.—Ver. 6. The visitation of God was not restricted to the demolition of the statue of Dagon, but affected the people of Ashdod as well. "*The hand of Jehovah was heavy upon the Ashdodites, and laid them waste.*" עָשָׂה, from עָשָׂה, when applied to men, as in Micah vi. 13, signifies to make desolate not only by diseases, but also by the withdrawal or diminution of the means of subsistence, the devastation of the fields, and such like. That the latter is included here, is evident from the dedicatory offerings with which the Philistines sought to mitigate the wrath of the God of the Israelites (ch. vi. 4, 5, 11, 18), although the verse before us simply mentions the diseases with which God visited them.¹ "*And He smote them with עֲפָרָה, i.e. boils:*" according to the Rabbins, swellings on the anus, *mariscæ* (see at Deut. xxviii. 27). For עֲפָרָה the Masoretes have invariably substituted מַחֲרָה,

¹ At the close of vers. 3 and 6 the Septuagint contains some comprehensive additions; viz. at the close of ver. 3: *Kai ἐβαρύνθη χεὶρ Κυρίου ἐπὶ τοὺς Ἀζωτίους καὶ ἐβασάνιζεν αὐτούς, καὶ ἐπάταξεν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὰς ἑδρας αὐτῶν, τὴν Ἀζωτον καὶ τὰ ὄρια αὐτῆς;* and at the end of ver. 4: *Kai μέσον τῆς χώρας αὐτῆς ἀνεφύησαν μύες καὶ ἐγένετο σύγχυσις θανάτου μεγάλη ἐν τῇ πόλει.* This last clause we also find in the Vulgate, expressed as follows: *Et eballiverunt villæ et agri in medio regionis illius, et nati sunt mures, et facta est confusio mortis magnæ in civitate.* Ewald's decision with regard to these clauses (*Gesch.* ii. p. 541) is, that they are not wanted at ch. v. 3, 6, but that they are all the more necessary at ch. vi. 1; whereas at ch. v. 3, 6, they would rather injure the sense. Thenius admits that the clause appended to ver. 3 is nothing more than a second translation of our sixth verse, which has been interpolated by a copyist of the Greek in the wrong place; whereas that of ver. 6 contains the original though somewhat

which is used in ch. vi. 11, 17, and was probably regarded as more decorous. *Ashdod* is a more precise definition of the word *them*, viz. Ashdod, i.e. the inhabitants of Ashdod and its territory.

Vers. 7–12. “*When the Ashdodites saw that it was so,*” they were unwilling to keep the ark of the God of Israel any longer, because the hand of Jehovah lay heavy upon them and their god Dagon; whereupon the princes of the Philistines (פְּרִזִּי, as in Josh. xiii. 3, etc.) assembled together, and came to the resolution to “*let the ark of the God of Israel turn (i.e. be taken) to Gath*” (ver. 8). The princes of the Philistines probably imagined that the calamity which the Ashdodites attributed to the ark of God, either did not proceed from the ark, i.e. from the God of Israel, or if actually connected with the presence of the ark, simply arose from the fact that the city itself was hateful to the God of the Israelites, or that the Dagon of Ashdod was weaker than the Jehovah of Israel: they therefore resolved to let the ark be taken to Gath in order to pacify the Ashdodites. According to our account, the city of *Gath* seems to have stood between Ashdod and Ekron (see at Josh. xiii. 3).—Ver. 9. But when the ark was brought to Gath, the hand of Jehovah came upon that city also with very great alarm. מְהוֹמַת מוֹת is subordinated to the main sentence either adverbially or in the accusative. Jehovah smote the people of the city, small and great, so that boils broke out upon their hinder parts.—Vers. 10–12. They therefore sent the ark of God to *Ekron*, i.e. *Akir*, the north-western city of the Philistines (see

corrupt text, according to which the Hebrew text should be emended. But an impartial examination would show very clearly, that all these additions are nothing more than paraphrases founded upon the context. The last part of the addition to ver. 6 is taken *verbatim* from ver. 11, whilst the first part is a conjecture based upon ch. vi. 4, 5. Jerome, if indeed the addition in our text of the Vulgate really originated with him, and was not transferred into his version from the Itala, did not venture to suppress the clause interpolated in the Alexandrian version. This is very evident from the words *confusio mortis magnæ*, which are a literal rendering of σύγχυσις θανάτου μεγάλη; whereas in ver. 11, Jerome has given to מוֹת מְהוֹמַת, which the LXX. rendered σύγχυσις θανάτου, the much more accurate rendering *pavor mortis*. Moreover, neither the Syriac nor *Targum Jonath.* has this clause; so that long before the time of Jerome, the Hebrew text existed in the form in which the Masoretes have handed it down to us.

at Josh. xiii. 3). But the Ekronites, who had been informed of what had taken place in Ashdod and Gath, cried out, when the ark came into their city, "*They have brought the ark of the God of Israel to me, to slay me and my people*" (these words are to be regarded as spoken by the whole town); and they said to all the princes of the Philistines whom they had called together, "*Send away the ark of the God of Israel, that it may return to its place, and not slay me and my people. For deadly alarm* (מַהֲרַחֵם מָוֶת, *confusion of death, i.e. alarm produced by many sudden deaths*) *ruled in the whole city; very heavy was the hand of God there. The people who did not die were smitten with boils, and the cry of the city ascended to heaven.*" From this description, which simply indicates briefly the particulars of the plagues that God inflicted upon Ekron, we may see very clearly that Ekron was visited even more severely than Ashdod and Gath. This was naturally the case. The longer the Philistines resisted and refused to recognise the chastening hand of the living God in the plagues inflicted upon them, the more severely would they necessarily be punished, that they might be brought at last to see that the God of Israel, whose sanctuary they still wanted to keep as a trophy of their victory over that nation, was the omnipotent God, who was able to destroy His foes.

Chap. vi.-vii. 1. THE ARK OF GOD SENT BACK.—Vers. 1-3. The ark of Jehovah was in the land (*lit.* the fields, as in Ruth i. 2) of the Philistines for seven months, and had brought destruction to all the towns to which it had been taken. At length the Philistines resolved to send it back to the Israelites, and therefore called their priests and diviners (see at Num. xxiii. 23) to ask them, "*What shall we do with regard to the ark of God; tell us, with what shall we send it to its place?*" "*Its place*" is the land of Israel, and בְּמַה does not mean "in what manner" (*quomodo*: Vulgate, Thenius), but *with what, wherewith* (as in Micah vi. 6). There is no force in the objection brought by Thenius, that if the question had implied with what presents, the priests would not have answered, "*Do not send it without a present;*" for the priests did not confine themselves to this answer, in which they gave a general assent, but proceeded at once to define the present more minutely. They replied, "*If they send away the ark of the God of Israel* (מִשְׁלָחִים is to be

taken as the third person in an indefinite address, as in ch. ii. 24, and not to be construed with לְהָקִיף supplied), *do not send it away empty* (i.e. without an expiatory offering), *but return Him* (i.e. the God of Israel) *a trespass-offering.* אָשָׁם, lit. guilt, then the gift presented as compensation for a fault, the trespass-offering (see at Lev. v. 14-26). The gifts appointed by the Philistines as an *asham* were to serve as a compensation and satisfaction to be rendered to the God of Israel for the robbery committed upon Him by the removal of the ark of the covenant, and were therefore called *asham*, although in their nature they were only expiatory offerings. For the same reason the verb הָשִׁיב, to return or repay, is used to denote the presentation of these gifts, being the technical expression for the payment of compensation for a fault in Num. v. 7, and in Lev. v. 23 for compensation for anything belonging to another, that had been unjustly appropriated. "*Are ye healed then, it will show you why His hand is not removed from you,*" sc. so long as ye keep back the ark. The words אִם יִרְפּוּ are to be understood as conditional, even without אִם, which the rules of the language allow (see Ewald, § 357, b); this is required by the context. For, according to ver. 9, the Philistine priests still thought it a possible thing that any misfortune which had befallen the Philistines might be only an accidental circumstance. With this view, they could not look upon a cure as certain to result from the sending back of the ark, but only as possible; consequently they could only speak conditionally, and with this the words "*we shall know*" agree.

Vers. 4-6. The trespass-offering was to correspond to the number of the princes of the Philistines. מִסְפָּר is an accusative employed to determine either measure or number (see Ewald, § 204, a), lit. "*the number of their princes:*" the compensations were to be the same in number as the princes. "*Five golden boils, and five golden mice,*" i.e., according to ver. 5, images resembling their boils, and the field-mice which overran the land; the same gifts, therefore, for them all, "*for one plague is to all and to your princes,*" i.e. the same plague has fallen upon all the people and their princes. The change of person in the two words, לְכָלם, "*all of them,*" i.e. the whole nation of the Philistines, and לְאֶמְלֵיכֶם, "*your princes,*" appears very strange to us with our modes of thought and speech, but it is by no means

unusual in Hebrew. The selection of this peculiar kind of expiatory present was quite in accordance with a custom, which was not only widely spread among the heathen but was even adopted in the Christian church, viz. that after recovery from an illness, or rescue from any danger or calamity, a representation of the member healed or the danger passed through was placed as an offering in the temple of the deity, to whom the person had prayed for deliverance;¹ and it also perfectly agrees with a custom which has prevailed in India, according to Tavernier (*Ros. A. u. N. Morgenland* iii. p. 77), from time immemorial down to the present day, viz. that when a pilgrim takes a journey to a pagoda to be cured of a disease, he offers to the idol a present either in gold, silver, or copper, according to his ability, of the shape of the diseased or injured member, and then sings a hymn. Such a present passed as a practical acknowledgment that the god had inflicted the suffering or evil. If offered after recovery or deliverance, it was a public expression of thanksgiving. In the case before us, however, in which it was offered before deliverance, the presentation of the images of the things with which they had been chastised was probably a kind of fine or compensation for the fault that had been committed against the Deity, to mitigate His wrath and obtain a deliverance from the evils with which they had been smitten. This is contained in the words, "Give glory unto the God of Israel! peradventure He will lighten His (punishing) hand from off you, and from off your

¹ Thus, after a shipwreck, any who escaped presented a tablet to Isis, or Neptune, with the representation of a shipwreck upon it; gladiators offered their weapons, and emancipated slaves their fetters. In some of the nations of antiquity even representations of the private parts, in which a cure had been obtained from the deity, were hung up in the temples in honour of the gods (see Schol. ad Aristoph. *Acharn.* 243, and other proofs in Winer's *Real-wörterbuch*, ii. p. 255). Theodoret says, concerning the Christians of the fourth century (*Therapeutik. Disp.* viii.): "Ὅτι δὲ τυγχάνουσιν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦσιν οἱ πιστῶς ἐπαγγέλλοντες, ἀναφανδὸν μαρτυρεῖ τὰ τούτων ἀναθήματα, τὴν ἰατρείαν δηλοῦντα, οἱ μὲν γὰρ ὀφθαλμῶν, οἱ δὲ ποδῶν, ἄλλοι δὲ χειρῶν προσφέρουσιν ἐκτεπώματα· καὶ οἱ μὲν ἐκ χρυσοῦ, οἱ δὲ ἐξ ὕλης ἀργύρου πεποιημένα. δέχεται γὰρ ὁ τούτων Δεσπότης καὶ τὰ σμικρὰ τε καὶ εὐώνα, τῇ τοῦ προσφέροντος δυνάμει τὸ δῶρον μετρῶν. δηλοῖ δὲ ταῦτα προκείμενα τῶν παθημάτων τὴν λύσιν, ἧς ἀντίθε μνημεῖα παρὰ τῶν ἀρτίων γυγνημένων. And at Rome they still hang up a picture of the danger, from which deliverance had been obtained after a vow, in the church of the saint invoked in the danger.

gods, and from off your land." The expression is a pregnant one for "make His heavy hand light and withdraw it," *i.e.* take away the punishment. In the allusion to the representations of the field-mice, the words "that devastate the land" are added, because in the description given of the plagues in ch. v. the devastation of the land by mice is not expressly mentioned. The introduction of this clause after עֲבָרִיכֶם, when contrasted with the omission of any such explanation after עָשִׂיכֶם, is a proof that the plague of mice had not been described before, and therefore that the references made to these in the Septuagint at ch. v. 3, 6, and ch. vi. 1, are nothing more than explanatory glosses. It is a well-known fact that field-mice, with their enormous rate of increase and their great voracity, do extraordinary damage to the fields. In southern lands they sometimes destroy entire harvests in a very short space of time (Aristot. *Animal.* vi. 37; Plin. *h. n.* x. c. 65; Strabo, iii. p. 165; Ælian, etc., in Bochart, *Hieroz.* ii. p. 429, ed. Ros.).—Ver. 6. "Wherefore," continued the priests, "will ye harden your heart, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? (Ex. vii. 13 sqq.) Was it not the case, that when He (Jehovah) had let out His power upon them (הִחַלְתָּ, as in Ex. x. 2), they (the Egyptians) let them (the Israelites) go, and they departed?" There is nothing strange in this reference, on the part of the Philistian priests, to the hardening of the Egyptians, and its results, since the report of those occurrences had spread among all the neighbouring nations (see at ch. iv. 8). And the warning is not at variance with the fact that, according to ver. 9, the priests still entertained some doubt whether the plagues really did come from Jehovah at all: for their doubts did not preclude the possibility of its being so; and even the possibility might be sufficient to make it seem advisable to do everything that could be done to mitigate the wrath of the God of the Israelites, of whom, under existing circumstances, the heathen stood not only no less, but even more, in dread, than of the wrath of their own gods.

Vers. 7-12. Accordingly they arranged the sending back in such a manner as to manifest the reverence which ought to be shown to the God of Israel as a powerful deity (vers. 7-9). The Philistines were to take a new cart and make it ready (הֵעֲרִי), and to yoke two milch cows to the cart upon which no yoke had ever come, and to take away their young ones (calves)

from them into the house, *i.e.* into the stall, and then to put the ark upon the cart, along with the golden things to be presented as a trespass-offering, which were to be in a small chest by the side of the ark, and to send it (*i.e.* the ark) away, that it might go, *viz.* without the cows being either driven or guided. From the result of these arrangements, they were to learn whether the plague had been sent by the God of Israel, or had arisen accidentally. "*If it (the ark) goeth up by the way to its border towards Bethshemesh, He (Jehovah) hath done us this great evil; but if not, we perceive that His hand hath not touched us. It came to us by chance,*" *i.e.* the evil came upon us merely by accident. In עֲלֵיהֶם, בְּנִיָּהֶם, and מֵאַחֲרֵיהֶם (ver. 7), the masculine is used in the place of the more definite feminine, as being the more general form. This is frequently the case, and occurs again in vers. 10 and 12. אֲרֹנִי, which only occurs again in vers. 8, 11, and 15, signifies, according to the context and the ancient versions, a chest or little case. The suffix to אֹתוֹ refers to the ark, which is also the subject to יַעֲלֶהָ (ver. 9). גְּבֻלָּו, the territory of the ark, is the land of Israel, where it had its home. מִקְרָה is used adverbially: by chance, or accidentally. The new cart and the young cows, which had never worn a yoke, corresponded to the holiness of the ark of God. To place it upon an old cart, which had already been used for all kinds of earthly purposes, would have been an offence against the holy thing; and it would have been just the same to yoke to the cart animals that had already been used for drawing, and had had their strength impaired by the yoke (see Deut. xxi. 3). The reason for selecting cows, however, instead of male oxen, was no doubt to be found in the further object which they hoped to attain. It was certainly to be expected, that if suckling cows, whose calves had been kept back from them, followed their own instincts, without any drivers, they would not go away, but would come back to their young ones in the stall. And if the very opposite should take place, this would be a sure sign that they were driven and guided by a divine power, and in fact by the God whose ark they were to draw into His own land. From this they would be able to draw the conclusion, that the plagues which had fallen upon the Philistines were also sent by this God. There was no special sagacity in this advice of the priests; it was nothing more than a cleverly devised attempt to

put the power of the God of the Israelites to the test, though they thereby unconsciously and against their will furnished the occasion for the living God to display His divine glory before those who did not know Him.—Vers. 10–12. The God of Israel actually did what the idolatrous priests hardly considered possible. When the Philistines, in accordance with the advice given them by their priests, had placed the ark of the covenant and the expiatory gifts upon the cart to which the two cows were harnessed, *“the cows went straight forward on the way to Bethshemesh; they went along a road going and lowing (i.e. lowing the whole time), and turned not to the right or to the left; and the princes of the Philistines went behind them to the territory of Bethshemesh.”* יִשְׁרְנָה בְּדֶרֶךְ, lit. “they were straight in the way,” i.e. they went straight along the road. The form יִשְׁרְנָה for יִשְׁרְנָה is the imperf. *Kal*, third pers. plur. fem., with the preformative *y* instead of *n*, as in Gen. xxx. 38 (see Ges. § 47, Anm. 3; Ewald, § 191, b). *Bethshemesh*, the present *Ain-shems*, was a priests’ city on the border of Judah and Dan (see at Josh. xv. 10).

Vers. 13–18. The inhabitants of Bethshemesh were busy with the wheat-harvest in the valley (in front of the town), when they unexpectedly saw the ark of the covenant coming, and rejoiced to see it. The cart had arrived at the field of Joshua, a Bethshemeshite, and there it stood still before a large stone. And they (the inhabitants of Bethshemesh) chopped up the wood of the cart, and offered the cows to the Lord as a burnt-offering. In the meantime the Levites had taken off the ark, with the chest of golden presents, and placed it upon the large stone; and the people of Bethshemesh offered burnt-offerings and slain-offerings that day to the Lord. The princes of the Philistines stood looking at this, and then returned the same day to Ekron. That the Bethshemeshites, and not the Philistines, are the subject to יִבְקְעֵי, is evident from the correct interpretation of the clauses; viz. from the fact that in ver. 14a the words from וַהֲעֵנֶלָה to וַיִּדְלָה are circumstantial clauses introduced into the main clause, and that יִבְקְעֵי is attached to וַיִּשְׁחָדוּ לְרֹאשׁוֹ, and carries on the principal clause.—Ver. 15a contains a supplementary remark, therefore הוֹרִידוּ is to be translated as a pluperfect. After sacrificing the cart, with the cows, as a burnt-offering to the Lord, the inhabitants of Bethshemesh

gave a further practical expression to their joy at the return of the ark, by offering burnt-offerings and slain-offerings in praise of God. In the burnt-offerings they consecrated themselves afresh, with all their members, to the service of the Lord; and in the slain-offerings, which culminated in the sacrificial meals, they sealed anew their living fellowship with the Lord. The offering of these sacrifices at Bethshemesh was no offence against the commandment, to sacrifice to the Lord at the place of His sanctuary alone. The ark of the covenant was the throne of the gracious presence of God, before which the sacrifices were really offered at the tabernacle. The Lord had sanctified the ark afresh as the throne of His presence, by the miracle which He had wrought in bringing it back again.—In vers. 17 and 18 the different atoning presents, which the Philistines sent to Jehovah as compensation, are enumerated once more: viz. five golden boils, one for each of their five principal towns (see at Josh. xiii. 3), and “golden mice, according to the number of all the Philistian towns of the five princes, from the fortified city to the village of the inhabitants of the level land” (*perazi*; see at Deut. iii. 5). The priests had only proposed that five golden mice should be sent as compensation, as well as five boils (ver. 4). But the Philistines offered as many images of mice as there were towns and villages in their five states, no doubt because the plague of mice had spread over the whole land, whereas the plague of boils had only fallen upon the inhabitants of those towns to which the ark of the covenant had come. In this way the apparent discrepancy between ver. 4 and ver. 18 is very simply removed. The words which follow, viz. *אֲשֶׁר הִנִּיחוּ עָלֶיהָ וְגוּ*, “upon which they had set down the ark,” show unmistakeably, when compared with vers. 14 and 15, that we are to understand by *אֲבֶל הַגִּדּוּלָהּ* the great stone upon which the ark was placed when it was taken off the cart. The conjecture of Kimchi, that this stone was called *Abel* (*luctus*), on account of the mourning which took place there (see ver. 19), is extremely unnatural. Consequently there is no other course left than to regard *אֲבֶל* as an error in writing for *אֲבֶן*, according to the reading, or at all events the rendering, adopted by the LXX. and *Targum*. But *וְעַד* (even unto) is quite unsuitable here, as no further local definition is required after the foregoing *וְעַד כְּפֶר הַפְּרָזִי*, and it is impossible to suppose that the

Philistines offered a golden mouse as a trespass-offering for the great stone upon which the ark was placed. We must therefore alter *וְיָרָה* into *וְיָרָה*: "*And the great stone is witness (for וְיָרָה in this sense, see Gen. xxxi. 52) to this day in the field of Joshua the Bethshemeshite,*" *sc.* of the fact just described.

Ver. 19—ch. vii. 1. DISPOSAL OF THE ARK OF GOD.—

Ver. 19. As the ark had brought evil upon the Philistines, so the inhabitants of Bethshemesh were also to be taught that they could not stand in their unholiness before the holy God: "*And He (God) smote among the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked at the ark of Jehovah, and smote among the people seventy men, fifty thousand men.*" In this statement of numbers we are not only struck by the fact that the 70 stands before the 50,000, which is very unusual, but even more by the omission of the copula *ו* before the second number, which is altogether unparalleled. When, in addition to this, we notice that 50,000 men could not possibly live either in or round Bethshemesh, and that we cannot conceive of any extraordinary gathering having taken place out of the whole land, or even from the immediate neighbourhood; and also that the words *הַכִּשִּׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ* are wanting in several Hebrew MSS., and that Josephus, in his account of the occurrence, only speaks of *seventy* as having been killed (*Ant.* vi. 1, 4); we cannot come to any other conclusion than that the number 50,000 is neither correct nor genuine, but a gloss which has crept into the text through some oversight, though it is of great antiquity, since the numbers stood in the text employed by the Septuagint and Chaldee translators, who attempted to explain them in two different ways, but both extremely forced. Apart from this number, however, the verse does not contain anything either in form or substance that could furnish occasion for well-founded objections to its integrity. The repetition of *וְיָרָה* simply resumes the thought that had been broken off by the parenthetical clause *כִּי רָאוּ בְּאֶרְוֹן י'*; and *בְּעָמֻם* is only a general expression for *ב' ש' בְּאֶנְשֵׁי ב' ש'*. The stroke which fell upon the people of Bethshemesh is sufficiently accounted for in the words, "*because they had looked,*" etc. There is no necessity to understand these words, however, as many Rabbins do, as signifying "*they looked into the ark,*" *i.e.* opened it and looked in; for if this had been the meaning, the

opening would certainly not have been passed over without notice. **נִסְתָּר** with **בְּ** means to look *upon* or *at* a thing with lust or malicious pleasure; and here it no doubt signifies a foolish staring, which was incompatible with the holiness of the ark of God, and was punished with death, according to the warning expressed in Num. iv. 20. This severe judgment so alarmed the people of Bethshemesh, that they exclaimed, "*Who is able to stand before Jehovah, this holy God!*" Consequently the Bethshemeshites discerned correctly enough that the cause of the fatal stroke, which had fallen upon them, was the unholiness of their own nature, and not any special crime which had been committed by the persons slain. They felt that they were none of them any better than those who had fallen, and that sinners could not approach the holy God. Inspired with this feeling, they added, "*and to whom shall He go away from us?*" The subject to **עָלָה** is not the ark, but Jehovah who had chosen the ark as the dwelling-place of His name. In order to avert still further judgments, they sought to remove the ark from their town. They therefore sent messengers to Kirjath-jearim to announce to the inhabitants the fact that the ark had been sent back by the Philistines, and to entreat them to fetch it away.

Ch. vii. 1. The inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim complied with this request, and brought the ark into the house of Abinadab upon the height, and sanctified Abinadab's son Eleazar to be the keeper of the ark. *Kirjath-jearim*, the present *Kuryet el Enab* (see at Josh. ix. 17), was neither a priestly nor a Levitical city. The reason why the ark was taken there, is to be sought for, therefore, in the situation of the town, *i.e.* in the fact that Kirjath-jearim was the nearest large town on the road from Bethshemesh to Shiloh. We have no definite information, however, as to the reason why it was not taken on to Shiloh, to be placed in the tabernacle, but was allowed to remain in the house of Abinadab at Kirjath-jearim, where a keeper was expressly appointed to take charge of it; so that we can only confine ourselves to conjectures. Ewald's opinion (*Gesch.* ii. 540), that the Philistines had conquered Shiloh after the victory described in ch. iv., and had destroyed the ancient sanctuary there, *i.e.* the tabernacle, is at variance with the accounts given in ch. xxi. 6, 1 Kings iii. 4, 2 Chron. i. 3, respecting the continuance of worship in the tabernacle at Nob and Gibeon. There

is much more to be said in support of the conjecture, that the carrying away of the ark by the Philistines was regarded as a judgment upon the sanctuary, which had been desecrated by the reckless conduct of the sons of Eli, and consequently, that even when the ark itself was recovered, they would not take it back without an express declaration of the will of God, but were satisfied, as a temporary arrangement, to leave the ark in Kirjath-jearim, which was farther removed from the cities of the Philistines. And there it remained, because no declaration of the divine will followed respecting its removal into the tabernacle, and the tabernacle itself had to be removed from Shiloh to Nob, and eventually to Gibeon, until David had effected the conquest of the citadel of Zion, and chosen Jerusalem as his capital, when it was removed from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem (2 Sam. vi.). It is not stated that Abinadab was a Levite; but this is very probable, because otherwise they would hardly have consecrated his son to be the keeper of the ark, but would have chosen a Levite for the office.

CONVERSION OF ISRAEL TO THE LORD BY SAMUEL. VICTORY
OVER THE PHILISTINES. SAMUEL AS JUDGE OF ISRAEL.—
CHAP. VII. 2-17.

Vers. 2-4. *Purification of Israel from idolatry.*—Twenty years passed away from that time forward, while the ark remained at Kirjath-jearim, and all Israel mourned after Jehovah. Then Samuel said to them, "*If ye turn to the Lord with all your heart, put away the strange gods from the midst of you, and the Astartes, and direct your heart firmly upon the Lord, and serve Him only, that He may save you out of the hand of the Philistines.*" And the Israelites listened to this appeal. The single clauses of vers. 2 and 3 are connected together by *tav consec.*, and are not to be separated from one another. There is no gap between these verses; but they contain the same closely and logically connected thought,¹ which may be arranged in

¹ There is no force at all in the proofs which Thenius has adduced of a gap between vers. 2 and 3. It by no means follows, that because the Philistines had brought back the ark, their rule over the Israelites had ceased, so as to make the words "he will deliver you," etc., incomprehensible. Moreover, the appearance of Samuel as judge does not presuppose

one period in the following manner: "And it came to pass, when the days multiplied from the time that the ark remained at Kirjath-jearim, and grew to twenty years, and the whole house of Israel mourned after Jehovah, that Samuel said," etc. The verbs *וַיִּבְנוּ*, *וַיִּהְיוּ*, and *וַיִּנָּהוּ*, are merely continuations of the infinitive *שָׁבַת*, and the main sentence is resumed in the words *וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל*. The contents of the verses require that the clauses should be combined in this manner. The statement that twenty years had passed can only be understood on the supposition that some kind of turning-point ensued at the close of that time. The complaining of the people after Jehovah was no such turning-point, but became one simply from the fact that this complaining was followed by some result. This result is described in ver. 3. It consisted in the fact that Samuel exhorted the people to put away the strange gods (ver. 3); and that when the people listened to his exhortation (ver. 4), he helped them to gain a victory over the Philistines (vers. 5 sqq.). *וַיִּנָּהוּ*, from *נָהַה*, to lament or complain (Micah ii. 4; Ezek. xxxii. 18). "The phrase, *to lament after God*, is taken from human affairs, when one person follows another with earnest solicitations and complaints, until he at length assents. We have an example of this in the Syrophenician woman in Matt. xv." (Seb. Schmidt). The meaning "to assemble together," which is the one adopted by Gesenius, is forced upon the word from the Chaldee *אַתְתִּי*, and it cannot be shown that the word was ever used in this sense in Hebrew. Samuel's appeal in ver. 3 recalls to mind Josh. xxiv. 14, and Gen. xxxv. 2; but the words, "*If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts*," assume that the turning of the people to the Lord their God had already inwardly commenced, and indeed,

that his assumption of this office must necessarily have been mentioned before. As a general rule, there was no such formal assumption of the office, and this would be least of all the case with Samuel, who had been recognised as an accredited prophet of Jehovah (ch. iii. 19 sqq.). And lastly, the reference to idols, and to their being put away in consequence of Samuel's appeal, is intelligible enough, without any express account of their falling into idolatry, if we bear in mind, on the one hand, the constant inclination of the people to serve other gods, and if we observe, on the other hand, that Samuel called upon the people to turn to the Lord with all their heart and serve Him alone, which not only does not preclude, but actually implies, the outward continuance of the worship of Jehovah.

as the participle שָׁמַר expresses duration, had commenced as a permanent thing, and simply demand that the inward turning of the heart to God should be manifested outwardly as well, by the putting away of all their idols, and should thus be carried out to completion. The "strange gods" (see Gen. xxxv. 2) are described in ver. 4 as "*Baalim*." On *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth*, see at Judg. ii. 11, 13. הָיָה לֵב, to direct the heart firmly: see Ps. lxxviii. 8; 2 Chron. xxx. 19.

Vers. 5-14. *Victory obtained over the Philistines through Samuel's prayer.*—Vers. 5, 6. When Israel had turned to the Lord with all its heart, and had put away all its idols, Samuel gathered together all the people at Mizpeh, to prepare them for fighting against the Philistines by a solemn day for penitence and prayer. For it is very evident that the object of calling all the people to Mizpeh was that the religious act performed there might serve as a consecration for battle, not only from the circumstance that, according to ver. 7, when the Philistines heard of the meeting, they drew near to make war upon Israel, but also from the contents of ver. 5: "*Samuel said (sc. to the heads or representatives of the nation), Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the Lord.*" His intention could not possibly have been any other than to put the people into the right relation to their God, and thus to prepare the way for their deliverance out of the bondage of the Philistines. Samuel appointed *Mizpeh*, i.e. *Nebi Samwil*, on the western boundary of the tribe of Benjamin (see at Josb. xviii. 26), as the place of meeting, partly no doubt on historical grounds, viz. because it was there that the tribes had formerly held their consultations respecting the wickedness of the inhabitants of Gibeah, and had resolved to make war upon Benjamin (Judg. xx. 1 sqq.), but still more, no doubt, because Mizpeh, on the western border of the mountains, was the most suitable place for commencing the conflict with the Philistines.—Ver. 6. When they had assembled together here, "*they drew water and poured it out before Jehovah, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord.*" Drawing water and pouring it out before Jehovah was a symbolical act, which has been thus correctly explained by the Chaldee, on the whole: "*They poured out their heart like water in penitence before the Lord.*" This is evident from the figurative expres-

sions, "poured out like water," in Ps. xxii. 15, and "pour out thy heart like water," in Lam. ii. 19, which are used to denote inward dissolution through pain, misery, and distress (see 2 Sam. xiv. 14). Hence the pouring out of water before God was a symbolical representation of the temporal and spiritual distress in which they were at the time,—a practical confession before God, "Behold, we are before Thee like water that has been poured out;" and as it was their own sin and rebellion against God that had brought this distress upon them, it was at the same time a confession of their misery, and an act of the deepest humiliation before the Lord. They gave a still further practical expression to this humiliation by fasting (צום), as a sign of their inward distress of mind on account of their sin, and an oral confession of their sin against the Lord. By the word שָׁמָּה, which is added to וַיֹּאמְרוּ, "they said *there*," i.e. at Mizpeh, the oral confession of their sin is formally separated from the two symbolical acts of humiliation before God, though by this very separation it is practically placed on a par with them. What they did symbolically by the pouring out of water and fasting, they explained and confirmed by their verbal confession. כֵּן is never an adverb of time signifying "then;" neither in Ps. xiv. 5, cxxxii. 17, nor Judg. v. 11. "*And thus Samuel judged the children of Israel at Mizpeh.*" וַיִּשְׁפֹּט does not mean "he became judge" (Mich. and others), any more than "he punished every one according to his iniquity" (Thenius, after David Kimchi). Judging the people neither consisted in a censure pronounced by Samuel afterwards, nor in absolution granted to the penitent after they had made a confession of their sin, but in the fact that Samuel summoned the nation to Mizpeh to humble itself before Jehovah, and there secured for it, through his intercession, the forgiveness of its sin, and a renewal of the favour of its God, and thus restored the proper relation between Israel and its God, so that the Lord could proceed to vindicate His people's rights against their foes.

When the Philistines heard of the gathering of the Israelites at Mizpeh (vers. 7, 8), their princes went up against Israel to make war upon it; and the Israelites, in their fear of the Philistines, entreated Samuel, "*Do not cease to cry for us to the Lord our God, that He may save us out of the hand of the Philistines.*"—Ver. 9. "*And Samuel took a milk-lamb* (a lamb that

was still sucking, probably, according to Lev. xxii. 27, a lamb seven days old), and offered it whole as a burnt-offering to the Lord." *כָּלֵל* is used adverbially, according to its original meaning as an adverb, "whole." The Chaldee has not given the word at all, probably because the translators regarded it as pleonastic, since every burnt-offering was consumed upon the altar whole, and consequently the word *כָּלֵל* was sometimes used in a substantive sense, as synonymous with *עֹלָה* (Deut. xxxiii. 10; Ps. li. 21). But in the passage before us, *כָּלֵל* is not synonymous with *עֹלָה*, but simply affirms that the lamb was offered upon the altar without being cut up or divided. Samuel selected a young lamb for the burnt-offering, not "as being the purest and most innocent kind of sacrificial animal,"—for it cannot possibly be shown that very young animals were regarded as purer than those that were full-grown,—but as being the most suitable to represent the nation that had wakened up to new life through its conversion to the Lord, and was, as it were, new-born. For the burnt-offering represented the man, who consecrated therein his life and labour to the Lord. The sacrifice was the substratum for prayer. When Samuel offered it, he cried to the Lord for the children of Israel; and the Lord "answered," i.e. granted, his prayer.—Ver. 10. When the Philistines advanced during the offering of the sacrifice to fight against Israel, "*Jehovah thundered with a great noise*," i.e. with loud peals, against the Philistines, and threw them into confusion, so that they were smitten before Israel. The thunder, which alarmed the Philistines and threw them into confusion (*הַמָּוֶה*, as in Josh. x. 10), was the answer of God to Samuel's crying to the Lord.—Ver. 11. As soon as they took to flight, the Israelites advanced from Mizpeh, and pursued and smote them to below *Beth-car*. The situation of this town or locality, which is only mentioned here, has not yet been discovered. Josephus (*Ant.* vi. 2, 2) has *μέχρι Κορβάλων*.—Ver. 12. As a memorial of this victory, Samuel placed a stone between Mizpeh and Shen, to which he gave the name of *Eben-ha-ezer*, i.e. stone of help, as a standing memorial that the Lord had thus far helped His people. The situation of *Shen* is also not known. The name *Shen* (i.e. tooth) seems to indicate a projecting point of rock (see ch. xiv. 4), but may also signify a place situated upon such a point.—Ver. 13. Through this victory which was

obtained by the miraculous help of God, the Philistines were so humbled, that they no more invaded the territory of Israel, *i.e.* with lasting success, as they had done before. This limitation of the words "*they came no more*" (*lit.* "they did not add again to come into the border of Israel"), is implied in the context; for the words which immediately follow, "*and the hand of Jehovah was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel,*" show that they made attempts to recover their lost supremacy, but that so long as Samuel lived they were unable to effect anything against Israel. This is also manifest from the successful battles fought by Saul (ch. xiii. and xiv.), when the Philistines had made fresh attempts to subjugate Israel during his reign. The defeats inflicted upon them by Saul also belong to the days of Samuel, who died but a very few years before Saul himself. Because of these battles which Saul fought with the Philistines, Lyra and Brentius understand the expression "all the days of Samuel" as referring not to the lifetime of Samuel, but simply to the duration of his official life as judge, *viz.* till the commencement of Saul's reign. But this is at variance with ver. 15, where Samuel is said to have judged Israel all the days of his life. Seb. Schmidt has given, on the whole, the correct explanation of ver. 13: "They came no more so as to obtain a victory and subdue the Israelites as before; yet they did return, so that the hand of the Lord was against them, *i.e.* so that they were repulsed with great slaughter, although they were not actually expelled, or the Israelites delivered from tribute and the presence of military garrisons, and that all the days that the judicial life of Samuel lasted, in fact all his life, since they were also smitten by Saul." —Ver. 14. In consequence of the defeat at Ebenezer, the Philistines were obliged to restore to the Israelites the cities which they had taken from them, "*from Ekron to Gath.*" This definition of the limits is probably to be understood as *exclusive*, *i.e.* as signifying that the Israelites received back their cities up to the very borders of the Philistines, measuring these borders from Ekron to Gath, and not that the Israelites received Ekron and Gath also. For although these chief cities of the Philistines had been allotted to the tribes of Judah and Dan in the time of Joshua (Josh. xiii. 3, 4, xv. 45, 46), yet, notwithstanding the fact that Judah and Simeon conquered Ekron,

together with Gaza and Askelon, after the death of Joshua (Judg. i. 18), the Israelites did not obtain any permanent possession. "*And their territory*" (coasts), *i.e.* the territory of the towns that were given back to Israel, not that of Ekron and Gath, "*did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites;*" *i.e.* the Canaanitish tribes also kept peace with Israel after this victory of the Israelites over the Philistines, and during the time of Samuel. The Amorites are mentioned, as in Josh. x. 6, as being the most powerful of the Canaanitish tribes, who had forced the Danites out of the plain into the mountains (Judg. i. 34, 35).

Vers. 15–17. *Samuel's judicial labours.*—With the calling of the people to Mizpeh, and the victory at Ebenezer that had been obtained through his prayer, Samuel had assumed the government of the whole nation; so that his office as judge dates from this period, although he had laboured as prophet among the people from the death of Eli, and had thereby prepared the way for the conversion of Israel to the Lord. As his prophetic labours were described in general terms in ch. iii. 19–21, so are his labours as judge in the verses before us: *viz.* in ver. 15 their duration,—"*all the days of his life,*" as his activity during Saul's reign and the anointing of David (ch. xv. xvi.) sufficiently prove; and then in vers. 16, 17 their general character,—"*he went round from year to year*" (סָבַב; serves as a more precise definition of הִלָּךְ, he went and travelled round) *to Bethel, i.e.* Beitin (see at Josh. vii. 2), *Gilgal, and Mizpeh* (see at ver. 5), and judged Israel at all these places. Which Gilgal is meant, whether the one situated in the valley of the Jordan (Josh. iv. 19), or the *Jiljilia* on the higher ground to the south-west of Shiloh (see at Josh. viii. 35), cannot be determined with perfect certainty. The latter is favoured partly by the order in which the three places visited by Samuel on his circuits occur, since according to this he probably went first of all from Ramah to Bethel, which was to the north-east, then farther north or north-west to Jiljilia, and then turning back went towards the south-east to Mizpeh, and returning thence to Ramah performed a complete circuit; whereas, if the Gilgal in the valley of the Jordan had been the place referred to, we should expect him to go there first of all from Ramah, and

then towards the north-east to Bethel, and from that to the south-west to Mizpeh ; and partly also by the circumstance that, according to 2 Kings ii. 1 and iv. 38, there was a school of the prophets at Jiljilia in the time of Elijah and Elisha, the founding of which probably dated as far back as the days of Samuel. If this conjecture were really a well-founded one, it would furnish a strong proof that it was in this place, and not in the Gilgal in the valley of the Jordan, that Samuel judged the people. But as this conjecture cannot be raised into a certainty, the evidence in favour of Jiljilia is not so conclusive as I myself formerly supposed (see also the remarks on ch. ix. 14). *אַתְּ כָל־הַמְּקוֹמוֹת* is grammatically considered an accusative, and is in apposition to *אַתְּ־יִשְׂרָאֵל*, *lit. Israel*, viz. all the places named, i.e. Israel which inhabited all these places, and was to be found there. "*And his return was to Ramah ;*" i.e. after finishing the annual circuit he returned to Ramah, where he had his house. There he judged Israel, and also built an altar to conduct the religious affairs of the nation. Up to the death of Eli, Samuel lived and laboured at Shiloh (ch. iii. 21). But when the ark was carried away by the Philistines, and consequently the tabernacle at Shiloh lost what was most essential to it as a sanctuary, and ceased at once to be the scene of the gracious presence of God, Samuel went to his native town Ramah, and there built an altar as the place of sacrifice for Jehovah, who had manifested himself to him. The building of the altar at Ramah would naturally be suggested to the prophet by these extraordinary circumstances, even if it had not been expressly commanded by Jehovah.

II. THE MONARCHY OF SAUL FROM HIS ELECTION TILL HIS ULTIMATE REJECTION.

CHAP. VIII.-XV.

The earthly monarchy in Israel was established in the time of Samuel, and through his mediation. At the pressing desire of the people, Samuel installed the Benjaminite Saul as king, according to the command of God. The reign of Saul may

be divided into two essentially different periods: viz. (1) the establishment and vigorous development of his regal supremacy (ch. viii.-xv.); (2) the decline and gradual overthrow of his monarchy (ch. xvi.-xxxi.). The establishment of the monarchy is introduced by the negotiations of the elders of Israel with Samuel concerning the appointment of a king (ch. viii.). This is followed by (1) the account of the anointing of Saul as king (ch. ix. 1-x. 16), of his election by lot, and of his victory over the Ammonites and the confirmation of his monarchy at Gilgal (ch. x. 17-xi. 15), together with Samuel's final address to the nation (ch. xii.); (2) the history of Saul's reign, of which only his earliest victories over the Philistines are given at all elaborately (ch. xiii. 1-xiv. 46), his other wars and family history being disposed of very summarily (ch. xiv. 47-52); (3) the account of his disobedience to the command of God in the war against the Amalekites, and the rejection on the part of God with which Samuel threatened him in consequence (ch. xv.). The brevity with which the history of his actual reign is treated, in contrast with the elaborate account of his election and confirmation as king, may be accounted for from the significance and importance of Saul's monarchy in relation to the kingdom of God in Israel.

The people of Israel traced the cause of the oppression and distress, from which they had suffered more and more in the time of the judges, to the defects of their own political constitution. They wished to have a king, like all the heathen nations, to conduct their wars and conquer their enemies. Now, although the desire to be ruled by a king, which had existed in the nation even from the time of Gideon, was not in itself at variance with the appointment of Israel as a kingdom of God, yet the motive which led the people to desire it was both wrong and hostile to God, since the source of all the evils and misfortunes from which Israel suffered was to be found in the apostasy of the nation from its God, and its coquetting with the gods of the heathen. Consequently their self-willed obstinacy in demanding a king, notwithstanding the warnings of Samuel, was an actual rejection of the sovereignty of Jehovah, since He had always manifested himself to His people as their king by delivering them out of the power of their foes, as soon as they returned to Him with simple penitence of heart. Samuel

pointed this out to the elders of Israel, when they laid their petition before him that he would choose them a king. But Jehovah fulfilled their desires. He directed Samuel to appoint them a king, who possessed all the qualifications that were necessary to secure for the nation what it looked for from a king, and who therefore might have established the monarchy in Israel as foreseen and foretold by Jehovah, if he had not presumed upon his own power, but had submitted humbly to the will of God as made known to him by the prophet. Saul, who was chosen from Benjamin, the smallest but yet the most warlike of all the tribes, a man in the full vigour of youth, and surpassing all the rest of the people in beauty of form as well as bodily strength, not only possessed "warlike bravery and talent, unbroken courage that could overcome opposition of every kind, a stedfast desire for the well-being of the nation in the face of its many and mighty foes, and zeal and pertinacity in the execution of his plans" (Ewald), but also a pious heart, and an earnest zeal for the maintenance of the provisions of the law, and the promotion of the religious life of the nation. He would not commence the conflict with the Philistines until sacrifice had been offered (ch. xiii. 9 sqq.); in the midst of the hot pursuit of the foe he opposed the sin committed by the people in eating flesh with the blood (ch. xiv. 32, 33); he banished the wizards and necromancers out of the land (ch. xxviii. 3, 9); and in general he appears to have kept a strict watch over the observance of the Mosaic law in his kingdom. But the consciousness of his own power, coupled with the energy of his character, led him astray into an incautious disregard of the commands of God; his zeal in the prosecution of his plans hurried him on to reckless and violent measures; and success in his undertakings heightened his ambition into a haughty rebellion against the Lord, the God-king of Israel. These errors come out very conspicuously in the three great events of his reign which are the most circumstantially described. When Saul was preparing for war against the Philistines, and Samuel did not appear at once on the day appointed, he presumptuously disregarded the prohibition of the prophet, and offered the sacrifice himself without waiting for Samuel to arrive (ch. xiii. 7 sqq.). In the engagement with the Philistines, he attempted to force on the annihilation of the foe by pronouncing the ban upon any one

in his army who should eat bread before the evening, or till he had avenged himself upon his foes. Consequently, he not only diminished the strength of the people, so that the overthrow of the enemy was not great, but he also prepared humiliation for himself, inasmuch as he was not able to carry out his vow (ch. xiv. 24 sqq.). But he sinned still more grievously in the war with the Amalekites, when he violated the express command of the Lord by only executing the ban upon that nation as far as he himself thought well, and thus by such utterly unpardonable conduct altogether renounced the obedience which he owed to the Lord his God (ch. xv.). All these acts of transgression manifest an attempt to secure the unconditional gratification of his own self-will, and a growing disregard of the government of Jehovah in Israel; and the consequence of the whole was simply this, that Saul not only failed to accomplish that deliverance of the nation out of the power of its foes which the Israelites had anticipated from their king, and was unable to inflict any lasting humiliation upon the Philistines, but that he undermined the stability of his monarchy, and brought about his own rejection on the part of God.

From all this we may see very clearly, that the reason why the occurrences connected with the election of Saul as king are fully described on the one hand, and on the other only such incidents connected with his enterprises after he began to reign as served to bring out the faults and crimes of his monarchy, was, that Israel might learn from this, that royalty itself could never secure the salvation it expected, unless the occupant of the throne submitted altogether to the will of the Lord. Of the other acts of Saul, the wars with the different nations round about are only briefly mentioned, but with this remark, that he displayed his strength and gained the victory in whatever direction he turned (ch. xiv. 47), simply because this statement was sufficient to bring out the brighter side of his reign, inasmuch as this clearly showed that it might have been a source of blessing to the people of God, if the king had only studied how to govern his people in the power and according to the will of Jehovah. If we examine the history of Saul's reign from this point of view, all the different points connected with it exhibit the greatest harmony. Modern critics, however, have discovered irreconcilable contradictions in the history, simply because, in-

stead of studying it for the purpose of fathoming the plan and purpose which lie at the foundation, they have entered upon the inquiry with a twofold assumption: viz. (1) that the government of Jehovah over Israel was only a subjective idea of the Israelitish nation, without any objective reality; and (2) that the human monarchy was irreconcilably opposed to the government of God. Governed by these axioms, which are derived not from the Scriptures, but from the philosophical views of modern times, the critics have found it impossible to explain the different accounts in any other way than by the purely external hypothesis, that the history contained in this book has been compiled from two different sources, in one of which the establishment of the earthly monarchy was treated as a violation of the supremacy of God, whilst the other took a more favourable view. From the first source, ch. viii., x. 17-27, xi., xii., and xv. are said to have been derived; and ch. ix.-x. 17, xiii., and xiv. from the second.

ISRAEL'S PRAYER FOR A KING.—CHAP. VIII.

As Samuel had appointed his sons as judges in his old age, and they had perverted justice, the elders of Israel entreated him to appoint them a king after the manner of all the nations (vers. 1-5). This desire not only displeased Samuel, but Jehovah also saw in it a rejection of His government; nevertheless He commanded the prophet to fulfil the desire of the people, but at the same time to set before them as a warning the prerogatives of a king (vers. 6-9). This answer from God, Samuel made known to the people, describing to them the prerogatives which the king would assume to himself above the rest of the people (vers. 10-18). As the people, however, persisted in their wish, Samuel promised them, according to the direction of God, that their wishes should be gratified (vers. 19-22).

Vers. 1-5. The reason assigned for the appointment of Samuel's sons as judges is his own advanced age. The inference which we might draw from this alone, namely, that they were simply to support their father in the administration of justice, and that Samuel had no intention of laying down his office, and still less of making the supreme office of judge hereditary in his family, is still more apparent from the fact that

they were stationed as judges of the nation in Beersheba, which was on the southern border of Canaan (Judg. xx. 1, etc.; see at Gen. xxi. 31). The sons are also mentioned again in 1 Chron. vi. 13, though the name of the elder has either been dropped out of the Masoretic text or has become corrupt.—Ver. 3. The sons, however, did not walk in the ways of their father, but set their hearts upon gain, took bribes, and perverted justice, in opposition to the command of God (see Ex. xxiii. 6, 8; Deut. xvi. 19).—Vers. 4, 5. These circumstances (viz. Samuel's age and the degeneracy of his sons) furnished the elders of Israel with the opportunity to apply to Samuel with this request: "*Appoint us a king to judge us, as all the nations*" (the heathen), *sc.* have kings. This request resembles so completely the law of the king in Deut. xvii. 14 (observe, for example, the expression כִּלְלֵנוּ-מֶלֶךְ), that the distinct allusion to it is unmistakeable. The custom of expressly quoting the book of the law is met with for the first time in the writings of the period of the captivity. The elders simply desired what Jehovah had foretold through His servant Moses, as a thing that would take place in the future and for which He had even made provision.

Vers. 6–9. Nevertheless "*the thing displeased Samuel when they said,*" etc. This serves to explain הִרְרָם, and precludes the supposition that Samuel's displeasure had reference to what they had said concerning his own age and the conduct of his sons. At the same time, the reason why the petition for a king displeased the prophet, was not that he regarded the earthly monarchy as irreconcilable with the sovereignty of God, or even as untimely; for in both these cases he would not have entered into the question at all, but would simply have refused the request as ungodly or unseasonable. But "*Samuel prayed to the Lord,*" *i.e.* he laid the matter before the Lord in prayer, and the Lord said (ver. 7): "*Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee.*" This clearly implies, that not only in Samuel's opinion, but also according to the counsel of God, the time had really come for the establishment of the earthly sovereignty in Israel. In this respect the request of the elders for a king to reign over them was perfectly justifiable; and there is no reason to say, with Calvin, "they ought to have had regard to the times and conditions prescribed by God, and it would no doubt have come to pass that the regal power would

have grown up in the nation. Although, therefore, it had not yet been established, they ought to have waited patiently for the time appointed by God, and not to have given way to their own reasons and counsels apart from the will of God." For God had not only appointed no particular time for the establishment of the monarchy; but in the introduction to the law for the king, "When thou shalt say, I will set a king over me," He had ceded the right to the representatives of the nation to deliberate upon the matter. Nor did they err in this respect, that while Samuel was still living, it was not the proper time to make use of the permission that they had received; for they assigned as the reason for their application, that Samuel had grown old: consequently they did not petition for a king instead of the prophet who had been appointed and so gloriously accredited by God, but simply that Samuel himself would give them a king in consideration of his own age, in order that when he should become feeble or die, they might have a judge and leader of the nation. Nevertheless the Lord declared, "*They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. As they have always done from the day that I brought them up out of Egypt unto this day, that they have forsaken me and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.*" This verdict on the part of God refers not so much to the desire expressed, as to the feelings from which it had sprung. Externally regarded, the elders of Israel had a perfect right to present the request; the wrong was in their hearts.¹ They not only declared to the prophet their confidence in his administration of his office, but they implicitly declared him incapable of any further superintendence of their civil and political affairs. This mistrust was founded upon mistrust in the Lord and His

¹ Calvin has correctly pointed out how much would have been warrantable under the circumstances: "They might, indeed, have reminded Samuel of his old age, which rendered him less able to attend to the duties of his office, and also of the avarice of his sons and the corruptness of the judges; or they might have complained that his sons did not walk in his footsteps, and have asked that God would choose suitable men to govern them, and thus have left the whole thing to His will. And if they had done this, there can be no doubt that they would have received a gracious and suitable answer. But they did not think of calling upon God; they demanded that a king should be given them, and brought forward the customs and institutions of other nations."

guidance. In the person of Samuel they rejected the Lord and His rule. They wanted a king, because they imagined that Jehovah their God-king was not able to secure their constant prosperity. Instead of seeking for the cause of the misfortunes which had hitherto befallen them in their own sin and want of fidelity towards Jehovah, they searched for it in the faulty constitution of the nation itself. In such a state of mind as this, their desire for a king was a contempt and rejection of the kingly government of Jehovah, and was nothing more than forsaking Jehovah to serve other gods. (See ch. x. 18, 19, and ch. xii. 7 sqq., where Samuel points out to the people still more fully the wrong that they have committed.)—Ver. 9. In order to show them wherein they were wrong, Samuel was instructed to bear witness against them, by proclaiming the right of the king who would rule over them. הָעֵד הָעֵד בָּהֶם neither means “warn them earnestly” (De Wette), nor “explain and solemnly expound to them” (Thenius). הָעֵד means *to bear witness*, or give testimony against a person, *i.e.* to point out to him his wrong. The following words, וְהִנָּחֵתוּ, are to be understood as explanatory, in the sense of “*by proclaiming to them.*” “*The manner (mishpat) of the king*” is the *right* or *prerogative* which the king would claim, namely, such a king as was possessed by all the other nations, and such an one as Israel desired in the place of its own God-king, *i.e.* a king who would rule over his people with arbitrary and absolute power.

Vers. 10–18. In accordance with the instructions of God, Samuel told the people all the words of Jehovah, *i.e.* all that God had said to him, as related in vers. 7–9, and then proclaimed to them the right of the king.—Ver. 11. “*He will take your sons, and set them for himself upon his chariots, and upon his saddle-horses, and they will run before his chariot;*” *i.e.* he will make the sons of the people his retainers at court, his charioteers, riders, and runners. The singular suffix attached to בְּמִרְכָּבָיו is not to be altered, as Thenius suggests, into the plural form, according to the LXX., Chald., and Syr., since the word refers, not to war-chariots, but to the king’s state-carriage; and פָּרָשׁ does not mean a rider, but a saddle-horse, as in 2 Sam. i. 6, 1 Kings v. 6, etc.—Ver. 12. “*And to make himself chiefs over thousands and over fifties;*”—the greatest and smallest military officers are mentioned, instead of all the soldiers and officers

(comp. Num. xxxi. 14, 2 Kings i. 9 sqq., with Ex. xviii. 21, 25). *וְלִשְׂוֹם* is also dependent upon *יָקַח* (ver. 11),—"and to plough his field (*וְהָרִישׁ*, *lit.* the ploughed), and reap his harvest, and make his instruments of war and instruments of his chariots."—Ver. 13. "Your daughters he will take as preparers of ointments, cooks, and bakers," *sc.* for his court.—Vers. 14 sqq. All their possessions he would also take to himself: the good (*i.e.* the best) fields, vineyards, and olive-gardens, he would take away, and give to his servants; he would tithe the sowings and vineyards (*i.e.* the produce which they yielded), and give them to his courtiers and servants. *סָרִיס*, *lit.* the eunuch; here it is used in a wider sense for the royal chamberlains. Even their slaves (men-servants and maid-servants) and their beasts of draught and burden he would take and use for his own work, and raise the tithe of the flock. The word *בְּחֵירֵיכֶם*, between the slaves (men-servants and maid-servants) and the asses, is very striking and altogether unsuitable; and in all probability it is only an ancient copyist's error for *בְּקָרֵיכֶם*, your oxen, as we may see from the LXX. rendering, *τὰ βουκόλια*. The servants and maids, oxen and asses, answer in that case to one another; whilst the young men are included among the sons in vers. 11, 12. In this way the king would make all the people into his servants or slaves. This is the meaning of the second clause of ver. 17; for the whole are evidently summed up in conclusion in the expression, "*and ye shall be his servants.*"—Ver. 18. Israel would then cry out to God because of its king, but the Lord would not hear it then. This description, which contains a fearful picture of the tyranny of the king, is drawn from the despotic conduct of the heathen kings, and does not presuppose, as many have maintained, the times of the later kings, which were so full of painful experiences.

Vers. 19-22. With such a description of the "*right of the king*" as this, Samuel had pointed out to the elders the dangers connected with a monarchy in so alarming a manner, that they ought to have been brought to reflection, and to have desisted from their demand. "*But the people refused to hearken to the voice of Samuel.*" They repeated their demand, "*We will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and conduct our battles.*"—Vers. 21, 22. These words of the people were laid by Samuel before the Lord, and the Lord commanded him to give

the people a king. With this answer Samuel sent the men of Israel, *i.e.* the elders, away. This is implied in the words, "*Go ye every man unto his city*," since we may easily supply from the context, "till I shall call you again, to appoint you the king you desire."

ANOIDTING OF SAUL AS KING.—CHAP. IX.—X. 16.

When the Lord had instructed Samuel to appoint a king over the nation, in accordance with its own desire, He very speedily proceeded to show him the man whom He had chosen. Saul the Benjaminite came to Samuel, to consult him as a seer about his father's she-asses, which had been lost, and for which he had been seeking in all directions in vain (ch. ix. 1-14). And the Lord had already revealed to the prophet the day before, that He would send him the man who had been set apart by Him as the king of Israel; and when Samuel met with Saul, He pointed him out as the man to whom He had referred (vers. 15-17). Accordingly, Samuel invited Saul to be his guest at a sacrificial meal, which he was about to celebrate (vers. 18-24). After the meal he made known to him the purpose of God, anointed him as king (vers. 25-27, ch. x. 1), and sent him away, with an announcement of three signs, which would serve to confirm his election on the part of God (ch. x. 2-16). This occurrence is related very circumstantially, to bring out distinctly the miraculous interposition of God, and to show that Saul did not aspire to the throne; and also that Samuel did not appoint of his own accord the man whom he was afterwards obliged to reject, but that Saul was elected by God to be king over His people, without any interference on the part of either Samuel or himself.¹

Ch. ix. 1-10. *Saul searches for his father's asses*.—Vers. 1, 2. The elaborate genealogy of the Benjaminite Kish, and the minute description of the figure of his son Saul, are in-

¹ There is no tenable ground for the assumption of Thenius and others, that this account was derived from a different source from ch. viii., x. 17-27, and xi. sqq.; for the assertion that ch. x. 17-27 connects itself in the most natural way with ch. viii. is neither well-founded nor correct. In the first place, it was certainly more natural that Samuel, who was to place a king over the nation according to the appointment of God, should be

tended to indicate at the very outset the importance to which Saul attained in relation to the people of Israel. *Kish* was the son of *Abiel*: this is in harmony with ch. xiv. 51. But when, on the other hand, it is stated in 1 Chron. viii. 33, ix. 39, that *Ner* begat *Kish*, the difference may be reconciled in the simplest manner, on the assumption that the *Ner* mentioned there is not the father, but the grandfather, or a still more remote ancestor of *Kish*, as the intervening members are frequently passed over in the genealogies. The other ancestors of *Kish* are never mentioned again. *גִּבּוֹר הָיִל* refers to *Kish*, and signifies not a brave man, but a man of property, as in Ruth ii. 1. This son *Saul* (i.e. "prayed for:" for this meaning of the word, comp. ch. i. 17, 27) was "*young and beautiful*." It is true that even at that time Saul had a son grown up (viz. Jonathan), according to ch. xiii. 2; but still, in contrast with his father, he was "a young man," i.e. in the full vigour of youth, probably about forty or forty-five years old. There is no necessity, therefore, to follow the Vulgate rendering *electus*. No one equalled him in beauty. "*From his shoulder upwards he was higher than any of the people*." Such a figure as this was well adapted to commend him to the people as their king (cf. ch. x. 24), since size and beauty were highly valued in rulers, as signs of manly strength (see Herod. iii. 20, vii. 187; Aristot. *Polit.* iv. c. 24).—Vers. 3-5. Having been sent out by his father to search for his she-asses which had strayed, Saul went with his servant through the mountains of Ephraim, which ran southwards into the tribe-territory of Benjamin (see at ch. i. 1), then through the land of Shalishah and the land of Shaalim, and after that through the land of Benjamin, without finding the asses; and at length, when he had reached the land of Zuph, he determined to return, because he was afraid that his father might turn his mind from the asses, and trouble himself about them (the son and servant). *חָזַר לֵן*, to desist from a thing, to give it up or renounce it.

made acquainted with the man whom God had appointed, before the people elected him by lot. And secondly, Saul's behaviour in hiding himself when the lots were cast (ch. x. 21 sqq.), can only be explained on the supposition that Samuel had already informed him that he was the appointed king; whereas, if this had not been the case, it would be altogether incomprehensible.

As Saul started in any case from Gibeah of Benjamin, his own home (ch. x. 10 sqq., 26, xi. 4, xv. 34, xxiii. 19, xxvi. 1), *i.e.* the present *Tuleil el Phul*, which was an hour or an hour and a half to the north of Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 28), and went thence into the mountains of Ephraim, he no doubt took a north-westerly direction, so that he crossed the boundary of Benjamin somewhere between Bireh and Atarah, and passing through the crest of the mountains of Ephraim, on the west of Gophnah (Jifna), came out into the land of Shalishah. *Shalishah* is unquestionably the country round (or of) *Baal-shalishah* (2 Kings iv. 42), which was situated, according to Eusebius (*Onom. s.v. Βαυθραπισάβ*: *Beth-sarisa* or *Beth-salisa*), in *regione Thamnitica*, fifteen Roman miles to the north of Diospolis (Lydda), and was therefore probably the country to the west of Jiljilia, where three different wadys run into one large wady, called Kurawa; and according to the probable conjecture of Thenius, it was from this fact that the district received the name of *Shalishah*, or *Three-land*. They proceeded thence in their search to the land of *Shaalim*: according to the *Onom. (s.v.)*, "a village seven miles off, in *finibus Eleutheropoleos contra occidentem*." But this is hardly correct, and is most likely connected with the mistake made in transposing the town of Samuel to the neighbourhood of Diospolis (see at ch. i. 1). For since they went on from *Shaalim* into the land of Benjamin, and then still further into the land of Zuph, on the south-west of Benjamin, they probably turned eastwards from *Shalishah*, into the country where we find *Beni Mussah* and *Beni Salem* marked upon Robinson's and v. de Velde's maps, and where we must therefore look for the land of *Shaalim*, that they might proceed thence to explore the land of Benjamin from the north-east to the south-west. If, on the contrary, they had gone from *Shaalim* in a southerly or south-westerly direction, to the district of Eleutheropolis, they would only have entered the land of Benjamin at the south-west corner, and would have had to go all the way back again in order to go thence to the land of Zuph. For we may infer with certainty that the land of Zuph was on the south-west of the tribe-territory of Benjamin, from the fact that, according to ch. x. 2, Saul and his companion passed Rachel's tomb on their return thence to their own home, and then came to the border of

Benjamin. On the name *Zuph*, see at ch. i. 1.—Ver. 6. When Saul proposed to return home from the land of Zuph, his servant said to him, “*Behold, in this city* (*‘this,’* referring to the town which stood in front of them upon a hill) *is a man of God, much honoured; all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now we will go thither; perhaps he will tell us our way that we have to go*” (*lit.* have gone, and still go, *sc.* to attain the object of our journey, *viz.* to find the asses). The name of this town is not mentioned either here or in the further course of this history. Nearly all the commentators suppose it to have been Ramah, Samuel’s home. But this assumption has no foundation at all in the text, and is irreconcilable with the statements respecting the return in ch. x. 2-5. The servant did not say there *dwells* in this city, but there is in this city (ver. 6; comp. with this ver. 10, “They went into the city where the man of God was,” not “dwelt”). It is still more evident, from the answer given by the drawers of water, when Saul asked them, “*Is the seer here?*” (ver. 11),—*viz.* “*He came to-day to the city, for the people have a great sacrifice upon the high place*” (ver. 12),—that the seer (Samuel) did not live in the town, but had only come thither to a sacrificial festival. Moreover, “every impartial man will admit, that the fact of Samuel’s having honoured Saul as his guest at the sacrificial meal of those who participated in the sacrifice, and of their having slept under the same roof, cannot possibly weaken the impression that Samuel was only there in his peculiar and official capacity. It could not be otherwise than that the presidency should be assigned to him at the feast itself as priest and prophet, and therefore that the appointments mentioned should proceed from him. And it is but natural to assume that he had a house at his command for any repetition of such sacrifices, which we find from 2 Kings iv. to have been the case in the history of Elisha” (Valentiner). And lastly, the sacrificial festival itself does not point to Ramah; for although Samuel had built an altar to the Lord at Ramah (ch. vii. 17), this was by no means the only place of sacrifice in the nation. If Samuel offered sacrifice at Mizpeh and Gilgal (ch. vii. 9, x. 8, xiii. 8 sqq.), he could also do the same at other places. What the town really was in which Saul met with him, cannot indeed be determined, since all that we can gather from ch. x. 2 is, that it was situated on the south-west of Bethlehem.

—Vers. 7–10. Saul's objection, that they had no present to bring to the man of God, as the bread was gone from their vessels, was met by the servant with the remark, that he had a quarter of a shekel which he would give.—Ver. 9. Before proceeding with the further progress of the affair, the historian introduces a notice, which was required to throw light upon what follows; namely, that beforetime, if any one wished to inquire of God, *i.e.* to apply to a prophet for counsel from God upon any matter, it was customary in Israel to say, We will go to the seer, because "*he that is now called a prophet was before-time called a seer.*" After this parenthetical remark, the account is continued in ver. 10. Saul declared himself satisfied with the answer of the servant; and they both went into the town, to ask the man of God about the asses that were lost.

Vers. 11–17. As they were going up to the high place of the town, they met maidens coming out of the town to draw water; and on asking them whether the seer was there, they received this answer: "*Yes; behold, he is before thee: make haste now, for he has come into the town to-day; for the people have a sacrifice to-day upon the high place.*" *Bamah* (in the singular) does not mean the height or hill generally; but throughout it signifies *the high place*, as a place of sacrifice or prayer.—Ver. 13. "*When ye come into the city, ye will find him directly, before he goes up to the high place to eat.*" *כֵּן* not only introduces the apodosis, but corresponds to *כֵּן*, *as, so*: here, however, it is used with reference to time, in the sense of our "*immediately.*" "*For the people are not accustomed to eat till he comes, for he blesses the sacrifice,*" etc. *בִּרְיָהּ*, like *εὐλογεῖν*, refers to the thanksgiving prayer offered before the sacrificial meal. "*Go now for him; ye will meet him even to-day.*" The first *אֵתָּה* is placed at the beginning for the sake of emphasis, and then repeated at the close. *כֵּתִיּוֹם*, "*Even to-day.*"—Ver. 14. When they went into the town, Samuel met them on his way out to go to the high place of sacrifice. Before the meeting itself is described, the statement is introduced in vers. 15–17, that the day before Jehovah had foretold to Samuel that the man was coming to him whom he was to anoint as captain over his people. *אֶתְּחַלֵּץ אֹזְןָא*, *to open any one's ear*, equivalent to *reveal* something to him (ch. xx. 12; 2 Sam. vii. 27, etc.). *אֶשְׁלַח*, *I will send thee, i.e.* "I will so direct his way in my overruling providence,

that he shall come to thee" (J. H. Mich.). The words, "*that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon my people, for their cry is come unto me,*" are not at all at variance with ch. vii. 13. In that passage there is simply the assertion, that there was no more any permanent oppression on the part of the Philistines in the days of Samuel, such as had taken place before; but an attempt to recover their supremacy over Israel is not only not precluded, but is even indirectly affirmed (see the comm. on ch. vii. 13). The words before us simply show that the Philistines had then begun to make a fresh attempt to contend for dominion over the Israelites. "*I have looked upon my people:*" this is to be explained like the similar passage in Ex. ii. 25, "God looked upon the children of Israel," and Ex. iii. 7, "I have looked upon the misery of my people." God's looking was not a quiet, inactive looking on, but an energetic look, which brought help in trouble. "*Their cry is come unto me:*" this is word for word the same as in Ex. iii. 9. As the Philistines wanted to tread in the footsteps of the Egyptians, it was necessary that Jehovah should also send His people a deliverer from these new oppressors, by giving them a king. The reason here assigned for the establishment of a monarchy is by no means at variance with the displeasure which God had expressed to Samuel at the desire of the people for a king (ch. viii. 7 sqq.); since this displeasure had reference to the state of heart from which the desire had sprung.—Ver. 17. When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord answered him, *sc.* in reply to the tacit inquiry, '*Is this he?*' "*Behold, this is the man of whom I spake to thee.*" עֲצָר, *coercere imperio.*

Vers. 18-24. The thread of the narrative, which was broken off in ver. 15, is resumed in ver. 18. Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and asked him for the seer's house. The expression בֵּיתוֹ הַשֹּׁעֵר is used to define more precisely the general phrase in ver. 14, בָּתֵּי בֵּיתוֹ הָעִיר, and there is no necessity to alter הָעִיר in ver. 14 into הַשֹּׁעֵר, as Thenius proposes, for בֵּיתוֹ הָעִיר does not mean to go (or be) in the middle of the town, as he imagines, but to go into, or enter, the town; and the entrance to the town was through the gate.—Ver. 19. Samuel replied, "*I am the seer: go up before me to the high place, and eat with me to-day; and to-morrow I will send thee away, and make known to thee all that is in thy heart.*" Letting

a person go in front was a sign of great esteem. The change from the singular אֶחָד to the plural אֶחָדָם may be explained on the ground that, whilst Samuel only spoke to Saul, he intended expressly to invite his servant to the meal as well as himself. "*All that is in thine heart*" does not mean "all that thou hast upon thy heart," i.e. all that troubles thee, for Samuel relieved him of all anxiety about the asses at once by telling him that they were found; but simply the thoughts of thy heart generally. Samuel would make these known to him, to prove to him that he was a prophet. He then first of all satisfied him respecting the asses (ver. 20): "*As for the asses that were lost to thee to-day three days (three days ago), do not set thy heart upon them (i.e. do not trouble thyself about them), for they are found.*" After this quieting announcement, by which he had convinced Saul of his seer's gift, Samuel directed Saul's thoughts to that higher thing which Jehovah had appointed for him: "*And to whom does all that is worth desiring of Israel belong? is it not to thee, and to all thy father's house?*" "The desire of Israel" (*optima quæque Israel*, Vulg.; "the best in Israel," Luther) is not all that Israel desires, but all that Israel possesses of what is precious or *worth desiring* (see Hag. ii. 7). "The antithesis here is between the asses and every desirable thing" (Seb. Schmidt). Notwithstanding the indefinite character of the words, they held up such glorious things as in prospect for Saul, that he replied in amazement (ver. 21), "*Am not I a Benjaminite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family is the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin*" (בְּנֵי בִנְיָמִן is unquestionably a copyist's error for שִׁבְטֵי בִנְיָמִן); and *how speakest thou such a word to me?*" Samuel made no reply to this, as he simply wanted first of all to awaken the expectation in Saul's mind of things that he had never dreamt of before.—Ver. 22. When they arrived at the high place, he conducted Saul and his servant into the cell (the apartment prepared for the sacrificial meal), and gave them (the servant as well as Saul, according to the simple customs of antiquity, as being also his guest) a place at the upper end among those who had been invited. There were about thirty persons present, no doubt the most distinguished men of the city, whilst the rest of the people probably encamped in the open air.—Vers. 23, 24. He then ordered the cook to bring the piece which he had directed him to set aside, and to

place it before Saul, namely the leg and הַעֲלִיָּה (the article in the place of the relative; see Ewald, § 331, *b*); *i.e.* not what was over it, *viz.* the broth poured upon it (Dathe and Maurer), but what was attached to it (Luther). The reference, however, is not to the kidney as the choicest portion (Thenius), for the kidneys were burned upon the altar in the case of all the slain sacrifices (Lev. iii. 4), and only the flesh of the animals offered in sacrifice was applied to the sacrificial meal. What was attached to the leg, therefore, can only have been such of the fat upon the flesh as was not intended for the altar. Whether the right or left leg, is not stated: the earlier commentators decide in favour of the left, because the right leg fell to the share of the priests (Lev. vii. 32 sqq.). But as Samuel conducted the whole of the sacrificial ceremony, he may also have offered the sacrifice itself by virtue of his prophetic calling, so that the right leg would fall to his share, and he might have it reserved for his guest. In any case, however, the leg, as the largest and best portion, was to be a piece of honour for Saul (see Gen. xliii. 34). There is no reason to seek for any further symbolical meaning in it. The fact that it was Samuel's intention to distinguish and honour Saul above all his other guests, is evident enough from what he said to Saul when the cook had brought the leg: "*Behold, that which is reserved is set before thee* (שֵׁנִי is the passive participle, as in Num. xxiv. 21); *for unto this time hath it been kept for thee, as I said I have invited the people.*" לְמוֹעֵד is either "*to the appointed time of thy coming,*" or possibly, "*for the (this) meeting together.*" Samuel mentions this to give Saul his guest to understand that he had foreseen his coming in a supernatural way. לֵאמֹר, *saying, i.e.* as I said (to the cook).

Vers. 25-27. When the sacrificial meal was over, Samuel and Saul went down from the high place into the town, and he (Samuel) talked with him upon the roof (of the house into which Samuel had entered). The flat roofs of the East were used as places of retirement for private conversation (see at Deut. xxii. 8). This conversation did not refer of course to the call of Samuel to the royal dignity, for that was not made known to him as a word of Jehovah till the following day (ver. 27); but it was intended to prepare him for that announcement: so that O. v. Gerlach's conjecture is probably the correct

one, viz. that Samuel "talked with Saul concerning the deep religious and political degradation of the people of God, the oppression of the heathen, the causes of the inability of the Israelites to stand against these foes, the necessity for a conversion of the people, and the want of a leader who was entirely devoted to the Lord."¹—Ver. 26. "*And they rose up early in*

¹ For וַיַּרְבֵּר עַם־שָׂאֹל עַל הַגֶּגֶז the LXX. have *καὶ διέστρωσαν τῷ Σαούλ ἐπὶ τῷ δώματι καὶ ἐκοιμήθη*, "they prepared Saul a bed upon the house, and he slept," from which Clericus conjectured that these translators had read וַיַּרְבֵּר וַיַּרְבֵּר וַיַּרְבֵּר לְשָׂאֹל (וַיַּרְבֵּר or וַיַּרְבֵּר); and Ewald and Thenius propose to alter the Hebrew text in this way. But although וַיִּשְׁכְּבוּ וַיַּרְבֵּר (ver. 26) no doubt presupposes that Saul had slept in Samuel's house, and in fact upon the roof, the remark of Thenius, "that the private conversation upon the roof (ver. 25) comes too early, as Saul did not yet know, and was not to learn till the following day, what was about to take place," does not supply any valid objection to the correctness of the Masoretic text, or any argument in favour of the Septuagint rendering or interpretation, since it rests upon an altogether unfounded and erroneous assumption, viz. that Samuel had talked with Saul about his call to the throne. Moreover, "the strangeness" of the statement in ver. 26, "they rose up early," and then "when the morning dawned, Samuel called," etc., cannot possibly throw any suspicion upon the integrity of the Hebrew text, as this "strangeness" vanishes when we take וַיַּרְבֵּר כְּעֹלֹת וַיַּרְבֵּר as a more precise definition of וַיִּשְׁכְּבוּ. The Septuagint translators evidently held the same opinion as their modern defenders. They took offence at Samuel's private conversation with Saul, because he did not make known to him the word of God concerning his call to the throne till the next morning; and, on the other hand, as their rising the next morning is mentioned in ver. 26, they felt the absence of any allusion to their sleeping, and consequently not only interpreted וַיַּרְבֵּר by a conjectural emendation as standing for וַיַּרְבֵּר, because וַיַּרְבֵּר מַרְבְּדִים is used in Prov. vii. 16 to signify the spreading of mats or carpets for a bed, but also identified וַיִּשְׁכְּבוּ with וַיִּשְׁכְּבוּ, and rendered it *ἐκοιμήθη*. At the same time, they did not reflect that the preparation of the bed and their sleeping during the night were both of them matters of course, and there was consequently no necessity to mention them; whereas Samuel's talking with Saul upon the roof was a matter of importance in relation to the whole affair, and one which could not be passed over in silence. Moreover, the correctness of the Hebrew text is confirmed by all the other ancient versions. Not only do the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic follow the Masoretic text, but Jerome does the same in the rendering adopted by him, "*Et locutus est cum Saule in solario. Cumque mane surrexissent*," though the words "*stravitque Saul in solario et dormivit*" have been interpolated probably from the Itala into the text of the Vulgate which has come down to us

the morning: namely, when the morning dawn arose, Samuel called to Saul upon the roof (i.e. he called from below within the house up to the roof, where Saul was probably sleeping upon the balcony; cf. 2 Kings iv. 10), Get up, I will conduct thee." As soon as Saul had risen, "*they both (both Samuel and Saul) went out (into the street).*" And when they had gone down to the extremity of the town, *Samuel said to Saul, "Let the servant pass on before us (and he did so), and do thou remain here for the present; I will show thee a word of God."*

Ch. x. 1. Samuel then took the oil-flask, poured it upon his (Saul's) head, kissed him, and said, "*Hath not Jehovah (equivalent to 'Jehovah assuredly hath')* *anointed thee to be captain over His inheritance?*" אֲנִי־יְהוָה, as an expression of lively assurance, receives the force of an independent clause through the following יֵּ, "*is it not so?*" i.e. "yea, it is so, that," etc., just as it does before אֲנִי in Gen. iv. 7. אֲנִי־יְהוָה, His (Jehovah's) possession, was the nation of Israel, which Jehovah had acquired as the people of His own possession through their deliverance out of Egypt (Deut. iv. 20, ix. 26, etc.). Anointing with oil was a symbol of endowment with the Spirit of God; as the oil itself, by virtue of the strength which it gives to the vital spirits, was a symbol of the Spirit of God as the principle of divine and spiritual power (see at Lev. viii. 12). Hitherto there had been no other anointing among the people of God than that of the priests and sanctuary (Ex. xxx. 23 sqq.; Lev. viii. 10 sqq.). When Saul, therefore, was consecrated as king by anointing, the monarchy was inaugurated as a divine institution, standing on a par with the priesthood; through which henceforth the Lord would also bestow upon His people the gifts of His Spirit for the building up of His kingdom. As the priests were consecrated by anointing to be the media of the ethical blessings of divine grace for Israel, so the king was consecrated by anointing to be the vehicle and medium of all the blessings of grace which the Lord, as the God-king, would confer upon His people through the institution of a civil government. Through this anointing, which was performed by Samuel under the direction of God, the king was set apart from the rest of the nation as "anointed of the Lord" (cf. ch. xii. 3, 5, etc.), and sanctified as the מָלִיךְ, i.e. its captain, its leader and commander. *Kissing* was probably not a sign of homage or rever-

ence towards the anointed of the Lord, so much as "a kiss of affection, with which the grace of God itself was sealed" (Seb. Schmidt).¹

Vers. 2-7. To confirm the consecration of Saul as king over Israel, which had been effected through the anointing, Samuel gave him three more signs which would occur on his journey home, and would be a pledge to him that Jehovah would accompany his undertakings with His divine help, and practically accredit him as His anointed. These signs, therefore, stand in the closest relation to the calling conveyed to Saul through his anointing.—Ver. 2. *The first sign*: "When thou goest away from me to-day (i.e. now), thou wilt meet two men at Rachel's sepulchre, on the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses of thy father, which thou wentest to seek, are found. Behold, thy father hath given up אֶת־דְּבָרֶיךָ הָאֵלֶּה, the words (i.e. talking) about the asses, and troubleth himself about you, saying, What shall I do about my son?" According to Gen. xxxv. 16 sqq., Rachel's sepulchre was on the way from Bethel

¹ The LXX. and Vulgate have expanded the second half of this verse by a considerable addition, which reads as follows in the LXX.: οὐχὶ κέχριξέ σε κύριος εἰς ἀρχόντα ἐπὶ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ Ἰσραὴλ; καὶ σὺ ἀρξῇς ἐν λαῷ κυρίου, καὶ σὺ σώσεις αὐτὸν ἐκ χειρὸς ἐχθρῶν αὐτοῦ κυκλόθεν, καὶ τοῦτο σοι τὸ σημεῖον ὅτι ἔχρισέ σε κύριος ἐπὶ κληρονομίαν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἀρχόντα. And in the Vulgate: *Ecce, unxit te Dominus super hæreditatem suam in principem, et liberabis populum suum de manibus inimicorum ejus, qui in circuitu ejus sunt. Et hoc tibi signum, quia unxit te Deus in principem.* A comparison of these two texts will show that the LXX. interpolated their addition between אֶלֶּה and בִּי, as the last clause, ὅτι ἔχρισέ σε κύριος ἐπὶ κληρονομίαν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἀρχόντα, is a verbal translation of בִּי מִשְׁחָךְ יְהוָה עַל־נַחֲלָתוֹ לְנִגִּיד. In the Vulgate, on the other hand, the first clause, *ecce unxit—in principem*, corresponds word for word with the Hebrew text, from which we may see that Jerome translated our present Hebrew text; and the addition, *et liberabis*, etc., was interpolated into the Vulgate from the Itala. The text of the Septuagint is nothing more than a gloss formed from ch. ix. 16, 17, which the translator thought necessary, partly because he could not clearly see the force of בִּי אֶלֶּה, but more especially because he could not explain the fact that Samuel speaks to Saul of signs, without having announced them to him as such. But the author of the gloss has overlooked the fact that Samuel does not give Saul a σημεῖον, but three σημεῖα, and describes the object of them in ver. 7 as being the following, namely, that Saul would learn when they took place what he had to do, for Jehovah was with him, and not that they would prove that the Lord had anointed him to be captain.

to Bethlehem, only a short distance from the latter place, and therefore undoubtedly on the spot which tradition has assigned to it since the time of Jerome, viz. on the site of the *Kubbet Rahil*, half an hour to the north-west of Bethlehem, on the left of the road to Jerusalem, about an hour and a half from the city (see at Gen. xxxv. 20). This suits the passage before us very well, if we give up the groundless assumption that Saul came to Samuel at Ramah and was anointed by him there, and assume that the place of meeting, which is not more fully defined in ch. ix., was situated to the south-west of Bethlehem.¹ The expression "in the border of Benjamin" is not at variance with this. It is true that *Kubbet Rahil* is about an hour and a quarter from the southern boundary of Benjamin, which ran past the *Rogel* spring, through the valley of Ben-Hinnom (Josh. xviii. 16); but the expression *עַם קְבוֹרָה* must not be so pressed as to be restricted to the actual site of the grave, since otherwise the further definition "*at Zelzah*" would be superfluous, as Rachel's tomb was unquestionably a well-known locality at that time. If we suppose the place called Zelzah, the situation of which has not yet been discovered,² to have been about midway between Rachel's tomb and the *Rogel* spring, Samuel could very well describe the spot where Saul would meet the

¹ As the account of Saul's meeting with Samuel, in ch. ix., when properly understood, is not at variance with the tradition concerning the situation of Rachel's tomb, and the passage before us neither requires us on the one hand to understand the Ephratah of Gen. xxxv. 19 and xlviii. 7 as a different place from Bethlehem, and erase "*that is Bethlehem*" from both passages as a gloss that has crept into the text, and then invent an *Ephratah* in the neighbourhood of Bethel between Benjamin and Ephraim, as Thenius does, nor warrants us on the other hand in transferring Rachel's tomb to the neighbourhood of Bethel, in opposition to the ordinary tradition, as Kurtz proposes; so the words of Jer. xxxi. 15, "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children," etc., furnish no evidence that Rachel's tomb was at Ramah (*i.e. er Râm*). "For here (in the cycle of prophecy concerning the restoration of all Israel, Jer. xxx.-xxxiii.) Rachel's weeping is occasioned by the fact of the exiles of Benjamin having assembled together in Ramah (Jer. xl. 1), without there being any reason why Rachel's tomb should be sought for in the neighbourhood of this Ramah" (Delitzsch on Gen. xxxv. 20).

² Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 29) supposes Zelzah to be unsuitable to the context, if taken as the name of a place, and therefore follows the *ἀλλομένους μεγάλα* of the LXX., and renders the word "in great haste;" but he has neither given any reason why the name of a place is unsuitable here, nor

two men in the way that he has done. This sign, by confirming the information which Samuel had given to Saul with reference to the asses, was to furnish him with a practical proof that what Samuel had said to him with regard to the monarchy would quite as certainly come to pass, and therefore not only to deliver him from all anxiety as to the lost animals of his father, but also to direct his thoughts to the higher destiny to which God had called him through Samuel's anointing.

The second sign (vers. 3, 4): "*Then thou shalt go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the terebinth of Tabor; and there shall meet thee there three men going up to God to Bethel, carrying one three kids, one three loaves of bread, and one a bottle of wine. They will ask thee after thy welfare, and give thee two loaves; receive them at their hands.*" The terebinth of Tabor is not mentioned anywhere else, and nothing further can be determined concerning it, than that it stood by the road leading from Rachel's tomb to Gibeah.¹ The fact that the three men were going up to God at Bethel, shows that there was still a place of sacrifice consecrated to the Lord at Bethel, where Abraham and Jacob had erected altars to the Lord who had appeared to them there (Gen. xii. 8, xiii. 3, 4, xxviii. 18, 19, xxxv. 7); for the kids and loaves and wine were sacrificial gifts which they were about to offer. שְׁאֵל לְשָׁלוֹם, to ask after one's welfare, i.e. to greet in a friendly manner (cf. Judg. xviii. 15; Gen. xliii. 27). The meaning of this double sign consisted in the fact that these men gave Saul two loaves from their sacrificial offerings. In this he was to

considered that the Septuagint rendering is merely conjectural, and has nothing further to support it than the fact that the translators rendered סָרַח *ἐφ' ἑλάτω*, "he sprang upon him," in ver. 6 and ch. xi. 6, and took סָרַח to be an emphatic form of סָרַח.

¹ The opinion expressed by Ewald and Thenius, that Deborah's mourning oak (Gen. xxxv. 8) is intended, and that Tabor is either a different form of Deborah, or that Tabor should be altered into Deborah, has no foundation to rest upon; for the fact that the oak referred to stood below (i.e. to the south of) Bethel, and the three men whom Saul was to meet at the terebinth of Tabor were going to Bethel, by no means establishes the identity of the two, as their going up to Bethel does not prove that they were already in the neighbourhood of Bethel. Moreover, the Deborah oak was on the north of Gibeah, whereas Saul met the three men between Rachel's tomb and Gibeah, i.e. to the south of Gibeah.

discern a homage paid to the anointed of the Lord ; and he was therefore to accept the gift in this sense at their hand.

The third sign (vers. 5, 6) Saul was to receive at Gibeah of God, where posts of the Philistines were stationed. *Gibeath ha-Elohim* is not an appellative, signifying a high place of God, i.e. a high place dedicated to God, but a proper name referring to *Gibeah* of Benjamin, the native place of Saul, which was called *Gibeah of Saul* from the time when Saul resided there as king (ver. 16 : cf. ch. xi. 4, xv. 34 ; 2 Sam. xxi. 6 ; Isa. x. 29). This is very apparent from the fact that, according to vers. 10 sqq., all the people of Gibeah had known Saul of old, and therefore could not comprehend how he had all at once come to be among the prophets. The name *Gibeah of God* is here given to the town on account of a *bamah* or sacrificial height which rose within or near the town (ver. 13), and which may possibly have been renowned above other such heights, as the seat of a society of prophets. נָצִיבֵי פִלִּשְׁתִּים are not bailiffs of the Philistines, still less columns erected as signs of their supremacy (Thenius), but military posts of the Philistines, as ch. xiii. 3, 4, and 2 Sam. viii. 6, 14, clearly show. The allusion here to the posts of the Philistines at Gibeah is connected with what was about to happen to Saul there. At the place where the Philistines, those severe oppressors of Israel, had set up military posts, the Spirit of God was to come upon Saul, and endow him with the divine power that was required for his regal office. "And it shall come to pass, when thou comest to the town there, thou wilt light upon a company of prophets coming down from the high place (*bamah*, the sacrificial height), before them lyre and *tambourin*, and flute, and harp, and they prophesying." חֶבֶל signifies a rope or cord, then a *band* or *company* of men. It does not follow that because this band of prophets was coming down from the high place, the high place at Gibeah must have been the seat of a school of the prophets. They might have been upon a pilgrimage to Gibeah. The fact that they were preceded by musicians playing, seems to indicate a festal procession. *Nebel* and *kinnor* are stringed instruments which were used after David's time in connection with the psalmody of divine worship (1 Chron. xiii. 8, xv. 20, 21 ; Ps. xxxiii. 2, xliii. 4, etc.). The *nebel* was an instrument resembling a *lyre*, the *kinnor* was more like a *guitar* than a harp. *Toph* : the *tambourin*, which

was played by Miriam at the Red Sea (Ex. xv. 20). *Chalil*. the *flute*; see my *Bibl. Archæology*, ii. § 137. By the prophesying of these prophets we are to understand an ecstatic utterance of religious feelings to the praise of God, as in the case of the seventy elders in the time of Moses (Num. xi. 25). Whether it took the form of a song or of an enthusiastic discourse, cannot be determined; in any case it was connected with a very energetic action indicative of the highest state of mental excitement. (For further remarks on these societies of prophets, see at ch. xix. 18 sqq.)—Ver. 6. “*And the Spirit of Jehovah will come upon thee, and thou wilt prophesy with them, and be changed into another man.*” “Ecstatic states,” says Tholuck (*die Propheten*, p. 53), “have something infectious about them. The excitement spreads involuntarily, as in the American revivals and the preaching mania in Sweden, even to persons in whose state of mind there is no affinity with anything of the kind.” But in the instance before us there was something more than psychical infection. The Spirit of Jehovah, which manifested itself in the prophesying of the prophets, was to pass over to Saul, so that he would prophesy along with them (הִתְנַבֵּיתָ formed like a verb לָהּ for הִתְנַבֵּאתָ; so again in ver. 13), and was entirely to transform him. This transformation is not to be regarded indeed as regeneration in the Christian sense, but as a change resembling regeneration, which affected the entire disposition of mind, and by which Saul was lifted out of his former modes of thought and feeling, which were confined within a narrow earthly sphere, into the far higher sphere of his new royal calling, was filled with kingly thoughts in relation to the service of God, and received “another heart” (ver. 9). *Heart* is used in the ordinary scriptural sense, as the centre of the whole mental and psychical life of will, desire, thought, perception, and feeling (see Delitzsch, *Bibl. Psychol.* pp. 248 sqq., ed. 2). Through this sign his anointing as king was to be inwardly sealed.—Ver. 7. “*When these signs are come unto thee* (the *Kethibh* תְּבִיאֶנָּה is to be read תְּבִאֶנָּה, as in Ps. xlv. 16 and Esther iv. 4; and the *Keri* תְּבִאֶנָּה is a needless emendation), *do to thee what thy hand findeth, i.e. act according to the circumstances* (for this formula, see Judg. ix. 33); *for God will be with thee.*” The occurrence of the signs mentioned was to assure him of the certainty that

God would assist him in all that he undertook as king. The first opportunity for action was afforded him by the Ammonite Nahash, who besieged Jabesh-gilead (ch. xi.).

Ver. 8. In conclusion, Samuel gave him an important hint with regard to his future attitude: "*And goest thou before me down to Gilgal; and, behold, I am coming down to thee, to offer burnt-offerings, and to sacrifice peace-offerings: thou shalt wait seven days, till I come to thee, that I may show thee what thou art to do.*" The infinitive clause *לְהֵעָלוֹת וְנִי* is undoubtedly dependent upon the main clause *וַיֵּרֶדְהָ*, and not upon the circumstantial clause which is introduced as a parenthesis. The thought therefore is the following: If Saul went down to Gilgal to offer sacrifice there, he was to wait till Samuel arrived. The construction of the main clause itself, however, is doubtful, since, grammatically considered, *וַיֵּרֶדְהָ* can either be a continuation of the imperative *עֲשֵׂהָ* (ver. 7), or can be regarded as independent, and in fact conditional. The latter view, according to which *וַיֵּרֶדְהָ* supposes his going down as a possible thing that may take place at a future time, is the one required by the circumstantial clause which follows, and which is introduced by *וְהָיָה*; for if *וַיֵּרֶדְהָ* were intended to be a continuation of the imperative which precedes it, so that Samuel commanded Saul to go down to Gilgal before him, he would have simply announced his coming, that is to say, he would either have said *וַיֵּרֶדְהָ* or *וַיָּאֵר*. The circumstantial clause "*and behold I am coming down to thee*" evidently presupposes Saul's going down as a possible occurrence, in the event of which Samuel prescribes the course he is to pursue. But the conditional interpretation of *וַיֵּרֶדְהָ* is still more decidedly required by the context. For instance, when Samuel said to Saul that after the occurrence of the three signs he was to do what came to his hand, he could hardly command him immediately afterwards to go to Gilgal, since the performance of what came to his hand might prevent him from going to Gilgal. If, however, Samuel meant that after Saul had finished what came to his hand he was to go down to Gilgal, he would have said, "*And after thou hast done this, go down to Gilgal,*" etc. But as he does not express himself in this manner, he can only have referred to Saul's going to Gilgal as an occurrence which, as he foresaw, would take place at some time or other. And to Saul himself this

must not only have presented itself as a possible occurrence, but under the existing circumstances as one that was sure to take place; so that the whole thing was not so obscure to him as it is to us, who are only able to form our conclusions from the brief account which lies before us. If we suppose that in the conversation which Samuel had with Saul upon the roof (ch. ix. 25), he also spoke about the manner in which the Philistines, who had pushed their outposts as far as Gibeah, could be successfully attacked, he might also have mentioned that Gilgal was the most suitable place for gathering an army together, and for making the necessary preparations for a successful engagement with their foes. If we just glance at the events narrated in the following chapters, for the purpose of getting a clear idea of the thing which Samuel had in view; we find that the three signs announced by Samuel took place on Saul's return to Gibeah (vers. 9-16). Samuel then summoned the people to Mizpeh, where Saul was elected king by lot (vers. 17-27); but Saul returned to Gibeah to his own house even after this solemn election, and was engaged in ploughing the field, when messengers came from Jabesh with the account of the siege of that town by the Ammonites. On receiving this intelligence the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him, so that he summoned the whole nation with energy and without delay to come to battle, and proceeded to Jabesh with the assembled army, and smote the Ammonites (ch. xi. 1-11). Thereupon Samuel summoned the people to come to Gilgal and renew the monarchy there (ch. xi. 12-15); and at the same time he renewed his office of supreme judge (ch. xii.), so that now for the first time Saul actually commenced his reign, and began the war against the Philistines (ch. xiii. 1), in which, as soon as the latter advanced to Michmash with a powerful army after Jonathan's victorious engagement, he summoned the people to Gilgal to battle, and after waiting there seven days for Samuel in vain, had the sacrifices offered, on which account as soon as Samuel arrived he announced to him that his rule would not last (ch. xiii. 13 sqq.). Now, it cannot have been the first of these two gatherings at Gilgal that Samuel had in his mind, but must have been the second. The first is precluded by the simple fact that Samuel summoned the people to go to Gilgal for the purpose of renewing the monarchy; and therefore, as

the words "come and let us go to Gilgal" (ch. xi. 14) unquestionably imply, he must have gone thither himself along with the people and the king, so that Saul was never in a position to have to wait for Samuel's arrival. The second occurrence at Gilgal, on the other hand, is clearly indicated in the words of ch. xiii. 8, "*Saul tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed,*" in which there is almost an express allusion to the instructions given to Saul in the verse before us. But whilst we cannot but regard this as the only true explanation, we cannot agree with Seb. Schmidt, who looks upon the instructions given to Saul in this verse as "a rule to be observed throughout the whole of Samuel's life," that is to say, who interprets יָרַדָּה in the sense of "as often as thou goest down to Gilgal." For this view cannot be grammatically sustained, although it is founded upon the correct idea, that Samuel's instructions cannot have been intended as a solitary and arbitrary command, by which Saul was to be kept in a condition of dependence. According to our explanation, however, this is not the case; but there was an inward necessity for them, so far as the government of Saul was concerned. Placed as he was by Jehovah as king over His people, for the purpose of rescuing them out of the power of those who were at that time its most dangerous foes, Saul was not at liberty to enter upon the war against these foes simply by his own will, but was directed to wait till Samuel, the accredited prophet of Jehovah, had completed the consecration through the offering of a solemn sacrifice, and had communicated to him the requisite instructions from God, even though he should have to wait for seven days.¹

Vers. 9-16. When Saul went away from Samuel, to return to Gibeah, "*God changed to him another heart,*"—a pregnant expression for "God changed him, and gave him another heart"

¹ The difficulty in question has been solved on the whole quite correctly by Brentius. "It is not to be supposed," he says, "that Samuel was directing Saul to go at once to Gilgal as soon as he should go away from him, and wait there for seven days; but that he was to do this after he had been chosen king by public lot, and having conquered the Ammonites and been confirmed in the kingdom, was about to prepare to make war upon the Philistines, on whose account chiefly it was that he had been called to the kingdom. For the Lord had already spoken thus to Samuel concerning Saul: 'He will save my people from the hands of the Philis-

(see at ver. 6); and all these signs (the signs mentioned by Samuel) happened on that very day. As he left Samuel early in the morning, Saul could easily reach Gibeah in one day, even if the town where he had met with Samuel was situated to the south-west of Rachel's tomb, as the distance from that tomb to Gibeah was not more than three and a half or four hours.—Ver. 10. The third sign is the only one which is minutely described, because this caused a great sensation at Gibeah, Saul's home. “*And they (Saul and his attendant) came thither to Gibeah.*” “*Thither*” points back to “*thither to the city*” in ver. 5, and is defined by the further expression “*to Gibeah*” (Eng. version, “*to the hill:*” Tr.). The rendering *ἐκεῖθεν* (LXX.) does not warrant us in changing *נָּ* into *נָּ*; for the latter would be quite superfluous, as it was self-evident that they came to Gibeah from the place where they had been in the company of Samuel.—Ver. 11. When those who had known Saul of old saw that he prophesied with the prophets, the people said one to another, “*What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?*” This expression presupposes that Saul's previous life was altogether different from that of the disciples of the prophets.—Ver. 12. And one from thence (*i.e.* from Gibeah, or from the crowd that was gathered round the prophets) answered, “*And who is their father?*” *i.e.* not “*who is their president?*” which would be a very gratuitous question; but, “*is their father a prophet then?*” *i.e.*, according to the explanation given by Oehler (Herzog's *Real. Enc.* xii. p. 216), “*have they the prophetic spirit by virtue of their birth?*” Understood in this way, the retort forms a very appropriate “*answer*” to the expression of surprise and the inquiry, how it came to pass that Saul was among the prophets. If those prophets had not obtained the gift of prophecy by inheritance, but as a free gift of the Lord, it was equally possible for the Lord to communi-
stines, because I have looked upon my people.’ This is the meaning therefore of Samuel's command: Thou hast been called to the kingdom chiefly for this purpose, that thou mayest deliver Israel from the tyranny of the Philistines. When therefore thou shalt enter upon this work, go down into Gilgal and wait there seven days, until I shall come to thee: for thou shalt then offer a holocaust, though not before I come to thee, and I will show thee what must be done in order that our enemies the Philistines may be conquered. The account of this is given below in ch. xiii., where we learn that Saul violated this command.”

cate the same gift to Saul. On the other hand, the alteration of the text from אֲבִיהֶם (their father) into אֲבִיָּהוּ (his father), according to the LXX., Vulg., Syr., and Arab., which is favoured by Ewald, Thenius, and others, must be rejected, for the simple reason that the question, Who is his father? in the mouth of one of the inhabitants of Gibeah, to whom Saul's father was so well known that they called Saul the son of Kish at once, would have no sense whatever. From this the proverb arose, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"—a proverb which was used to express astonishment at the appearance of any man in a sphere of life which had hitherto been altogether strange to him.—Vers. 13 sqq. When Saul had left off prophesying, and came to Bamah, his uncle asked him and his attendant where they had been; and Saul told him, that as they had not found the asses anywhere, they had gone to Samuel, and had learned from him that the asses were found. But he did not relate the words which had been spoken by Samuel concerning the monarchy, from unambitious humility (cf. vers. 22, 23) and not because he was afraid of unbelief and envy, as Thenius follows Josephus in supposing. From the expression "he came to Bamah" (Eng. ver. "to the high place"), we must conclude, that not only Saul's uncle, but his father also, lived in Bamah, as we find Saul immediately afterwards in his own family circle (see vers. 14 sqq.).

SAUL ELECTED KING. HIS ELECTION CONFIRMED.—

CHAP. X. 17-XI. 15.

Vers. 17-27. SAUL'S ELECTION BY LOT.—After Samuel had secretly anointed Saul king by the command of God, it was his duty to make provision for a recognition of the man whom God had chosen on the part of the people also. To this end he summoned the people to Mizpeh, and there instructed the tribes to choose a king by lot. As the result of the lot was regarded as a divine decision, not only was Saul to be accredited by this act in the sight of the whole nation as the king appointed by the Lord, but he himself was also to be more fully assured of the certainty of his own election on the part of God.¹—Ver. 17.

¹ Thenius follows De Wette, and adduces the incompatibility of ch. viii. and ch. x. 17-27 with ch. ix. 1-10, 16, as a proof that in vers. 17-27 we

הָעָם is the nation in its heads and representatives. *Samuel* selected *Mizpeh* for this purpose, because it was there that he had once before obtained for the people, by prayer, a great victory over the Philistines (ch. vii. 5 sqq.).—Vers. 18, 19. "But before proceeding to the election itself, Samuel once more charged the people with their sin in rejecting God, who had brought them out of Egypt, and delivered them out of the hand of all their oppressors, by their demand for a king, that he might show them how dangerous was the way which they were taking now, and how bitterly they would perhaps repent of what they had now desired" (O. v. Gerlach; see the commentary on ch. viii.). The masculine הַלְחִיצִים is construed *ad sensum* with הַמְּלִכּוֹת. In וְהֵאָמְרוּ לוֹ the early translators have taken לוֹ for לָא, which is the actual reading in some of the Codices. But although this reading is decidedly favoured by the parallel passages, ch. viii. 19, xii. 12, it is not necessary; since וְ is used to introduce a direct statement, even in a declaration of the opposite, in the sense of our "no but" (*e.g.* in Ruth i. 10, where לָא precedes). There is, therefore, no reason for exchanging לוֹ for לָא.—Vers. 20, 21. After this warning, Samuel directed the assembled Israelites to come before Jehovah (*i.e.* before the altar of Jehovah which stood at Mizpeh, according to ch. vii. 9) according to their tribes and families (*alaphim*: see at Num. i. 16); "and there was taken (by lot) the tribe of Benjamin."

have a different account of the manner in which Saul became king from that given in ch. ix. 1–10, 16, and one which continues the account in ch. viii. 22. "It is thoroughly inconceivable," he says, "that Samuel should have first of all anointed Saul king by the instigation of God, and then have caused the lot to be cast, as it were, for the sake of further confirmation; for in that case either the prophet would have tempted God, or he would have made Him chargeable before the nation with an unworthy act of jugglery." Such an argument as this could only be used by critics, who deny not only the inspiration of the prophets, but all influence on the part of the living God upon the free action of men, and cannot therefore render the truth of the biblical history at all doubtful. Even Ewald sees no discrepancy here, and observes in his history (*Gesch.* iii. p. 32): "If we bear in mind the ordinary use made of the sacred lot at that time, we shall find that there is nothing but the simple truth in the whole course of the narrative. The secret meeting of the seer with Saul was not sufficient to secure a complete and satisfactory recognition of him as king; it was also necessary that the Spirit of Jehovah should single him out publicly in a solemn assembly of the nation, and point him out as the man of Jehovah."

הִלָּכְךָ, *lit.* to be snatched out by Jehovah, namely, through the lot (see Josh. vii. 14, 16). He then directed the tribe of Benjamin to draw near according to its families, *i.e.* he directed the heads of the families of this tribe to come before the altar of the Lord and draw lots; and *the family of Matri was taken*. Lastly, when the heads of the households in this family came, and after that the different individuals in the household which had been taken, the lot fell upon *Saul the son of Kish*. In the words, "*Saul the son of Kish was taken*," the historian proceeds at once to the final result of the casting of the lots, without describing the intermediate steps any further.¹ When the lot fell upon Saul, they sought him, and he could not be found.—Ver. 22. Then they inquired of Jehovah, "*Is any one else come hither?*" and Jehovah replied, "*Behold, he (whom ye are seeking) is hidden among the things.*" The inquiry was made through the high priest, by means of the Urim and Thummim, for which בִּיחֹה אֱלֹהִים was the technical expression, according to Num. xxvii. 21 (see Judg. xx. 27, 28, i. 1, etc.). There can be no doubt, that in a gathering of the people for so important a purpose as the election of a king, the high priest would also be present, even though this is not expressly stated. Samuel presided over the meeting as the prophet of the Lord. The answer given by God, "*Behold, he is hidden*," etc., appears to have no relation to the question, "*Is any one else come?*" The Sept. and Vulg. have therefore altered the question into εἰ ἔτι ἔρχεται ὁ ἀνὴρ, *utrumnam venturus esset*; and Thenius would adopt this

¹ It is true the Septuagint introduces the words καὶ προσάγουσι τὴν φυλὴν Ματταρί εἰς ἀνδρας before הִלָּכְךָ, and this clause is also found in a very recent Hebrew ms. (viz. 451 in Kennicott's *dissert. gener.* p. 491). But it is very evident that these words did not form an integral part of the original text, as Thenius supposes, but were nothing more than an interpolation of the Sept. translators, from the simple fact that they do not fill up the supposed gap at all completely, but only in a very partial, and in fact a very mistaken manner; for the *family of Matri* could not come to the lot εἰς ἀνδρας (man by man), but only κατ' οἴκους (by households: Josh. vii. 14). Before the household (*beth-aboth*, father's house) of Saul could be taken, it was necessary that the הִלָּכְךָ (ἀνδρες), *i.e.* the different heads of households, should be brought; and it was not till then that Kish, or his son Saul, could be singled out as the appointed of the Lord. Neither the author of the gloss in the LXX., nor the modern defender of the gloss, has thought of this.

as an emendation. But he is wrong in doing so ; for there was no necessity to ask whether Saul would still come : they might at once have sent to fetch him. What they asked was rather, whether any one else had come besides those who were present, as Saul was not to be found among them, that they might know where they were to look for Saul, whether at home or anywhere else. And to this question God gave the answer, "He is present, only hidden among the things." By כְּלִים (the *things* or *vessels*, Eng. ver. the *stuff*) we are to understand the *travelling baggage* of the people who had assembled at Mizpeh. Saul could neither have wished to avoid accepting the monarchy, nor have imagined that the lot would not fall upon him if he hid himself. For he knew that God had chosen him ; and Samuel had anointed him already. He did it therefore simply from humility and modesty. "In order that he might not appear to have either the hope or desire for anything of the kind, he preferred to be absent when the lots were cast" (Seb. Schmidt).—Vers. 23, 24. He was speedily fetched, and brought into the midst of the (assembled) people ; and when he came, he was a head taller than all the people (see ch. ix. 2). And Samuel said to all the people, "*Behold ye whom the Lord hath chosen ! for there is none like him in all the nation.*" Then all the people shouted aloud, and cried, "*Let the king live !*" Saul's bodily stature won the favour of the people (see the remarks on ch. ix. 2).

Samuel then communicated to the people the right of the monarchy, and laid it down before Jehovah. "*The right of the monarchy*" (*meluchah*) is not to be identified with the right of the king (*melech*), which is described in ch. viii. 11 and sets forth the right or prerogative which a despotic king would assume over the people ; but it is the right which regulated the attitude of the earthly monarchy in the theocracy, and determined the duties and rights of the human king in relation to Jehovah the divine King on the one hand, and to the nation on the other. This right could only be laid down by a prophet like Samuel, to raise a wholesome barrier at the very outset against all excesses on the part of the king. Samuel therefore wrote it in a document which was laid down before Jehovah, *i.e.* in the sanctuary of Jehovah ; though certainly not in the sanctuary at Bamah in Gibeah, as Thenius supposes, for nothing is

known respecting any such sanctuary. It was no doubt placed in the tabernacle, where the law of Moses was also deposited, by the side of the fundamental law of the divine state in Israel. When the business was all completed, Samuel sent the people away to their own home.—Ver. 26. Saul also returned to his house at Gibeah, and there went with him the crowd of the men whose hearts God had touched, *sc.* to give him a royal escort, and show their readiness to serve him. **הַחִיל** is not to be altered into **בְּנֵי הַחִיל**, according to the free rendering of the LXX., but is used as in Ex. xiv. 28; with this difference, however, that here it does not signify a large military force, but a crowd of brave men, who formed Saul's escort of honour.—Ver. 27. But as it generally happens that, where a person is suddenly lifted up to exalted honours or office, there are sure to be envious people found, so was it here: there were **בְּנֵי בָלְעָל**, *worthless people*, even among the assembled Israelites, who spoke disparagingly of Saul, saying, "*How will this man help us?*" and who brought him no present. *Minchah*: the present which from time immemorial every one has been expected to bring when entering the presence of the king; so that the refusal to bring a present was almost equivalent to rebellion. But Saul was "*as being deaf*," *i.e.* he acted as if he had not heard. The objection which Thenius brings against this view, *viz.* that in that case it would read **וְהָיָא הָיָה כִּמְ**, exhibits a want of acquaintance with the Hebrew construction of a sentence. There is no more reason for touching **וְהָיָא** than **וְהָיָא** in ver. 26. In both cases the apodosis is attached to the protasis, which precedes it in the form of a circumstantial clause, by the *imperfect*, with *vav consec.* According to the genius of our language, these protases would be expressed by the conjunction *when*, *viz.* : "*when Saul also went home, . . . there went with him,*" etc.; and "*when loose (or idle) people said, etc., he was as deaf.*"

Ch. xi. SAUL'S VICTORY OVER THE AMMONITES.—Even after the election by lot at Mizpeh, Saul did not seize upon the reins of government at once, but returned to his father's house in Gibeah, and to his former agricultural occupation; not, however, merely from personal humility and want of ambition, but rather from a correct estimate of the circumstances. The monarchy was something so new in Israel, that the king could

not expect a general and voluntary recognition of his regal dignity and authority, especially after the conduct of the worthless people mentioned in ch. x. 27, until he had answered their expectations from a king (ch. viii. 6, 20), and proved himself a deliverer of Israel from its foes by a victorious campaign. But as Jehovah had chosen him ruler over his people without any seeking on his part, he would wait for higher instructions to act, before he entered upon the government. The opportunity was soon given him.

Vers. 1-5. Nahash, the king of the Ammonites (cf. ch. xii. 12; 2 Sam. x. 2), attacked the tribes on the east of the Jordan, no doubt with the intention of enforcing the claim to a part of Gilead asserted by his ancestor in the time of Jephthah (Judg. xi. 13), and besieged *Jabesh* in Gilead,¹—according to Josephus the metropolis of Gilead, and probably situated by the Wady Jabes (see at Judg. xxi. 8); from which we may

¹ The time of this campaign is not mentioned in the Hebrew text. But it is very evident from ch. xii. 12, where the Israelites are said to have desired a king, when they saw that Nahash had come against them, that Nahash had invaded Gilead before the election of Saul as king. The Septuagint, however, renders the words **וַיְהִי בְּמַחֲרֵיט** (ch. x. 27) by *καὶ ἐγένεθη ὡς μετὰ μῆνα*, and therefore the translators must have read **בְּמַחֲרֵיט**, which Ewald and Thenius would adopt as an emendation of the Hebrew text. But all the other ancient versions give the Masoretic text, viz. not only the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, but even Jerome, who renders it *ille vero dissimulabat se audire*. It is true that in our present Vulgate text these words are followed by *et factum est quasi post mensem*; but this addition has no doubt crept in from the Itala. With the general character of the Septuagint, the rendering of **בְּמַחֲרֵיט** by *ὡς μετὰ μῆνα* is no conclusive proof that the word in their Hebrew Codex was **בְּמַחֲרֵיט**; it simply shows that this was the interpretation which they gave to **בְּמַחֲרֵיט**. And Josephus (vi. 5, 1), who is also appealed to, simply establishes the fact that *ὡς μετὰ μῆνα* stood in the Sept. version of his day, since he made use of this version and not of the original text. Moreover, we cannot say with Ewald, that this was the last place in which the time could be overlooked; for it is perfectly evident that Nahash commenced the siege of Jabesh shortly after the election of Saul at Mizpeh, as we may infer from the verb **לַעֲלֹךְ**, when taken in connection with the fact implied in ch. xii. 12, that he had commenced the war with the Israelites before this. And lastly, it is much more probable that the LXX. changed **בְּמַחֲרֵיט** into **בְּמַחֲרֵיט**, than that the Hebrew readers of the Old Testament should have altered **בְּמַחֲרֵיט** into **בְּמַחֲרֵיט**, without defining the time more precisely by **אַחַר**, or some other number.

see that he must have penetrated very far into the territory of the Israelites. The inhabitants of Jabesh petitioned the Ammonites in their distress, "*Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee;*" i.e. grant us favourable terms, and we will submit.—Ver. 2. But Nahash replied, "*On this condition (בְּזֹאת, lit. at this price, בַּפְּרִיז pretii) will I make a covenant with you, that I may put out all your right eyes, and so bring a reproach upon all Israel.*" From the fact that the infinitive נָקוּר is continued with וְשִׁמְחֵה, it is evident that the subject to נָקוּר is Nahash, and not the Israelites, as the Syriac, Arabic, and others have rendered it. The suffix to וְשִׁמְחֵה is neuter, and refers to the previous clause: "*it,*" i.e. the putting out of the right eye. This answer on the part of Nahash shows unmistakeably that he sought to avenge upon the people of Israel the shame of the defeat which Jephthah had inflicted upon the Ammonites.—Ver. 3. The elders of Jabesh replied: "*Leave us seven days, that we may send messengers into all the territory of Israel; and if there is no one who saves us, we will come out to thee,*" i.e. will surrender to thee. This request was granted by Nahash, because he was not in a condition to take the town at once by storm, and also probably because, in the state of internal dissolution into which Israel had fallen at that time, he had no expectation that any vigorous help would come to the inhabitants of Jabesh. From the fact that the messengers were to be sent into all the territory of Israel, we may conclude that the Israelites had no central government at that time, and that neither Nahash nor the Jabeshites had heard anything of the election that had taken place; and this is still more apparent from the fact that, according to ver. 4, their messengers came to Gibeah of Saul, and laid their business before the people generally, without applying at once to Saul.—Ver. 5. Saul indeed did not hear of the matter till he came (returned home) from the field behind the oxen, and found the people weeping and lamenting at these mournful tidings. "*Behind the oxen,*" i.e., judging from the expression "yoke of oxen" in ver. 7, the pair of oxen with which he had been ploughing.

Vers. 6–11. When the report of the messengers had been communicated to him, "*the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him, and his anger was kindled greatly,*" sc. at the shame which the

Ammonites had resolved to bring upon all Israel.—Ver. 7. He took a yoke of oxen, cut them in pieces, and sent (the pieces) into every possession of Israel by messengers, and said, “*Whoever cometh not forth after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen.*” The introduction of Samuel’s name after that of Saul, is a proof that Saul even as king still recognised the authority which Samuel possessed in Israel as the prophet of Jehovah. This symbolical act, like the cutting up of the woman in Judg. xix. 29, made a deep impression. “*The fear of Jehovah fell upon the people, so that they went out as one man.*” By “the fear of Jehovah” we are not to understand *δειμα πανικόν* (Thenius and Böttcher), for *Jehovah* is not equivalent to *Elohim*, nor the fear of Jehovah in the sense of fear of His punishment, but a fear inspired by Jehovah. In Saul’s energetic appeal the people discerned the power of Jehovah, which inspired them with fear, and impelled them to immediate obedience.—Ver. 8. Saul held a muster of the people of war, who had gathered together at (or near) *Bezek*, a place which was situated, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Bezek*), about seven hours to the north of Nabulus towards Beisan (see at Judg. i. 4). The number assembled were 300,000 men of Israel, and 30,000 of Judah. These numbers will not appear too large, if we bear in mind that the allusion is not to a regular army, but that Saul had summoned all the people to a general levy. In the distinction drawn between the children of Judah and the children of Israel we may already discern a trace of that separation of Judah from the rest of the tribes, which eventually led to a formal secession on the part of the latter.—Ver. 9. The messengers from Jabesh, who had been waiting to see the result of Saul’s appeal, were now despatched with this message to their fellow-citizens: “*To-morrow you will have help, when the sun shines hot,*” i.e. about noon.—Ver. 10. After receiving these joyful news, the Jabeshites announced to the Ammonites: “*To-morrow we will come out to you, and ye may do to us what seemeth good to you,*”—an untruth by which they hoped to assure the besiegers, so that they might be fallen upon unexpectedly by the advancing army of Saul, and thoroughly beaten.—Ver. 11. The next day Saul arranged the people in three divisions (צִיָּאָה, as in Judg. vii. 16), who forced their way into the camp of the foe from three different sides, in the

morning watch (between three and six o'clock in the morning), smote the Ammonites "*till the heat of the day*," and routed them so completely, that those who remained were all scattered, and there were not two men left together.

Vers. 12-15. RENEWAL OF THE MONARCHY.—Saul had so thoroughly acted the part of a king in gaining this victory, and the people were so enthusiastic in his favour, that they said to Samuel, viz. after their return from the battle, "*Who is he that said, Saul should reign over us!*" The clause *מִלֵּךְ עָלֵינוּ שָׁאֵל* contains a question, though it is indicated simply by the tone, and there is no necessity to alter *שָׁאֵל* into *שָׁאֵלָה*. These words refer to the exclamation of the worthless people in ch. x. 27. "*Bring the men (who spoke in this manner), that we may put them to death.*" But Saul said, "*There shall not a man be put to death this day; for to-day Jehovah hath wrought salvation in Israel;*" and proved thereby not only his magnanimity, but also his genuine piety.¹—Ver. 14. Samuel turned this victory to account, by calling upon the people to go with him to Gilgal, and there renew the monarchy. In what the renewal consisted is not clearly stated; but it is simply recorded in ver. 15 that "*they (the whole people) made Saul king there before the Lord in Gilgal.*" Many commentators have supposed that he was anointed afresh, and appeal to David's second anointing (2 Sam. ii. 4 and v. 3). But David's example merely proves, as Seb. Schmidt has correctly observed, that the anointing could be repeated under certain circumstances; but it does not prove that it was repeated, or must have been repeated, in the case of Saul. If the ceremony of anointing had been performed, it would no doubt have been mentioned, just as it is in 2 Sam. ii. 4 and v. 3. But *מִלֵּךְ* does not mean "they anointed," although the LXX. have rendered it *ἔχρισε Σαμουὴλ*, according to their own subjective interpretation. The renewal of the monarchy may very well have consisted in nothing more than

¹ "Not only signifying that the public rejoicing should not be interrupted, but reminding them of the clemency of God, and urging that since Jehovah had shown such clemency upon that day, that He had overlooked their sins, and given them a glorious victory, it was only right that they should follow His example, and forgive their neighbours' sins without bloodshed."—*Seb. Schmidt*.

a solemn confirmation of the election that had taken place at Mizpeh, in which Samuel once more laid before both king and people the right of the monarchy, receiving from both parties in the presence of the Lord the promise to observe this right, and sealing the vow by a solemn sacrifice. The only sacrifices mentioned are *zebachim shelamim*, i.e. peace-offerings. These were thank-offerings, which were always connected with a sacrificial meal, and when presented on joyous occasions, formed a feast of rejoicing for those who took part, since the sacrificial meal shadowed forth a living and peaceful fellowship with the Lord. *Gilgal* is in all probability the place where Samuel judged the people every year (ch. vii. 16). But whether it was the Gilgal in the plain of the Jordan, or Jiljilia on higher ground to the south-west of Shiloh, it is by no means easy to determine. The latter is favoured, apart from the fact that Samuel did not say "Let us go down," but simply "Let us go" (cf. ch. x. 8), by the circumstance that the solemn ceremony took place after the return from the war at Jabesh; since it is hardly likely that the people would have gone down into the valley of the Jordan to Gilgal, whereas Jiljilia was close by the road from Jabesh to Gibeah and Ramah.

SAMUEL'S ADDRESS AT THE RENEWAL OF THE MONARCHY.—

CHAP. XII.

Samuel closed this solemn confirmation of Saul as king with an address to all Israel, in which he handed over the office of judge, which he had hitherto filled, to the king, who had been appointed by God and joyfully recognised by the people. The good, however, which Israel expected from the king depended entirely upon both the people and their king maintaining that proper attitude towards the Lord with which the prosperity of Israel was ever connected. This truth the prophet felt impelled to impress most earnestly upon the hearts of all the people on this occasion. To this end he reminded them, that neither he himself, in the administration of his office, nor the Lord in His guidance of Israel thus far, had given the people any reason for asking a king when the Ammonites invaded the land (vers. 1-12). Nevertheless the Lord had given them a king, and would not withdraw His hand from them, if they would only

fear Him and confess their sin (vers. 13-15). This address was then confirmed by the Lord at Samuel's desire, through a miraculous sign (vers. 16-18); whereupon Samuel gave to the people, who were terrified by the miracle and acknowledged their sin, the comforting promise that the Lord would not forsake His people for His great name's sake, and then closed his address with the assurance of his continued intercession, and a renewed appeal to them to serve the Lord with faithfulness (vers. 19-25). With this address Samuel laid down his office as judge, but without therefore ceasing as prophet to represent the people before God, and to maintain the rights of God in relation to the king. In this capacity he continued to support the king with his advice, until he was compelled to announce his rejection on account of his repeated rebellion against the commands of the Lord, and to anoint David as his successor.

Vers. 1-6. The time and place of the following address are not given. But it is evident from the connection with the preceding chapter implied in the expression *וַיֹּאמֶר*, and still more from the introduction (vers. 1, 2) and the entire contents of the address, that it was delivered on the renewal of the monarchy at Gilgal.—Vers. 1, 2. Samuel starts with the fact, that he had given the people a king in accordance with their own desire, who would now walk before them. *הִנֵּה* with the participle expresses what is happening, and will happen still. *הַתְּהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי* must not be restricted to going at the head in war, but signifies the general direction and government of the nation, which had been in the hands of Samuel as judge before the election of Saul as king. “*And I have grown old and grey* (*שֵׁבַע* from *שָׁבַע*); *and my sons, behold, they are with you.*” With this allusion to his sons, Samuel simply intended to confirm what he had said about his own age. By the further remark, “*and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day,*” he prepares the way for the following appeal to the people to bear witness concerning his conduct in office.—Ver. 3. “*Bear witness against me before the Lord,*” i.e. looking up to the Lord, the omnipotent and righteous God-king, “*and before His anointed,*” the visible administrator of His divine government, whether I have committed any injustice in my office of judge, by appropriating another's property, or by oppression and violence (*רָצַח*, to pound or crush in pieces, when used to denote an act of violence, is

stronger than *נָשָׂא*, with which it is connected here and in many other passages, *e.g.* Deut. xxviii. 33; Amos iv. 1), or by taking atonement money (*כֶּפֶר*, redemption or atonement money, is used, as in Ex. xxi. 30 and Num. xxxv. 31, to denote a payment made by a man to redeem himself from capital punishment), “so that I had covered my eyes with it,” viz. to exempt from punishment a man who was worthy of death. The *בֵּן*, which is construed with *וְהַעֲלִים*, is the *instrumenti*, and refers to *כֶּפֶר*; consequently it is not to be confounded with *כִּן*, “to hide from,” which would be quite unsuitable here. The thought is not that the judge covers his eyes from the *copher*, that he may not see the bribe, but that he covers his eyes with the money offered him as a bribe, so as not to see and not to punish the crime committed.—Ver. 4. The people answered Samuel, that he had not done them any kind of injustice.—Ver. 5. To confirm this declaration on the part of the people, he then called Jehovah and His anointed as witnesses against the people, and they accepted these witnesses. *כִּלְיֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל* is the subject to *וַיֵּאמְרוּ*; and the *Keri* *וַיֵּאמְרוּ*, though more simple, is by no means necessary. Samuel said, “Jehovah be witness against you,” because with the declaration which the people had made concerning Samuel’s judicial labours they had condemned themselves, inasmuch as they had thereby acknowledged on oath that there was no ground for their dissatisfaction with Samuel’s administration, and consequently no well-founded reason for their request for a king.—Ver. 6. But in order to bring the people to a still more thorough acknowledgment of their sin, Samuel strengthened still more their assent to his solemn appeal to God, as expressed in the words “He is witness,” by saying, “Jehovah (*i.e.* yea, the witness is Jehovah), who made Moses and Aaron, and brought your fathers out of the land of Egypt.” The context itself is sufficient to show that the expression “is witness” is understood; and there is no reason, therefore, to assume that the word has dropped out of the text through a copyist’s error. *עָשָׂה*, to make, in a moral and historical sense, *i.e.* to make a person what he is to be; it has no connection, therefore, with his physical birth, but simply relates to his introduction upon the stage of history, like *ποίησιν*, Heb. iii. 2. But if Jehovah, who redeemed Israel out of Egypt by the hands of Moses and Aaron, and exalted it into His own nation, was witness of the unselfishness and

impartiality of Samuel's conduct in his office of judge, then Israel had grievously sinned by demanding a king. In the person of Samuel they had rejected Jehovah their God, who had given them their rulers (see ch. viii. 7). Samuel proves this still further to the people from the following history.

Vers. 7-12. "*And now come hither, and I will reason with you before the Lord with regard to all the righteous acts which He has shown to you and your fathers.*" נִדְבָרָיו, righteous acts, is the expression used to denote the benefits which Jehovah had conferred upon His people, as being the results of His covenant fidelity, or as acts which attested the righteousness of the Lord in the fulfilment of the covenant grace which He had promised to His people.—Ver. 8. The first proof of this was furnished by the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and their safe guidance into Canaan ("*this place*" is the land of Canaan). The second was to be found in the deliverance of the people out of the power of their foes, to whom the Lord had been obliged to give them up on account of their apostasy from Him, through the judges whom He had raised up for them, as often as they turned to Him with penitence and cried to Him for help. Of the hostile oppressions which overtook the Israelites during this period of the judges, the following are singled out in ver. 9: (1) that by Sisera, the commander-in-chief of Hazor, *i.e.* that of the Canaanitish king Jabin of Hazor (Judg. iv. 2 sqq.); (2) that of the Philistines, by which we are to understand not so much the hostilities of that nation described in Judg. iii. 31, as the forty years' oppression mentioned in Judg. x. 2 and xiii. 1; and (3) the Moabitish oppression under Eglon (Judg. iii. 12 sqq.). The first half of ver. 10 agrees almost word for word with Judg. x. 10, except that, according to Judg. x. 6, the Ashtaroth are added to the Baalim (see at ch. vii. 4 and Judg. ii. 13). Of the judges whom God sent to the people as deliverers, the following are named, viz. Jerubbaal (see at Judg. vi. 32), *i.e.* Gideon (Judg. vi.), and Bedan, and Jephthah (see Judg. xi.), and Samuel. There is no judge named *Bedan* mentioned either in the book of Judges or anywhere else. The name *Bedan* only occurs again in 1 Chron. vii. 17, among the descendants of Machir the Manassite: consequently some of the commentators suppose *Jair* of Gilead to be the judge intended. But such a supposition is perfectly

arbitrary, as it is not rendered probable by any identity in the two names, and Jair is not described as having delivered Israel from any hostile oppression. Moreover, it is extremely improbable that Samuel should have mentioned a judge here, who had been passed over in the book of Judges on account of his comparative insignificance. There is also just as little ground for rendering *Bedan* as an appellative, *e.g.* the Danite (*ben-Dan*), as Kimchi suggests, or *corpulentus* as Böttcher maintains, and so connecting the name with Samson. There is no other course left, therefore, than to regard *Bedan* as an old copyist's error for *Barak* (Judg. iv.), as the LXX., Syriac, and Arabic have done,—a conclusion which is favoured by the circumstance that Barak was one of the most celebrated of the judges, and is placed by the side of Gideon and Jephthah in Heb. xi. 32. The Syriac, Arabic, and one Greek ms. (see Kennicott in the *Addenda* to his *Dissert. Gener.*), have the name of *Samson* instead of *Samuel*. But as the LXX., Chald., and Vulg. all agree with the Hebrew text, there is no critical ground for rejecting Samuel, the more especially as the objection raised to it, *viz.* that Samuel would not have mentioned himself, is far too trivial to overthrow the reading supported by the most ancient versions; and the assertion made by Thenius, that Samuel does not come down to his own times until the following verse, is altogether unfounded. Samuel could very well class himself with the deliverers of Israel, for the simple reason that it was by him that the people were delivered from the forty years' tyranny of the Philistines, whilst Samson merely commenced their deliverance and did not bring it to completion. Samuel appears to have deliberately mentioned his own name along with those of the other judges who were sent by God, that he might show the people in the most striking manner (ver. 12) that they had no reason whatever for saying to him, "*Nay, but a king shall reign over us,*" as soon as the Ammonites invaded Gilead. "*As Jehovah your God is your King,*" *i.e.* has ever proved himself to be your King by sending judges to deliver you.

Vers. 13–18a. After the prophet had thus held up before the people their sin against the Lord, he bade them still further consider, that the king would only procure for them the anticipated deliverance if they would fear the Lord, and give up

their rebellion against God.—Ver. 13. “*But now behold the king whom ye have chosen, whom ye have asked for! behold, Jehovah hath set a king over you.*” By the second הִנֵּה, the thought is brought out still more strongly, that Jehovah had fulfilled the desire of the people. Although the request of the people had been an act of hostility to God, yet Jehovah had fulfilled it. The word בְּחִירָתָם, relating to the choice by lot (ch. x. 17 sqq.), is placed before אֲשֶׁר שְׁאַלְתֶּם, to show that the demand was the strongest act that the people could perform. They had not only chosen the king with the consent or by the direction of Samuel; they had even demanded a king of their own self-will.—Ver. 14. Still, since the Lord had given them a king, the further welfare of the nation would depend upon whether they would follow the Lord from that time forward, or whether they would rebel against Him again. “*If ye will only fear the Lord, and serve Him, . . . and ye as well as the king who rules over you will be after Jehovah your God.*” אַם, in the sense of *modo*, if only, does not require any apodosis, as it is virtually equivalent to the wish, “*O that ye would only!*” for which אִם with the imperfect is commonly used (*vid.* 2 Kings xx. 19; Prov. xxiv. 11, etc.; and Ewald, § 329, *δ*). There is also nothing to be supplied to אַחֲרֵי יְהוָה . . . וְהִיתֶם, since אַחֲרֵי, to be after or behind a person, is good Hebrew, and is frequently met with, particularly in the sense of attaching one’s self to the king, or holding to him (*vid.* 2 Sam. ii. 10; 1 Kings xii. 20, xvi. 21, 22). This meaning is also at the foundation of the present passage, as Jehovah was the God-king of Israel.—Ver. 15. “*But if ye do not hearken to the voice of Jehovah, and strive against His commandment, the hand of Jehovah will be heavy upon you, as upon your fathers.*” וְ in the sense of *as*, i.e. used in a comparative sense, is most frequently placed before whole sentences (see Ewald, § 340, *δ*); and the use of it here may be explained, on the ground that בְּאֶבְרֵיכֶם contains the force of an entire sentence: “*as it was upon your fathers.*” The allusion to the fathers is very suitable here, because the people were looking to the king for the removal of all the calamities, which had fallen upon them from time immemorial. The paraphrase of this word, which is adopted in the Septuagint, ἐπὶ τὸν βασιλέα ὑμῶν, is a very unhappy conjecture, although Thenius proposes to alter the text to suit it.—Ver. 16. In order

to give still greater emphasis to his words, and to secure their lasting, salutary effect upon the people, Samuel added still further: Even now ye may see that ye have acted very wickedly in the sight of Jehovah, in demanding a king. This chain of thought is very clearly indicated by the words נִסְעָתָהּ, “*yea, even now.*” “*Even now come hither, and see this great thing which Jehovah does before your eyes.*” The words נִסְעָתָהּ, which are placed first, belong, so far as the sense is concerned, to רָאוּ אֶת־הָרָא; and הִתְיַצְבוּ (“*place yourselves,*” i.e. make yourselves ready) is merely inserted between, to fix the attention of the people more closely upon the following miracle, as an event of great importance, and one which they ought to lay to heart. “*Is it not now wheat harvest? I will call to Jehovah, that He may give thunder (קָלוּת, as in Ex. ix. 23, etc.) and rain. Then perceive and see, that the evil is great which ye have done in the eyes of Jehovah, to demand a king.*” The wheat harvest occurs in Palestine between the middle of May and the middle of June (see my *Bibl. Arch.* i. § 118). And during this time it scarcely ever rains. Thus Jerome affirms (*ad Am.* c. 4): “*Nunquam in fine mensis Junii aut in Julio in his provinciis maximeque in Judæa pluvias vidimus.*” And Robinson also says in his *Palestine* (ii. p. 98): “*In ordinary seasons, from the cessation of the showers in spring until their commencement in October and November, rain never falls, and the sky is usually serene*” (see my *Arch.* i. § 10). So that when God sent thunder and rain on that day in answer to Samuel’s appeal to him, this was a miracle of divine omnipotence, intended to show to the people that the judgments of God might fall upon the sinners at any time. Thunderings, as “*the voices of God*” (Ex. ix. 28), are harbingers of judgment.

Vers. 18b–25. This miracle therefore inspired the people with a salutary terror. “*All the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel,*” and entreated the prophet, “*Pray for thy servants to the Lord thy God, that we die not, because we have added to all our sins the evil thing, to ask us a king.*”—Vers. 20, 21. Samuel thereupon announced to them first of all, that the Lord would not forsake His people for His great name’s sake, if they would only serve Him with uprightness. In order, however, to give no encouragement to any false trust in the covenant faithfulness of the Lord, after the comforting words, “*Fear*

not," he told them again very decidedly that they had done wrong, but that now they were not to turn away from the Lord, but to serve Him with all their heart, and not go after vain idols. To strengthen this admonition, he repeats the *לֹא תִסְרֹף* in ver. 21, with the explanation, that in turning from the Lord they would fall away to idols, which could not bring them either help or deliverance. To the *כִּי* after *תִסְרֹף* the same verb must be supplied from the context: "*Do not turn aside (from the Lord), for (ye turn aside) after that which is vain.*" *הָהוּא*, the vain, worthless thing, signifies the *false gods*. This will explain the construction with a plural: "*which do not profit and do not save, because they are emptiness*" (*tohu*), i.e. worthless beings (*elilim*, Lev. xix. 4; cf. Isa. xlv. 9 and Jer. xvi. 19).—Ver. 22. "*For* (*כִּי* gives the reason for the main thought of the previous verse, 'Fear not, but serve the Lord,' etc.) *the Lord will not forsake His people for His great name's sake; for it hath pleased the Lord* (for *הוֹאִיל*, see at Deut. i. 5) *to make you His people.*" The emphasis lies upon *His*. This the Israelites could only be, when they proved themselves to be the people of God, by serving Jehovah with all their heart. "*For His great name's sake,*" i.e. for the great name which He had acquired in the sight of all the nations, by the marvellous guidance of Israel thus far, to preserve it against misapprehension and blasphemy (see at Josh. vii. 9).—Ver. 23. Samuel then promised the people his constant intercession: "*Far be it from me to sin against the Lord, that I should cease to pray for you, and to instruct you in the good and right way,*" i.e. to work as prophet for your good. "In this he sets a glorious example to all rulers, showing them that they should not be led astray by the ingratitude of their subordinates or subjects, and give up on that account all interest in their welfare, but should rather persevere all the more in their anxiety for them" (*Berleb. Bible*).—Vers. 24, 25. Lastly, he repeats once more his admonition, that they would continue steadfast in the fear of God, threatening at the same time the destruction of both king and people if they should do wrong (on ver. 24a, see ch. vii. 3 and Josh. xxiv. 14, where the form *יִרְאוּ* is also found). "*For see what great things He has done for you*" (shown to you), not by causing it to thunder and rain at Samuel's prayer, but by giving them a king. *הִנֵּה יְהוָה עִם*, as in Gen. xix. 19.

SAUL'S REIGN, AND HIS UNSEASONABLE SACRIFICE IN THE
WAR AGAINST THE PHILISTINES.—CHAP. XIII.

The history of the reign of Saul commences with this chapter;¹ and according to the standing custom in the history of the kings, it opens with a statement of the age of the king when he began to reign, and the number of years that his reign lasted. If, for example, we compare the form and contents of this verse with 2 Sam. ii. 10, v. 4, 1 Kings xiv. 21,

¹ The connection of vers. 8-11 of this chapter with ch. x. 8 is adduced in support of the hypothesis that ch. xiii. forms a direct continuation of the account that was broken off in ch. x. 16. This connection must be admitted; but it by no means follows that in the source from which the books before us were derived, ch. xiii. was directly attached to ch. viii. 16, and that Samuel intended to introduce Saul publicly as king here in Gilgal immediately before the attack upon the Philistines, to consecrate him by the solemn presentation of sacrifices, and to connect with this the religious consecration of the approaching campaign. For there is not a word about any such intention in the chapter before us or in ch. x. 8, nor even the slightest hint at it. Thenius has founded this view of his upon his erroneous interpretation of יִרְדָּה in ch. x. 8 as an imperative, as if Samuel intended to command Saul to go to Gilgal immediately after the occurrence of the signs mentioned in ch. x. 2 sqq.: a view which is at variance with the instructions given to him, to do what his hand should find after the occurrence of those signs (see p. 101). To this we may also add the following objections: How is it conceivable that Saul, who concealed his anointing even from his own family after his return from Samuel to Gibeah (ch. x. 16), should have immediately after chosen 3000 men of Israel to begin the war against the Philistines? How did Saul attain to any such distinction, that at his summons all Israel gathered round him as their king, even before he had been publicly proclaimed king in the presence of the people, and before he had secured the confidence of the people by any kingly heroic deed? The fact of his having met with a band of prophets, and even prophesied in his native town of Gibeah after his departure from Samuel, and that this had become a proverb, is by no means enough to explain the enterprises described in ch. xiii. 1-7, which so absolutely demand the incidents that occurred in the meantime as recorded in ch. x. 17-xii. 25 even to make them intelligible, that any writing in which ch. xiii. 2 sqq. followed directly upon ch. x. 16 would necessarily be regarded as utterly faulty. This fact, which I have already adduced in my examination of the hypothesis defended by Thenius in my *Introduction to the Old Testament* (p. 168), retains its force undiminished, even though, after a renewed investigation of the question, I have given up the supposed connection between ch. x. 8 and the proclamation mentioned in ch. xi. 14 sqq., which I defended there.

xxii. 42, 2 Kings viii. 26, and other passages, where the age is given at which Ishbosheth, David, and many of the kings of Judah began to reign, and also the number of years that their reign lasted, there can be no doubt that our verse was also intended to give the same account concerning Saul, and therefore that every attempt to connect this verse with the one which follows is opposed to the uniform historical usage. Moreover, even if, as a matter of necessity, the second clause of ver. 1 could be combined with ver. 2 in the following manner: He was two years king over Israel, then Saul chose 3000 men, etc.; the first half of the verse would give no reasonable sense, according to the Masoretic text that has come down to us. *בַּרְשָׁנָה שָׂאֵל מָלָךְ* cannot possibly be rendered "*jam per annum regnaverat Saul*," "Saul had been king for a year," or "Saul reigned one year," but can only mean "*Saul was a year old when he became king*." This is the way in which the words have been correctly rendered by the Sept. and Jerome; and so also in the Chaldee paraphrase ("Saul was an innocent child when he began to reign") this is the way in which the text has been understood. It is true that this statement as to his age is obviously false; but all that follows from that is, that there is an error in the text, namely, that between *בַּרְשָׁנָה* and *שָׂאֵל* the age has fallen out,—a thing which could easily take place, as there are many traces to show that originally the numbers were not written in words, but only in letters that were used as numerals. This gap in the text is older than the Septuagint version, as our present text is given there. There is, it is true, an *anonymus* in the *hexapla*, in which we find the reading *νῖος τριάκοντα ἐτῶν Σαούλ*; but this is certainly not according to ancient MSS., but simply according to a private conjecture, and that an incorrect one. For since Saul already had a son, Jonathan, who commanded a division of the army in the very first years of his reign, and therefore must have been at least twenty years of age, if not older, Saul himself cannot have been less than forty years old when he began to reign. Moreover, in the second half of the verse also, the number given is evidently a wrong one, and the text therefore equally corrupt: for the rendering "*when he had reigned two years over Israel*" is opposed both by the parallel passages already quoted, and also by the introduction of the name Saul as the subject in ver. 2a,

which shows very clearly that ver. 2 commences a fresh sentence, and is not merely the apodosis to ver. 1b. But Saul's reign must have lasted longer than two years, even if, in opposition to all analogies to be found elsewhere, we should understand the two years as merely denoting the length of his reign up to the time of his rejection (ch. xv.), and not till the time of his death. Even then he reigned longer than that; for he could not possibly have carried on all the wars mentioned in ch. xiv. 47, with Moab, Ammon, Edom, the kings of Zobah and the Philistines, in the space of two years. Consequently a numeral, say כ, twenty, must also have dropped out before שְׁנַיִם שָׁנִים (two years); since there are cogent reasons for assuming that his reign lasted as long as twenty or twenty-two years, reckoning to the time of his death. We have given the reasons themselves in connection with the chronology of the period of the judges (vol. iv. pp. 283-4).¹

Vers. 2-7. *The war with the Philistines* (ch. xiii. xiv.) certainly falls, at least so far as the commencement is concerned, in the very earliest part of Saul's reign. This we must infer partly from the fact, that at the very time when Saul was seeking for his father's asses, there was a military post of the Philistines at Gibeah (ch. x. 5), and therefore the Philistines had already occupied certain places in the land; and partly also from the fact, that according to this chapter Saul selected an army of 3000 men out of the whole nation, took up his post at Michmash with 2000 of them, placing the other thousand at Gibeah under his son Jonathan, and sent the rest of the people home (ver. 2), because his first intention was simply to check the further advance of the Philistines. The dismissal of the rest of the people to their own homes presupposes that the whole of the fighting men of the nation were assembled together. But as no other summoning together of the people has been

¹ The traditional account that Saul reigned forty years (Acts xiii. 24, and Josephus, *Ant.* vi. 14, 9) is supposed to have arisen, according to the conjecture of Thenius (on 2 Sam. ii. 10), from the fact that his son Ishbosheth was forty years old when he began to reign, and the notion that as he is not mentioned among the sons of Saul in 1 Sam. xiv. 49, he must have been born after the commencement of Saul's own reign. This conjecture is certainly a probable one; but it is much more natural to assume that as David and Solomon reigned forty years, it arose from the desire to make Saul's reign equal to theirs.

mentioned before, except to the war upon the Ammonites at Jabesh (ch. xi. 6, 7), where all Israel gathered together, and at the close of which Samuel had called the people and their king to Gilgal (ch. xi. 14), the assumption is a very probable one, that it was there at Gilgal, after the renewal of the monarchy, that Saul formed the resolution at once to make war upon the Philistines, and selected 3000 fighting men for the purpose out of the whole number that were collected together, and then dismissed the remainder to their homes. In all probability Saul did not consider that either he or the Israelites were sufficiently prepared as yet to undertake a war upon the Philistines generally, and therefore resolved, in the first place, only to attack the outpost of the Philistines, which was advanced as far as Gibeah, with a small number of picked soldiers. According to this simple view of affairs, the war here described took place at the very commencement of Saul's reign; and the chapter before us is closely connected with the preceding one.—Ver. 2. Saul posted himself at Michmash and on the mount of Bethel with his two thousand men. *Michmash*, the present *Mukhmas*, a village in ruins upon the northern ridge of the Wady *Suweinit*, according to the *Onom.* (s. v. *Machmas*), was only nine Roman miles to the north of Jerusalem, whereas it took Robinson three hours and a half to go from one to the other (*Pal.* ii. p. 117). *Bethel* (*Beitin*; see at Josh. vii. 2) is to the north-west of this, at a distance of two hours' journey, if you take the road past Deir-Diwan. The mountain (הַר) of Bethel cannot be precisely determined. Bethel itself was situated upon very high ground; and the ruins of Beitin are completely surrounded by heights (*Rob.* ii. p. 126; and v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 178-9). Jonathan stationed himself with his thousand men at (by) Gibeah of Benjamin, the native place and capital of Saul, which was situated upon *Tell el Phul* (see at Josh. xviii. 28), about an hour and a half from Michmas.—Ver. 3. “*And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was at Geba*,” probably the military post mentioned in ch. x. 5, which had been advanced in the meantime as far as Geba. For *Geba* is not to be confounded with *Gibeah*, from which it is clearly distinguished in ver. 16 as compared with ver. 15, but is the modern *Jeba*, between the Wady *Suweinit* and Wady *Fara*, to the north-west of Ramah (er-Râm; see at Josh. xviii. 24). “*The Philistines*

heard this. And Saul had the trumpet blown throughout the whole land, and proclamation made: let the Hebrews hear it." **לְאַמֵּר** after **בְּשׁוֹפָר** points out the proclamation that was made after the alarm given by the *shophar* (see 2 Sam. xx. 1; 1 Kings i. 34, 39, etc.). The object to "let them hear" may be easily supplied from the context, viz. Jonathan's feat of arms. Saul had this trumpeted in the whole land, not only as a joyful message for the Hebrews, but also as an indirect summons to the whole nation to rise and make war upon the Philistines. In the word **שָׁמַע** (hear), there is often involved the idea of observing, laying to heart that which is heard. If we understand **שָׁמַעוּ** in this sense here, and the next verse decidedly hints at it, there is no ground whatever for the objection which Thenius, who follows the LXX., has raised to **הַעֲבִירִים**. He proposes this emendation, **יִפְשְׁעוּ הַעֲבִירִים**, "let the Hebrews fall away," according to the Alex. text *ἡθετήκασιν οἱ δοῦλοι*, without reflecting that the very expression *οἱ δοῦλοι* is sufficient to render the Alex. reading suspicious, and that Saul could not have summoned the people in *all* the land to fall away from the Philistines, since they had not yet conquered and taken possession of the whole. Moreover, the correctness of **שָׁמַעוּ** is confirmed by **וְכָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל שָׁמַעוּ** in ver. 4. "*All Israel heard*," not the call to fall away, but the news, "*Saul has smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and Israel has also made itself stinking with the Philistines*," i.e. hated in consequence of the bold and successful attack made by Jonathan, which proved that the Israelites would no longer allow themselves to be oppressed by the Philistines. "*And the people let themselves be called together after Saul to Gilgal.*" **וַיִּצְעֲקוּ**, to permit to summon to war (as in Judg. vii. 23, 24). The words are incorrectly rendered by the Vulgate, "*clamavit ergo populus post Saul*," and by Luther, "*Then the people cried after Saul to Gilgal.*" Saul drew back to Gilgal, when the Philistines advanced with a large army, to make preparations for the further conflict (see at ver. 13).—Ver. 5. The Philistines also did not delay to avenge the defeat at Geba. They collected an innumerable army: 30,000 chariots, 6000 horsemen, and people, i.e. foot-soldiers, without number (as the sand by the sea-shore; cf. Judg. vii. 12, Josh. xi. 4, etc.). **רָכֶב** by the side of **פָּרָשִׁים** can only mean war chariots. 30,000 war chariots, however, bear no proportion

whatever to 6000 horsemen, not only because the number of war chariots is invariably smaller than that of the horsemen (cf. 2 Sam. x. 18; 1 Kings x. 26; 2 Chron. xii. 3), but also, as Bochart observes in his *Hieroz.* p. i. lib. ii. c. 9, because such a number of war chariots is never met with either in sacred or profane history, not even in the case of nations that were much more powerful than the Philistines. The number is therefore certainly corrupt, and we must either read 3000 (שְׁלֶשֶׁת אֲלֵף) instead of (שְׁלִישִׁים אֲלֵף), according to the Syriac and Arabic, or else simply 1000; and in the latter case the origin of the number thirty must be attributed to the fact, that through the oversight of a copyist the ל of the word יִשְׂרָאֵל was written twice, and consequently the second ל was taken for the numeral thirty. This army was encamped "at Michmash, before (*i.e.* in the front, or on the western side of) Bethaven:" for, according to Josh. vii. 2, Bethaven was to the east of Michmash; and קִרְיָת, when it occurs in geographical accounts, does not "always mean to the east," as Thenius erroneously maintains, but invariably means simply "in front" (see at Gen. ii. 14).¹—Vers. 6, 7. When the Israelites saw that they had come into a strait (צֵר), for the people were oppressed (by the Philistines), they hid themselves in the caves, thorn-bushes, rocks (*i.e.* clefts of the rocks), fortresses (צִדְדִּיִּים; see at Judg. ix. 46), and pits (which were to be found in the land); and Hebrews also went over the Jordan into the land of Gad and Gilead, whilst Saul was still at Gilgal; and all the people (the people of war who had been called together, ver. 4) trembled behind him, *i.e.* were gathered together in his train, or assembled round him as leader, trembling or in despair.

The *Gilgal* mentioned here cannot be Jiljilia, which is situated upon the high ground, as assumed in the *Comm. on Joshua*, p. 94, but must be the Gilgal in the valley of the Jordan. This is not only favoured by the expression יֵרִי (the Philistines will come *down* from Michmash to Gilgal, ver. 12),

¹ Consequently there is no ground whatever for altering the text according to the confused rendering of the LXX., ἐν Μαχμαδὶς ἐξ ἐναντίας Βαιθαρὼν κατὰ νότον, for the purpose of substituting for the correct statement in the text a description which would be geographically wrong, viz. to the south-east of Beth-horon, since Michmash was neither to the south nor to the south-east, but to the east of Beth-horon.

but also by *וַיַּעַל* (Samuel went *up* from Gilgal to Gibeah, ver. 15), and by the general attitude of Saul and his army towards the Philistines. As the Philistines advanced with a powerful army, after Jonathan's victory over their garrison at Geba (to the south of Michmash), and encamped at Michmash (ver. 5); and Saul, after withdrawing from Gilgal, where he had gathered the Israelites together (vers. 4, 8, 12), with Jonathan and the six hundred men who were with him when the muster took place, took up his position at Geba (vers. 15, 16), from which point Jonathan attacked the Philistine post in the pass of Michmash (ver. 23, and ch. xiv. 1 sqq.): Saul must have drawn back from the advancing army of the Philistines to the Gilgal in the Jordan valley, to make ready for the battle by collecting soldiers and presenting sacrifices, and then, after this had been done, must have advanced once more to Gibeah and Geba to commence the war with the army of the Philistines that was encamped at Michmash. If, on the other hand, he had gone northwards to Jiljilia from Michmash, where he was first stationed, to escape the advancing army of the Philistines; he would have had to attack the Philistines from the north when they were encamped at Michmash, and could not possibly have returned to Geba without coming into conflict with the Philistines, since Michmash was situated between Jiljilia and Geba.

Vers. 8–15. *Saul's untimely sacrifice.*—Vers. 8, 9. Saul waited seven days for Samuel's coming, according to the time appointed by Samuel (see at ch. x. 8), before proceeding to offer the sacrifices through which the help of the Lord was to be secured for the approaching campaign (see ver. 12); and as Samuel did not come, the people began to disperse and leave him. The *Kethib* *וַיִּחַל* is either the *Niphal* *וַיִּחַל*, as in Gen. viii. 12, or *Piel* *וַיִּחַל*; and the *Keri* *וַיִּחַל* (*Hiphil*) is unnecessary. The verb *וַיַּעַר* may easily be supplied to *וַיִּחַל* from the word *לְמַוְעַר* (see *Ges. Lehrgeb.* p. 851).—Ver. 9. Saul then resolved, in his anxiety lest the people should lose all heart and forsake him altogether if there were any further delay, that he would offer the sacrifice without Samuel. *וַיַּעַל הָעֹלָה* does not imply that Saul offered the sacrifice with his own hand, *i.e.* that he performed the priestly function upon this occasion. The co-operation of the priests in performing the duties belonging to them on such an occasion is taken for granted, just as in the

case of the sacrifices offered by David and Solomon (2 Sam. xxiv. 25; 1 Kings iii. 4, viii. 63).—Vers. 10 sqq. The offering of the sacrifice was hardly finished when Samuel came and said to Saul, as he came to meet him and salute him, “*What hast thou done?*” Saul replied, “*When I saw that the people were scattered away from me, and thou camest not at the time appointed, and the Philistines were assembled at Michmash, I thought the Philistines will come down to me to Gilgal now (to attack me), before I have entreated the face of Jehovah; and I overcame myself, and offered the burnt-offering.*” חָלָה פָּנַי: see Ex. xxxii. 11.—Ver. 13. Samuel replied, “*Thou hast acted foolishly, (and) not kept the commandment of Jehovah thy God, which He commanded thee: for now (sc. if thou hadst obeyed His commandment) Jehovah would have established thy sovereignty over Israel for ever; but now (sc. since thou hast acted thus) thy sovereignty shall not continue.*” The antithesis of וְעַתָּה הִכֵּן and לֹא תָקִים requires that we should understand these two clauses conditionally. The conditional clauses are omitted, simply because they are at once suggested by the tenor of the address (see Ewald, § 358, a). The כִּי (for) assigns the reason, and refers to נִסְכַּלְתָּ (“thou hast done foolishly”), the וְנִסְכַּלְתָּ לֹא being merely added as explanatory. The non-continuance of the sovereignty is not to be regarded as a rejection, or as signifying that Saul had actually lost the throne so far as he himself was concerned; but לֹא תָקִים (shall not continue) forms the antithesis to הִכֵּן עַד־עוֹלָם (established for ever), and refers to the fact that it was not established in perpetuity by being transmitted to his descendants. It was not till his second transgression that Saul was rejected, or declared unworthy of being king over the people of God (ch. xv.). We are not compelled to assume an immediate rejection of Saul even by the further announcement made by Samuel, “*Jehovah hath sought him a man after his own heart; him hath Jehovah appointed prince over His people;*” for these words merely announce the purpose of God, without defining the time of its actual realization. Whether it would take place during Saul’s reign, or not till after his death, was known only to God, and was made contingent upon Saul’s further behaviour. But if Saul’s sin did not consist, as we have observed above, in his having interfered with the prerogatives of the priests by offering the sacrifice

himself, but simply in the fact that he had transgressed the commandment of God as revealed to him by Samuel, to postpone the sacrifice until Samuel arrived, the punishment which the prophet announced that God would inflict upon him in consequence appears a very severe one, since Saul had not come to the resolution either frivolously or presumptuously, but had been impelled and almost forced to act as he did by the difficulties in which he was placed in consequence of the prophet delaying his coming. But wherever, as in the present instance, there is a definite command given by the Lord, a man has no right to allow himself to be induced to transgress it, by fixing his attention upon the earthly circumstances in which he is placed. As Samuel had instructed Saul, as a direct command from Jehovah, to wait for his arrival before offering sacrifice, Saul might have trusted in the Lord that he would send His prophet at the right time and cause His command to be fulfilled, and ought not to have allowed his confidence to be shaken by the pressing danger of delay. The interval of seven days and the delay in Samuel's arrival were intended as a test of his faith, which he ought not to have lightly disregarded. Moreover, the matter in hand was the commencement of the war against the principal enemies of Israel, and Samuel was to tell him what he was to do (ch. x. 8). So that when Saul proceeded with the consecrating sacrifice for that very conflict, without the presence of Samuel, he showed clearly enough that he thought he could make war upon the enemies of his kingdom without the counsel and assistance of God. This was an act of rebellion against the sovereignty of Jehovah, for which the punishment announced was by no means too severe.—Ver. 15. After this occurrence Samuel went up to Gibeah, and Saul mustered the people who were with him, about six hundred men. Consequently Saul had not even accomplished the object of his unseasonable sacrifice, namely, to prevent the dispersion of the people. With this remark the account of the occurrence that decided the fate of Saul's monarchy is brought to a close.

Vers. 16-23. *Disarming of Israel by the Philistines.*—The following account is no doubt connected with the foregoing, so far as the facts are concerned, inasmuch as Jonathan's brave heroic deed, which brought the Israelites a splendid victory over the Philistines, terminated the war for which Saul had entreated

the help of God by his sacrifice at Gilgal; but it is not formally connected with it, so as to form a compact and complete account of the successive stages of the war. On the contrary, the 16th verse, where we have an account of the Israelitish warriors and their enemies, commences a new section of the history, in which the devastating march of the Philistines through the land, and the disarming of the Israelites by these their enemies, are first of all depicted (vers. 17-23); and then the victory of the Israelites through Jonathan's daring and heroic courage, notwithstanding their utter prostration, is recorded (ch. xiv. 1-46), for the purpose of showing how the Lord had miraculously helped His people.¹

Ver. 16. The two clauses of this verse are circumstantial clauses: "*But Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people that were with him, were sitting, i.e. tarrying, in Geba of Benjamin (the present Jeba; see at ver. 3); and the Philistines had encamped at Michmash.*" Just as in vers. 2-4 it is not stated when or why Saul went from Michmash or Geba to Gilgal,

¹ From this arrangement of the history, according to which the only two points that are minutely described in connection with the war with the Philistines are those which bring out the attitude of the king, whom the nation had desired to deliver it from its foes, towards Jehovah, and the way in which Jehovah acted towards His people, whilst all the rest is passed over, we may explain the absence of any closer connection between ver. 15 and ver. 16, and not from a gap in the text. The LXX., however, adopted the latter supposition, and according to the usual fashion filled up the gap by expanding ver. 15 in the following thoughtless manner: *καὶ ἀνίστη Σαμουὴλ καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ἐκ Γαλγάλων· καὶ τὸ κατάλειμμα τοῦ λαοῦ ἀνέβη ὀπίσω Σαοῦλ εἰς ἀπάντησιν ὀπίσω τοῦ λαοῦ τοῦ πολεμιστοῦ αὐτῶν παραγενομένων ἐκ Γαλγάλων εἰς Γαβαὰ Βενιαμὴν καὶ ἐπισκέψατο Σαοῦλ, κ.τ.λ.* For there is no sense in *εἰς ἀπάντησιν ὀπίσω*, and the whole thought, that the people who were left went up after Saul to meet the people of war, is unintelligible, since it is not stated whence the people of war had come, who are said to have met with those who had remained behind with Saul, and to have gone up with him from Gilgal to Gibeah. If, however, we overlook this, and assume that when Saul returned from Gilgal to Gibeah a further number of fighting men came to him from different parts of the land, how does this assumption agree with the account which follows, viz. that when Saul mustered the people he found only six hundred men,—a statement which is repeated again in ch. xiv. 2? The discrepancy remains even if we adopt Ewald's conjecture (*Gesch.* iii. 43), that *εἰς ἀπάντησιν* is a false rendering of לְקָרְבַּי, "to the conflict." Moreover, even with the Alexandrian filling up, no natural connection is secured between vers. 15 and 16, unless we identify *Geba* of Ben-

but this change in his position is merely hinted at indirectly at the close of ver. 4; so here Saul's return from Gilgal to Geba with the fighting men who remained with him is not distinctly mentioned, but simply taken for granted as having already occurred.—Vers. 17, 18. Then the spoiler went out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies. שְׁלֹשָׁה רָאשִׁים is made subject to the verb to define the mode of action (see Ewald, § 279, c); and *rashim* is used here, as in ch. xi. 11. הַפְּלִשְׁתִּית, according to the context, is a hostile band that went out to devastate the land. The definite article points it out as well known. One company took the road to *Ophrah* into the land of *Shual*, i.e. went in a north-easterly direction, as, according to the *Onom.*, *Ophrah* of Benjamin was five Roman miles to the east of Bethel (see at Josh. xviii. 23). Robinson supposes it to have been on the site of *Tayibeh*. The land of *Shual* (fox-land) is unknown; it may possibly have been identical with the land of *Saalim* (ch. ix. 5). The other company turned on the road to Beth-horon (Beit-ur: see at Josh. x. 11), that is to say, towards the west; the third, "the way to the territory that rises above the valley of *Zeboim* towards the

jamin with *Gibeah*, as the Septuagint and its latest defenders have done, and not only change the participle שָׁרִים (ver. 16) into the aorist ἐκάθισαν, but interpolate καὶ ἔκλαιον after "at *Geba* of Benjamin;" whereas the statement of the text "at *Geba* in Benjamin" is proved to be correct by the simple fact that Jonathan could only attempt or carry out the heroic deed recorded in ch. xiv. from *Geba* and not from *Gibeah*; and the alteration of the participle into the aorist is just as arbitrary as the interpolation of καὶ ἔκλαιον. From all this it follows that the Septuagint version has not preserved the original reading, as Ewald and Thenius suppose, but contains nothing more than a mistaken attempt to restore the missing link. It is true the Vulgate contains the same filling up as the Septuagint, but with one alteration, which upsets the assertion made by Thenius, that the repetition of the expression מִן הַגִּלְגָּל, ἐκ Γαλγάλων, caused the reading contained in the Septuagint to be dropped out of the Hebrew text. For the text of the Vulgate runs as follows: *Surrexit autem Samuel et ascendit de Galgalis in Gabaa Benjamin. Et reliqui populi ascenderunt post Saul obviam populo, qui expugnabant eos venientes de Galgala in Gabaa in colle Benjamin. Et recensuit Saul, etc.* Jerome has therefore rendered the first two clauses of ver. 15 in perfect accordance with the Hebrew text; and the addition which follows is nothing more than a gloss that has found its way into his translation from the Itala, and in which *de Galgala in colle Benjamin* is still retained, whereas Jerome himself rendered מִן הַגִּלְגָּל *de Galgalis*.

desert." These descriptions are obscure ; and the valley of *Zeboim* altogether unknown. There is a town of this name (זִבְעִים, different from זִבְיִים, Deut. xxix. 22, Gen. xiv. 2, 8 ; or זִבְאִים, Hos. xi. 8, in the vale of Siddim) mentioned in Neh. xi. 34, which was inhabited by Benjaminites, and was apparently situated in the south-eastern portion of the land of Benjamin, to the north-east of Jerusalem, from which it follows that the third company pursued its devastating course in a south-easterly direction from Michmash towards Jericho. "*The wilderness*" is probably the desert of Judah. The intention of the Philistines in carrying out these devastating expeditions, was no doubt to entice the men who were gathered round Saul and Jonathan out of their secure positions at Gibeah and Geba, and force them to fight.—Vers. 19 sqq. The Israelites could not offer a successful resistance to these devastating raids, as there was no smith to be found in the whole land: "*For the Philistines thought the Hebrews might make themselves sword or spear*" (אִמַּר followed by לֹא, "to say, or think, that not," equivalent to being unwilling that it should be done). Consequently (as the words clearly imply) when they proceeded to occupy the land of Israel as described in ver. 5, they disarmed the people throughout, *i.e.* as far as they penetrated, and carried off the smiths, who might have been able to forge weapons ; so that, as is still further related in ver. 20, all Israel was obliged to go to the Philistines, every one to sharpen his edge-tool, and his ploughshare, and his axe, and his chopper. According to Isa. ii. 4, Micah iv. 3, and Joel iv. 10, אֵת is an iron instrument used in agriculture ; the majority of the ancient versions render it *ploughshare*. The word מַחְרֶשֶׁתוֹ is striking after the previous מַחְרֶשֶׁתוֹ (from מַחְרֶשֶׁת) ; and the meaning of both words is uncertain. According to the etymology, מַחְרֶשֶׁת might denote any kind of edge-tool, even the ploughshare. The second מַחְרֶשֶׁתוֹ is rendered τὸ δρέπανον αὐτοῦ (his sickle) by the LXX., and *sarculum* by Jerome, a small garden hoe for loosening and weeding the soil. The fact that the word is connected with פָּרֶס, the axe or hatchet, favours the idea that it signifies a *hoe* or *spade* rather than a sickle. Some of the words in ver. 21 are still more obscure. וְהָיְתָה, which is the reading adopted by all the earlier translators, indicates that the result is about to be given of the facts mentioned before: "*And there came to*

pass," i.e. so that there came to pass (or arose), הַפְצִירָה פִּים, "a blunting of the edges." הַפְצִירָה, bluntness, from פָּצַד, to tear, hence to make blunt, is confirmed by the Arabic نطار, *gladius fissuras habens, obtusus ensis*, whereas the meaning to hammer, i.e. to sharpen by hammering, cannot be established. The insertion of the article before הַפְצִירָה is as striking as the omission of it before פִּים; also the *stat. abs.* instead of the construct הַפְצִירָה. These anomalies render it a very probable conjecture that the reading may have been הַפְצִיר הַפִּים (*inf. Hiph. nomin.*). Accordingly the rendering would be, "so that bluntness of the edges occurred in the edge-tools, and the ploughshares, and the trident, and the axes, and the setting of the goad." שֶׁלֶשׁ קִלְשֵׁן is to be regarded as a *nom. comp.* like our trident, denoting an instrument with three prongs, according to the Chaldee and the Rabbins (see *Ges. Thes.* p. 1219). דִּבְקוֹ, *stimulus*, is probably a pointed instrument generally, since the meaning goad is fully established in the case of דִּבְקוֹ by Eccl. xii. 11.¹—Ver. 22. On the day of battle, therefore, the people with Saul and Jonathan were without either sword or spear; Saul and Jonathan were the only persons provided with them. The account of the expedition of the Israelites, and their victory over the Ammonites, given in ver. 11, is apparently at variance with this description of the situation of the Israelites, since the

¹ Ver. 21 runs very differently in the LXX., namely, καὶ ἦν ὁ τρυγητός ἕτοιμος τοῦ θερίζειν, τὰ δὲ σκεύη ἦν τρεῖς σίκλοι εἰς τὸν ὀδόντα, καὶ τῇ ἀξίνῃ καὶ τῷ δρεπάνῳ ὑπόστασις ἦν ἡ αὐτή; and Thenius and Böttcher propose an emendation of the Hebrew text accordingly, so as to obtain the following meaning: "And the sharpening of the edges in the case of the spades and ploughshares was done at three shekels a tooth (i.e. three shekels each), and for the axe and sickle it was the same" (Thenius); or, "and the same for the sickles, and for the axes, and for setting the prong" (Böttcher). But here also it is easy enough to discover that the LXX. had not another text before them that was different from the Masoretic text, but merely confounded the הַפְצִיר הַפִּים, τρυγητός, and took שֶׁלֶשׁ קִלְשֵׁן, which was unintelligible to them, *e conjectura* for הֵשִׁין שֶׁן, altogether regardless of the sense or nonsense of their own translation. The latest supporters of this senseless rendering, however, have neither undertaken to prove the possibility of translating ὀδόντα (*δδοῦς*), "each single piece" (i.e. each), or inquired into the value of money at that time, so as to see whether three shekels would be an unexampled charge for the sharpening of an axe or sickle.

war in question not only presupposes the possession of weapons by the Israelites, but must also have resulted in their capturing a considerable quantity. The discrepancy is very easily removed, however, when we look carefully at all the circumstances. For instance, we can hardly picture the Israelites to ourselves as amply provided with ordinary weapons in this expedition against the Ammonites. Moreover, the disarming of the Israelites by the Philistines took place for the most part if not entirely after this expedition, viz. at the time when the Philistines swept over the land with an innumerable army after Jonathan had smitten their garrison at Geba (vers. 3, 5), so that the fighting men who gathered round Saul and Jonathan after that could hardly bring many arms with them. Lastly, the words "there was neither sword nor spear found in the hands of all the people with Saul and Jonathan" must not be too closely pressed, but simply affirm that the 600 fighting men of Saul and Jonathan were not provided with the necessary arms, because the Philistines had prevented the possibility of their arming themselves in the ordinary way by depriving the people of all their smiths.

Ver. 23 forms the transition to the heroic act of Jonathan described in ch. xiv.: "*An outpost of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash;*" i.e. the Philistines pushed forward a company of soldiers to the pass (מִצְרֵה, the crossing place) of Michmash, to prevent an attack being made by the Israelites upon their camp. Between *Geba* and *Michmash* there runs the great deep *Wady es Suweinit*, which goes down from Beitin and Bireh (Bethel and Beeroth) to the valley of the Jordan, and intersects the ridge upon which the two places are situated, so that the sides of the wady form very precipitous walls. When Robinson was travelling from Jeba to Mukhmas he had to go down a very steep and rugged path into this deep wady (*Pal.* ii. p. 116). "The way," he says in his *Biblical Researches*, p. 289, "was so steep, and the rocky steps so high, that we were compelled to dismount; while the baggage mules got along with great difficulty. Here, where we crossed, several short side wadys came in from the south-west and north-west. The ridges between these terminate in elevating points projecting into the great wady; and the most easterly of these bluffs on each side were probably the outposts of the two gar-

risons of Israel and the Philistines. The road passes around the eastern side of the southern hill, the post of Israel, and then strikes up over the western part of the northern one, the post of the Philistines, and the scene of Jonathan's adventure."

JONATHAN'S HEROIC ACT, AND ISRAEL'S VICTORY OVER THE PHILISTINES. SAUL'S WARS AND FAMILY.—CHAP. XIV.

Vers. 1-15. *Jonathan's heroic act.*—With strong faith and confidence in the might of the Lord, that He could give the victory even through the hands of very few, Jonathan resolved to attack the outpost of the Philistines at the pass of Mukhmas, accompanied by his armour-bearer alone, and the Lord crowned his enterprise with a marvellous victory.—Ver. 1. Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, "*We will go over to the post of the Philistines, that is over there.*" To these words, which introduce the occurrences that followed, there are attached from יִצְחָק to ver. 5 a series of sentences introduced to explain the situation, and the thread of the narrative is resumed in ver. 6 by a repetition of Jonathan's words. It is first of all observed that Jonathan did not disclose his intentions to his father, who would hardly have approved of so daring an enterprise. Then follows a description of the place where Saul was stationed with the six hundred men, viz. "*at the end of Gibeah (i.e. the extreme northern end); under the pomegranate-tree (Rimmon) which is by Migron.*" Rimmon is not the rock Rimmon (Judg. xx. 45), which was on the north-east of Michmash, but is an appellative noun, signifying a *pomegranate-tree*. Migron is a locality with which we are not acquainted, upon the north side of Gibeah, and a different place from the Migron which was on the north or north-west of Michmash (Isa. x. 28). *Gibeah (Tuleil el Phul)* was an hour and a quarter from *Geba*, and from the pass which led across to Michmash. Consequently, when Saul was encamped with his six hundred men on the north of Gibeah, he may have been hardly an hour's journey from Geba.—Ver. 3. Along with Saul and his six hundred men, there was also *Ahiah*, the son of Ahitub, the (elder) brother of Ichabod, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the priest at Shiloh, and therefore a great-grandson of Eli, wearing the ephod, i.e. in the high priest's robes. *Ahiah* is generally

supposed to be the same person as *Ahimelech*, the son of Ahitub (ch. xxii. 9 sqq.), in which case *Ahiah* (אֶחִיָּהּ, brother, *i.e.* friend of Jehovah) would be only another form of the name Ahimelech (*i.e.* brother or friend of the King, *viz.* Jehovah). This is very probable, although Ahimelech might have been Ahiah's brother, who succeeded him in the office of high priest on account of his having died without sons, since there is an interval of at least ten years between the events related in this chapter and those referred to in ch. xxii. Ahimelech was afterwards slain by Saul along with the priests of Nob (ch. xxii. 9 sqq.); the only one who escaped being his son Abiathar, who fled to David and, according to ch. xxx. 7, was invested with the ephod. It follows, therefore, that Abiah (or Ahimelech) must have had a son at least ten years old at the time of the war referred to here, *viz.* the Abiathar mentioned in ch. xxx. 7, and must have been thirty or thirty-five years old himself, since Saul had reigned at least twenty-two years, and Abiathar had become high priest a few years before the death of Saul. These assumptions may be very easily reconciled with the passage before us. As Eli was ninety-eight years old when he died, his son Phinehas, who had been killed in battle a short time before, might have been sixty or sixty-five years old, and have left a son of forty years of age, namely Ahitub. Forty years later, therefore, *i.e.* at the beginning of Saul's reign, Ahitub's son Ahiah (Ahimelech) might have been about fifty years old; and at the death of Ahimelech, which took place ten or twelve years after that, his son Abiathar might have been as much as thirty years of age, and have succeeded his father in the office of high priest. But Abiathar cannot have been older than this when his father died, since he was high priest during the whole of David's forty years' reign, until Solomon deposed him soon after he ascended the throne (1 Kings ii. 26 sqq.). Compare with this the remarks on 2 Sam. viii. 17. Jonathan had also refrained from telling the people anything about his intentions, so that they did not know that he had gone.

In vers. 4, 5, the locality is more minutely described. Between the passes, through which Jonathan endeavoured to cross over to go up to the post of the Philistines, there was a sharp rock on this side, and also one upon the other. One of these was called *Bozez*, the other *Seneh*; one (formed) a

pillar (פִּצְיֹץ), i.e. a steep height towards the north opposite to Michmash, the other towards the south opposite to Geba. The expression "*between the passes*" may be explained from the remark of Robinson quoted above, viz. that at the point where he passed the Wady Suweinit, side wadys enter it from the south-west and north-west. These side wadys supply so many different crossings. Between them, however, on the north and south walls of the deep valley, were the jagged rocks *Bozez* and *Seneh*, which rose up like pillars to a great height. These were probably the "hills" which Robinson saw to the left of the pass by which he crossed: "Two hills of a conical or rather spherical form, having steep rocky sides, with small wadys running up behind so as almost to isolate them. One is on the side towards Jeba, and the other towards Mukhmas" (*Pal. ii. p. 116*).—Ver. 6. And Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, "*Come, we will go over to the post of these uncircumcised; it may be that Jehovah will work for us; for (there is) no hindrance for Jehovah to work salvation by many or few.*" Jonathan's resolution arose from the strong conviction that Israel was the nation of God, and possessed in Jehovah an omnipotent God, who would not refuse His help to His people in their conflict with the foes of His kingdom, if they would only put their whole trust in Him.—Ver. 7. As the armour-bearer approved of Jonathan's resolution (פָּנָה לָהֶם, *turn thither*), and was ready to follow him, Jonathan fixed upon a sign by which he would ascertain whether the Lord would prosper his undertaking.—Vers. 8 sqq. "*Behold, we go over to the people and show ourselves to them. If they say to us, Wait (רַמָּז, keep quiet) till we come to you, we will stand still in our place, and not go up to them; but if they say thus, Come up unto us, then we will go up, for Jehovah hath (in that case) delivered them into our hand.*" The sign was well chosen. If the Philistines said, "Wait till we come," they would show some courage; but if they said, "Come up to us," it would be a sign that they were cowardly, and had not courage enough to leave their position and attack the Hebrews. It was not tempting God for Jonathan to fix upon such a sign by which to determine the success of his enterprise; for he did it in the exercise of his calling, when fighting not for personal objects, but for the kingdom of God, which the uncircumcised were threatening to annihilate, and in

the most confident belief that the Lord would deliver and preserve His people. Such faith as this God would not put to shame.—Vers. 11 sqq. When the two showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines, they said, "*Behold, Hebrews come forth out of the holes in which they have hidden themselves.*" And the men of the garrison cried out to Jonathan and his armour-bearer, "*Come up to us, and we will tell you a word,*" i.e. we will communicate something to you. This was ridicule at the daring of the two men, whilst for all that they had not courage enough to meet them bravely and drive them back. In this Jonathan received the desired sign that the Lord had given the Philistines into the hand of the Israelites: he therefore clambered up the rock on his hands and feet, and his armour-bearer after him; and "*they (the Philistines) fell before Jonathan,*" i.e. were smitten down by him, "*and his armour-bearer was slaying behind him.*"—Ver. 14. The first stroke that Jonathan and his armour-bearer struck was (amounted to) about twenty men "*on about half a furrow of an acre of field.*" מַעֲדָה, a furrow, as in Ps. cxxix. 3, is in the absolute state instead of the construct, because several nouns follow in the construct state (cf. Ewald, § 291, a). מַעֲדָה, lit. things bound together, then a pair; here it signifies a pair or *yoke of oxen*, but in the transferred sense of a piece of land that could be ploughed in one morning with a yoke of oxen, like the Latin *jugum, jugerum*. It is called the furrow of an acre of land, because the *length* only of half an acre of land was to be given, and not the breadth or the entire circumference. The Philistines, that is to say, took to flight in alarm as soon as the brave heroes really ascended, so that the twenty men were smitten one after another in the distance of half a rood of land. Their terror and flight are perfectly conceivable, if we consider that the outpost of the Philistines was so stationed upon the top of the ridge of the steep mountain wall, that they could not see how many were following, and the Philistines could not imagine it possible that two Hebrews would have ventured to climb the rock alone and make an attack upon them. Sallust relates a similar occurrence in connection with the scaling of a castle in the Numidian war (*Bell. Jugurth.* c. 89, 90).—Ver. 15. And there arose a terror in the camp upon the field (i.e. in the principal camp) as well as among all the people (of the advanced outpost of the Philistines); the

garrison (i.e. the army that was encamped at Michmash), and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked, sc. with the noise and tumult of the frightened foe; "and it grew into a trembling of God," i.e. a supernatural terror miraculously infused by God into the Philistines. The subject to the last וַיִּתֵּן is either הַחֲרָה, the alarm in the camp, or all that has been mentioned before, i.e. the alarm with the noise and tumult that sprang out of it.

Vers. 16–23. *Flight and defeat of the Philistines.*—Ver. 16. The spies of Saul at Gibeah saw how the multitude (in the camp of the Philistines) melted away and was beaten more and more. The words וַיִּלֶךְ וַיִּהְיֶה are obscure. The Rabbins are unanimous in adopting the explanation *magis magisque frangebatur*, and have therefore probably taken הָלַם as an inf. absol. הָלֹם, and interpreted הָלַם according to Judg. v. 26. This was also the case with the Chaldee; and Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 383) has adopted the same rendering, except that he has taken הָלַם in the sense of *dissolutus, dissipatus est*. Others take הָלֹם as adverbial ("and thither"), and supply the correlate הָלֵךְ (hither), so as to bring out the meaning "*hither and thither*." Thus the LXX. render it *ἔθεν καὶ ἔθεν*, but they have not translated וַיִּלֶךְ at all.—Ver. 17. Saul conjectured at once that the excitement in the camp of the Philistines was occasioned by an attack made by Israelitish warriors, and therefore commanded the people: מִקֶּרֶן, "*Muster (number) now, and see who has gone away from us;*" and "*Jonathan and his armour-bearer were not there,*" i.e. they were missing.—Vers. 18 sqq. Saul therefore resolved to ask God, through the priest Ahiah, what he should do; whether he should go out with his army against the Philistines or no. But whilst he was talking with the priest, the tumult in the camp of the Philistines became greater and greater, so that he saw from that what ought to be done under the circumstances, and stopped the priest's inquiring of God, and set out with his people without delay. We are struck, however, with the expression in ver. 18, "*Bring hither the ark of God,*" and the explanation which follows, "*for the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel,*" inasmuch as the ark was then deposited at Kirjath-jearim, and it is a very improbable thing that it should have been in the little camp of Saul. Moreover, in other cases where the high priest is spoken of as inquiring

the will of God, there is no mention made of the ark, but only of the ephod, the high priest's shoulder-dress, upon which there were fastened the Urim and Thummim, through which inquiry was made of God. And in addition to this, the verb הִנִּישָׁה is not really applicable to the ark, which was not an object that could be carried about at will; whereas this verb is the current expression used to signify the fetching of the ephod (*vid.* ch. xxiii. 9, xxx. 7). All these circumstances render the correctness of the Masoretic text extremely doubtful, notwithstanding the fact that the Chaldee, the Syriac, the Arabic, and the Vulgate support it, and recommend rather the reading adopted by the LXX., προσάγαγε τὸ Ἐφούδ· ὅτι αὐτὸς ἤρεν τὸ Ἐφούδ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἐνώπιον Ἰσραὴλ, which would give as the Hebrew text, הִנִּישָׁה הָאֶפֹּד כִּי הוּא נִשָּׂא הָאֶפֹּד בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לִפְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. In any case, יִשְׂרָאֵל at the end of the verse should be read 'שׁ לִפְנֵי or לִפְנֵי, since ו gives no sense at all.—Ver. 19. "*It increased more and more;*" *lit.* increasing and becoming greater. The subject וְהַהֲמֹן וְ is placed absolutely at the head, so that the verb יִלָּךְ is appended in the form of an apodosis. וְאַסֵּף יָדְךָ, "*draw thy hand in*" (back); *i.e.* leave off now.—Ver. 20. "*And (i.e. in consequence of the increasing tumult in the enemy's camp) Saul had himself, and all the people with him, called,*" *i.e.* called together for battle; and when they came to the war, *i.e.* to the place of conflict, "*behold, there was the sword of the one against the other, a very great confusion,*" in consequence partly of terror, and partly of the circumstance alluded to in ver. 21.—Ver. 21. "*And the Hebrews were with the Philistines as before (yesterday and the day before yesterday), who had come along with them in the camp round about; they also came over to Israel, which was with Saul and Jonathan.*" קָבִיב means distributed round about among the Philistines. Those Israelites whom the Philistines had incorporated into their army are called *Hebrews*, according to the name which was current among foreigners, whilst those who were with Saul are called *Israel*, according to the sacred name of the nation. The difficulty which many expositors have found in the word לָחִיז has been very correctly solved, so far as the sense is concerned, by the earlier translators, by the interpolation of "*they returned:*" חָבִי (Chald.), ἐπιστράφησαν (LXX.), *reversi sunt* (Vulg.), and similarly the Syriac and Arabic. We are not at

liberty, however, to amend the Hebrew text in this manner, as nothing more is omitted than the finite verb וַיָּבֹאוּ before the infinitive $\text{לְהִלָּחֵט$ (for this construction, see Gesenius, *Gramm.* § 132, 3, Anm. 1), and this might easily be left out here, since it stands at the beginning of the verse in the main clause. The literal rendering would be, they were to be with Israel, *i.e.* they came over to Israel. The fact that the Hebrews who were serving in the army of the Philistines came over to Saul and his host, and turned their weapons against their oppressors, naturally heightened the confusion in the camp of the Philistines, and accelerated their defeat; and this was still further increased by the fact that the Israelites who had concealed themselves on the mountains of Ephraim also joined the Israelitish army, as soon as they heard of the flight of the Philistines (ver. 22).—Ver. 23. “*Thus the Lord helped Israel that day, and the conflict went out beyond Bethaven.*” Bethaven was on the east of Michmash, and, according to ver. 31, the Philistines fled westwards from Michmash to Ajalon. But if we bear in mind that the camp of the Philistines was on the eastern side of Michmash before Bethaven, according to ch. xiii. 5, and that the Israelites forced their way into it from the south, we shall see that the battle might easily have spread out beyond Bethaven, and that eventually the main body of the enemy might have fled as far as Ajalon, and have been pursued to that point by the victorious Israelites.

Vers. 24–31. *Saul's precipitate haste.*—Ver. 24. The men of Israel were pressed (*i.e.* fatigued) on that day, *sc.* through the military service and fighting. Then Saul adjured the people, saying, “*Cursed be the man that eateth bread until the evening, and (till) I have avenged myself upon mine enemies.*” לְאִלָּן , *fut. apoc.* of לָאָה for לָאָה , from לָאָה , to swear, *Hiphil* to adjure or require an oath of a person. The people took the oath by saying “amen” to what Saul had uttered. This command of Saul did not proceed from a proper attitude towards the Lord, but was an act of false zeal, in which Saul had more regard to himself and his own kingly power than to the cause of the kingdom of Jehovah, as we may see at once from the expression $\text{וְנִקְמְתִי וְנִקְמְתִי}$, “till I have avenged myself upon mine enemies.” It was a despotic measure which not only failed to accomplish its object (see vers. 30, 31), but brought Saul into the unfortunate

position of being unable to carry out the oath (see ver. 45). All the people kept the command. "*They tasted no bread.*" *לֹא-טָעַם* is not to be connected with *וַיִּשְׁמָח* as an apodosis.—Ver. 25. "*And all the land (i.e. all the people of the land who had gathered round Saul : vid. ver. 29) came into the woody country; there was honey upon the field.*" *עֵר* signifies here a woody district, in which forests alternated with tracts of arable land and meadows.—Ver. 26. When the people came into the wood and saw a stream of honey (of wild or wood bees), "*no one put his hand to his mouth (sc. to eat of the honey), because they feared the oath.*"—Ver. 27. But Jonathan, who had not heard his father's oath, dipped (in the heat of pursuit, that he might not have to stop) the point of his staff in the new honey, and put it to his mouth, "*and his eyes became bright;*" his lost strength, which is reflected in the eye, having been brought back by this invigorating taste. The *Chethibh* *חֵרָאָנָה* is probably to be read *חֵרָאָנָה*, the eyes became seeing, received their power of vision again. The Masoretes have substituted as the *Keri* *חֵרָאָנָה*, from *אֹר*, to become bright, according to ver. 29; and this is probably the correct reading, as the letters might easily be transposed.—Vers. 28. sqq. When one of the people told him thereupon of his father's oath, in consequence of which the people were exhausted (*וַיִּעַף הָעָם* belongs to the man's words; and *וַיִּעַף* is the same as in Judg. iv. 21), Jonathan condemned the prohibition. "*My father has brought the land (i.e. the people of the land, as in ver. 25) into trouble (עֲבָרָה, see at Gen. xxxiv. 30): see how bright mine eyes have become because I tasted a little of this honey. How much more if the people had eaten to-day of the booty of its enemies, would not the overthrow among the Philistines truly have then become great?*" *כִּי* *אֵלֶּה*, lit. to this (there comes) also that = not to mention how much more; and *כִּי* *עַתָּה* is an emphatic introduction of the apodosis, as in Gen. xxxi. 42, xliii. 10, and other passages, and the apodosis itself is to be taken as a question.

Vers. 31-46. *Result of the battle, and consequences of Saul's rashness.*—Ver. 31. "*On that day they smote the Philistines from Michmash to Ajalon,*" which has been preserved in the village of Yálo (see at Josh. xix. 42), and was about three geographical miles to the south-west of Michmash; "*and the people were very faint,*" because Saul had forbidden them to

eat before the evening (ver. 24).—Ver. 32. They therefore “*fell voraciously upon the booty*”—(the *Chethibh* יָעַץ is no doubt merely an error in writing for יָעַץ, imperf. *Kal* of עָיַץ with *Dagesh forte implic.* instead of יָעַץ, as we may see from ch. xv. 19, since the meaning required by the context, viz. to fall upon a thing, cannot be established in the case of עָיַץ with אֵל. On the other hand, there does not appear to be any necessity to supply the article before שָׁלַל, and this *Keri* seems only to have been taken from the parallel passage in ch. xv. 19),—“*and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew them on the ground* (אֶרְצָהּ, lit. to the earth, so that when they were slaughtered the animal fell upon the ground, and remained lying in its blood, and was cut in pieces), *and ate upon the blood*” (עַל הָדָם, with which אֵל הָדָם, “*lying to the blood,*” is interchanged in ver. 34), i.e. the flesh along with the blood which adhered to it, by doing which they sinned against the law in Lev. xix. 26. This sin had been occasioned by Saul himself through the prohibition which he issued.—Vers. 33, 34. When this was told to Saul, he said, “*Ye act faithlessly towards Jehovah*” by transgressing the laws of the covenant; “*roll me now (lit. this day) a large stone. Scatter yourselves among the people, and say to them, Let every one bring his ox and his sheep to me, and slay here*” (upon the stone that has been rolled up), viz. so that the blood could run off properly upon the ground, and the flesh be separated from the blood. This the people also did.—Ver. 35. As a thanksgiving for this victory, Saul built an altar to the Lord. וַיֵּבֶן אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, “*he began to build it,*” i.e. he built this altar at the beginning, or as the first altar. This altar was probably not intended to serve as a place of sacrifice, but simply to be a memorial of the presence of God, or the revelation of God which Saul had received in the marvellous victory.—Ver. 36. After the people had strengthened themselves in the evening with food, Saul wanted to pursue the Philistines still farther during the night, and to plunder among them until the light (i.e. till break of day), and utterly destroy them. The people assented to this proposal, but the priest (Ahiah) wished first of all to obtain the decision of God upon the matter. “*We will draw near to God here*” (before the altar which has just been built).—Ver. 37. But when Saul inquired of God (through the Urim and Thummim of the high priest), “*Shall I go down*

after the Philistines? wilt Thou deliver them into the hand of Israel?" God did not answer him. Saul was to perceive from this, that the guilt of some sin was resting upon the people, on account of which the Lord had turned away His countenance, and was withdrawing His help.—Vers. 38, 39. When Saul perceived this, he directed all the heads of the people (*pinnoth*, as in Judg. xx. 2) to draw near to learn whereby (wherein) the sin had occurred that day, and declared, "*As truly as Jehovah liveth, who has brought salvation to Israel, even if it were upon Jonathan my son, he shall die.*" The first *וַיִּ* in ver. 39 is explanatory; the second and third serve to introduce the words, like *ὅτι*, *quod*; and the repetition serves to give emphasis, *lit.* "*that even if it were upon my son, that he shall die.*" "*And of all the people no one answered him,*" from terror at the king's word.—Ver. 40. In order to find out the guilt, or rather the culprit, Saul proceeded to the lot; and for this purpose he made all the people stand on one side, whilst he and his son Jonathan went to the other, and then solemnly addressed Jehovah thus: "*God of Israel, give innocence (of mind, i.e. truth). And the lot fell upon Saul and Jonathan (יָלַף, as in ch. x. 20, 21); and the people went out,*" *sc.* without the lot falling upon them, *i.e.* they went out free.—Ver. 42. When they proceeded still further to cast lots between Saul and his son (יָפִיץ, *sc.* יָפִיץ; cf. 1 Chron. xxvi. 14, Neh. xi. 11, etc.), *Jonathan was taken.*¹—Vers. 43,

¹ In the Alex. version, vers. 41 and 42 are lengthened out with long paraphrases upon the course pursued in casting the lots: *καὶ εἶπε Σαούλ, Κύριε ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ τί ὅτι οὐκ ἀπεκρίθης τῷ δούλῳ σου σήμερον; εἰ ἐν ἐμοὶ ἢ ἐν Ἰωνάθαν τῷ υἱῷ μου ἡ ἀδικία; κύριε ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ δὸς δῆλους· καὶ εἰς τὰς εἴπη, δὸς δὴ τῷ λαῷ σου Ἰσραὴλ, δὸς δὴ δαιμόνια, καὶ κληροῦται Ἰωνάθαν καὶ Σαούλ, καὶ ὁ λαὸς ἐξῆλθε.* Ver. 42: *Καὶ εἶπε Σαούλ, Βάλλετε ἀνὰ μέσον ἐμοῦ καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον Ἰωνάθαν τοῦ υἱοῦ μου· ὃν ἂν κατακληρώσῃται Κύριος ἀποθάνει.* Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ λαὸς πρὸς Σαούλ, Οὐκ ἔστι τὸ βῆμα τοῦτο. Καὶ κατεκράτησε Σαούλ τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ βάλλουσιν ἀνὰ μέσον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον Ἰωνάθαν τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, καὶ κατακληροῦται Ἰωνάθαν. One portion of these additions is also found in the text of our present Vulgate, and reads as follows: *Et dixit Saul ad Dominum Deum Israel: Domine Deus Israel, da indicium! quid est quod non responderis servo tuo hodie? Si in me aut in Jonatha filio meo est iniquitas, da ostensionem; aut si hæc iniquitas est in populo tuo, da sanctitatem. Et deprehensus est Jonathas et Saul, populus autem exivit.* The beginning and end of this verse, as well as ver. 42, agree here most accurately with the Hebrew text. But the words from *quid est quod* to *da sanctitatem* are interpolated, so that *הַבְּחִינִי הַזֶּה* are translated twice;

44. When Saul asked him what he had done, Jonathan confessed that he had tasted a little honey (see ver. 27), and resigned himself to the punishment suspended over him, saying, "*Behold, I shall die;*" and Saul pronounced sentence of death upon him, accompanying it with an oath ("*God do so,*" etc.: *vid.* Ruth i. 17).—Ver. 45. But the people interposed, "*Shall Jonathan die, who has achieved this great salvation (victory) in Israel? God forbid! As truly as Jehovah liveth, not a hair shall fall from his head upon the ground; for he hath wrought (the victory) with God to-day.*" Thus the people delivered Jonathan from death. The objection raised by the people was so conclusive, that Saul was obliged to yield.

What Jonathan had done was not wrong in itself, but became so simply on account of the oath with which Saul had

first in the words *da indicium*, and then in the interpolation *da ostensionem*. This repetition of the same words, and that in different renderings, when taken in connection with the agreement of the Vulgate with the Hebrew text at the beginning and end of the verse, shows clearly enough, that the interpolated clauses did not originate with Jerome, but are simply inserted in his translation from the Itala. The additions of the LXX., in which *ταύτης εἰρη* is evidently only a distortion of *ἡ ἀδικία*, are regarded by Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 48) and Thenius as an original portion of the text which has dropped out from the Masoretic text. They therefore infer, that instead of תמים we ought to read תמים (Thummim), and that we have here the full formula used in connection with the use of the Urim and Thummim, from which it may be seen, that this mode of divine revelation consisted simply in a sacred lot, or in the use of two dice, the one of which was fixed upon at the outset as meaning *no*, and the other as meaning *yes*. So much at any rate is indisputable, that the Septuagint translator took תמים in the sense of *thummim*, and so assumed that Saul had the guilty person discovered by resorting to the Urim and Thummim. But this assumption is also decidedly erroneous, together with all the inferences based upon it. For, in the first place, the verbs הָפִיל and יָלַךְ can be proved to be never used throughout the whole of the Old Testament to signify the use of the Urim and Thummim, and to be nothing more than technical expressions used to denote the casting of a simple lot (see the passages cited above in the text). Moreover, such passages as ch. x. 22, and ii. 5, 23, show most unmistakeably that the divine oracle of the Urim and Thummim did not consist merely in a sacred lot with yes and no, but that God gave such answers through it as could never have been given through the lots. The Septuagint expansions of the text are nothing more, therefore, than a subjective and really erroneous interpretation on the part of the translators, which arose simply from the mistaken idea that תמים was *thummim*, and which is therefore utterly worthless.

forbidden it. But Jonathan did not hear the oath, and therefore had not even consciously transgressed. Nevertheless a curse lay upon Israel, which was to be brought to light as a warning for the culprit. Therefore Jehovah had given no reply to Saul. But when the lot, which had the force of a divine verdict, fell upon Jonathan, sentence of death was not thereby pronounced upon him by God; but it was simply made manifest, that through his transgression of his father's oath, with which he was not acquainted, guilt had been brought upon Israel. The breach of a command issued with a solemn oath, even when it took place unconsciously, excited the wrath of God, as being a profanation of the divine name. But such a sin could only rest as guilt upon the man who had committed, or the man who occasioned it. Now where the command in question was one of God himself, there could be no question, that even in the case of unconscious transgression the sin fell upon the transgressor, and it was necessary that it should either be expiated by him or forgiven him. But where the command of a man had been unconsciously transgressed, the guilt might also fall upon the man who issued the command, that is to say, if he did it without being authorized or empowered by God. In the present instance, Saul had issued the prohibition without divine authority, and had made it obligatory upon the people by a solemn oath. The people had conscientiously obeyed the command, but Jonathan had transgressed it without being aware of it. For this Saul was about to punish him with death, in order to keep his oath. But the people opposed it. They not only pronounced Jonathan innocent, because he had broken the king's command unconsciously, but they also exclaimed that he had gained the victory for Israel "*with God.*" In this fact (Jonathan's victory) there was a divine verdict. And Saul could not fail to recognise now, that it was not Jonathan, but he himself, who had sinned, and through his arbitrary and despotic command had brought guilt upon Israel, on account of which God had given him no reply.—Ver. 46. With the feeling of this guilt, Saul gave up any further pursuit of the Philistines: he "*went up*" (*sc.* to Gibeah) "*from behind the Philistines,*" *i.e.* desisting from any further pursuit. But the Philistines went to their place, *i.e.* back into their own land.

Vers. 47-52. GENERAL SUMMARY OF SAUL'S OTHER WARS, AND ACCOUNT OF HIS FAMILY.—Ver. 47. “*But Saul had taken the sovereignty.*” As Saul had first of all secured a recognition of himself as king on the part of all the tribes of Israel, through his victory over the Ammonites at Jabesh (ch. xi. 12 sqq.), so it was through the victory which he had gained over the Philistines, and by which these obstinate foes of Israel were driven back into their own land, that he first acquired the kingship over Israel, *i.e.* first really secured the regal authority over the Israelites. This is the meaning of לָכֵן הִפְלִיכָה; and this statement is not at variance either with the election of Saul by lot (ch. x. 17 sqq.), or with his confirmation at Gilgal (ch. xi. 14, 15). But as Saul had to fight for the sovereignty, and could only secure it by successful warfare, his other wars are placed in the foreground in the summary account of his reign which follows (vers. 47, 48), whilst the notices concerning his family, which stand at the very beginning in the case of the other kings, are not mentioned till afterwards (vers. 49-51). Saul fought successfully against all the enemies of Israel round about; against Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, a district of Syria on this side the Euphrates (see at 2 Sam. viii. 3), and against the Philistines. The war against the Ammonites is described in ch. xi.; but with the Philistines Saul had to wage repeated war all the days of his life (ver. 52): The other wars are none of them more fully described, simply because they were of no importance to the history of the kingdom of God, having neither furnished occasion for any miraculous displays of divine omnipotence, nor brought about the subjection of hostile nations to the power of Israel. “*Whithersoever he turned, he inflicted punishment.*” This is the rendering which Luther has very aptly given to יָרַשׁ; for הָרַשָׁה signifies to declare wrong, hence to condemn, more especially as applied to judges: here it denotes sentence or condemnation *by deeds*. Saul chastised these nations for their attacks upon Israel.—Ver. 48. “*And he acquired power;*” קָשָׁה הָיָה (as in Num. xxiv. 18) does not merely signify he proved himself brave, or he formed an army, but denotes the development and unfolding of power in various respects. Here it relates more particularly to the development of strength in the war against Amalek, by virtue of which Saul smote this arch-enemy of Israel, and put an end

to their depredations. This war is described more fully in ch. xv., on account of its consequences in relation to Saul's own sovereignty.—Vers. 49–51. *Saul's family*.—Ver. 49. Only three of his sons are mentioned, namely those who fell with him, according to ch. xxxi. 2, in the war with the Philistines. *Jisvi* is only another name for Abinadab (ch. xxxi. 2; 1 Chron. viii. 33, ix. 39). In these passages in the Chronicles there is a fourth mentioned, *Esh-baal*, i.e. the one who is called *Ish-bosheth* in 2 Sam. ii. 8, etc., and who was set up by Abner as the antagonist of David. The reason why he is not mentioned here it is impossible to determine. It may be that the name has fallen out simply through some mistake in copying: the daughters *Michal* and *Merab* are mentioned, with special reference to the occurrence described in ch. xviii. 17 sq.—Vers. 50, 51. *Abner* the general was also Saul's cousin. For "*son of Abiel*" (*ben Abiel*) we must read "*sons of Abiel*" (*bne Abiel*: see ch. ix. 1).—Ver. 52. The statement, "*and the war was hard* (severe) *against the Philistines as long as Saul lived*," merely serves to explain the notice which follows, namely, that Saul took or drew to himself every strong man and every brave man that he saw. If we observe this, which is the true relation between the two clauses in this verse, the appearance of abruptness which we find in the first notice completely vanishes, and the verse follows very suitably upon the allusion to the general. The meaning might be expressed in this manner: And as Saul had to carry on a severe war against the Philistines his whole life long, he drew to himself every powerful man and every brave man that he met with.

WAR WITH AMALEK. SAUL'S DISOBEDIENCE AND
REJECTION.—CHAP. XV.

As Saul had transgressed the commandment of God which was given to him through Samuel, by the sacrifice which he offered at Gilgal in the war with the Philistines at the very commencement of his reign, and had thereby drawn upon himself the threat that his monarchy should not be continued in perpetuity (ch. xiii. 13, 14); so his disobedience in the war against the Amalekites was followed by his rejection on the part of God. The Amalekites were the first heathen nation to

attack the Israelites after their deliverance out of Egypt, which they did in the most treacherous manner on their journey from Egypt to Sinai; and they had been threatened by God with extermination in consequence. This Moses enjoined upon Joshua, and also committed to writing, for the Israelites to observe in all future generations (Ex. xvii. 8-16). As the Amalekites afterwards manifested the same hostility to the people of God which they had displayed in this first attack, on every occasion which appeared favourable to their ravages, the Lord instructed Samuel to issue the command to Saul, to wage war against Amalek, and to smite man and beast with the ban, *i.e.* to put all to death (vers. 1-3). But when Saul had smitten them, he not only left Agag the king alive, but spared the best of the cattle that he had taken as booty, and merely executed the ban upon such animals as were worthless (vers. 4-9). He was rejected by the Lord for this disobedience, so that he was to be no longer king over Israel. His rejection was announced to him by Samuel (vers. 10-23), and was not retracted in spite of his prayer for the forgiveness of his sin (vers. 24-35). In fact, Saul had no excuse for this breach of the divine command; it was nothing but open rebellion against the sovereignty of God in Israel; and if Jehovah would continue King of Israel, He must punish it by the rejection of the rebel. For Saul no longer desired to be the medium of the sovereignty of Jehovah, or the executor of the commands of the God-king, but simply wanted to reign according to his own arbitrary will. Nevertheless this rejection was not followed by his outward deposition. The Lord merely took away His Spirit, had David anointed king by Samuel, and thenceforward so directed the steps of Saul and David, that as time advanced the hearts of the people were turned away more and more from Saul to David; and on the death of Saul, the attempt of the ambitious Abner to raise his son Ishbosheth to the throne could not possibly have any lasting success.

Vers. 1-3. The account of the war against the Amalekites is a very condensed one, and is restricted to a description of the conduct of Saul on that occasion. Without mentioning either the time or the immediate occasion of the war, the narrative commences with the command of God which Samuel solemnly communicated to Saul, to go and exterminate that people.

Samuel commenced with the words, "*Jehovah sent me to anoint thee to be king over His people, over Israel,*" in order to show to Saul the obligation which rested upon him to receive his commission as coming from God, and to proceed at once to fulfil it. The allusion to the anointing points back not to ch. xi. 15, but to ch. x. 1.—Ver. 2. "*Thus saith the Lord of Zebaoth, I have looked upon what Amalek did to Israel, that it placed itself in his way when he came up out of Egypt*" (Ex. xvii. 8). Samuel merely mentions this first outbreak of hostility on the part of Amalek towards the people of Israel, because in this the same disposition was already manifested which now made the people ripe for the judgment of extermination (*vid.* Ex. xvii. 14). The hostility which they had now displayed, according to ver. 33, there was no necessity for the prophet to mention particularly, since it was well known to Saul and all Israel. When God looks upon a sin, directs His glance towards it, He must punish it according to His own holiness. This פָּקַדְתִּי points at the very outset to the punishment about to be proclaimed.—Ver. 3. Saul is to smite and ban everything belonging to it without reserve, *i.e.* to put to death both man and beast. The last clause וְהָמָתָהּ וְנָרְמָתָם is only an explanation and exemplification of וְהָתַרְמָתָם. "*From man to woman,*" etc., *i.e.* men and women, children and sucklings, etc.

Vers. 4-9. Saul summoned the people to war, and mustered them (those who were summoned) at *Telaim* (this was probably the same place as the *Telem* mentioned in Josh. xv. 24, and is to be looked for in the eastern portion of the Negeb). "*Two hundred thousand foot, and ten thousand of the men of Judah:*" this implies that the two hundred thousand were from the other tribes. These numbers are not too large; for a powerful Bedouin nation, such as the Amalekites were, could not possibly be successfully attacked with a small army, but only by raising the whole of the military force of Israel.—Ver. 5. He then advanced as far as the city of the Amalekites, the situation of which is altogether unknown, and placed an ambush in the valley. וַיִּרֶב does not come from רָיַב, to fight, *i.e.* to quarrel, not to give battle, but was understood even by the early translators as a contracted form of וַיִּצָּרֵב, the *Hiphil* of צָרַב. And modern commentators have generally understood it in the same way; but Olshausen (*Hebr. Gramm.* p. 572) questions the correctness

of the reading, and Thenius proposes to alter **וַיִּרְבּוּ בְנֵהָלָל** into **וַיַּעֲרֶיף מִלְחָמָהּ**. **וַיַּעֲרֶיף** refers to a valley in the neighbourhood of the city of the Amalekites.—Ver. 6. Saul directed the Kenites to come out from among the Amalekites, that they might not perish with them (**וְאַסְפֵּיָהּ**, *imp. Kal* of **וְאַסֵּף**), as they had shown affection to the Israelites on their journey out of Egypt (compare Num. x. 29 with Judg. i. 16). He then smote the Amalekites from Havilah in the direction towards Shur, which lay before (to the east of) Egypt (cf. Gen. xxv. 18). *Shur* is the desert of Jifar, *i.e.* that portion of the desert of Arabia which borders upon Egypt (see at Gen. xvi. 7). *Havilah*, the country of the *Chaulotæans*, on the border of Arabia Petræa towards Yemen (see at Gen. x. 29).—Vers. 8, 9. Their king, *Agag*, he took alive (on the name, see at Num. xxiv. 7), but all the people he banned with the edge of the sword, *i.e.* he had them put to death without quarter. “*All*,” *i.e.* all that fell into the hands of the Israelites. For it follows from the very nature of the case that many escaped, and consequently there is nothing striking in the fact that Amalekites are mentioned again at a later period (ch. xxvii. 8, xxx. 1; 2 Sam. viii. 12). The last remnant was destroyed by the Simeonites upon the mountains of Seir in the reign of Hezekiah (1 Chron. iv. 43). Only, king *Agag* did Saul and the people (of Israel) spare, also “*the best of the sheep and oxen, and the animals of the second birth, and the lambs and everything good; these they would not ban.*” **מִשְׁנֵי־טוֹבִים**, according to D. Kimchi and R. Tanch., are **שְׁנֵי־לִבָּטֵן**, *i.e.* *animalia secundo partu edita*, which were considered superior to the others (*vid.* Roediger in *Ges. Thes.* p. 1451); and **בָּרִים**, pasture lambs, *i.e.* fat lambs. There is no necessity, therefore, for the conjecture of Ewald and Thenius, **מִשְׁמִי־טוֹבִים**, fattened, and **בְּרִמִּים**, vineyards; nor for the far-fetched explanation given by Bochart, *viz.* camels with two humps and camel-saddles, to say nothing of the fact that camel-saddles and vineyards are altogether out of place here. In “*all that was good*” the things already mentioned singly are all included. **הַכָּל־אֲשֶׁר־בָּהֶן**, the property; here it is applied to cattle, as in Gen. xxxiii. 14. **נִבְזָה = נִבְזָה**, despised, undervalued. The form of the word is not contracted from a noun **מִבְזָה** and the participle **נִבְזָה** (*Ges. Lehrgeb.* p. 463), but seems to be a *participle Niph.* formed from a noun **מִבְזָה**. But as such a form is contrary to all analogy, Ewald

and Olshausen regard the reading as corrupt. נָסַף (from נָסַף): flowing away; used with reference to diseased cattle, or such as have perished. The reason for sparing the best cattle is very apparent, namely selfishness. But it is not so easy to determine why Agag should have been spared by Saul. It is by no means probable that he wished thereby to do honour to the royal dignity. O. v. Gerlach's supposition, that vanity or the desire to make a display with a royal slave was the actual reason, is a much more probable one.

Vers. 10-23. The word of the Lord came to Samuel: "*It repenteth me that I have made Saul king, for he hath turned away from me, and not set up (carried out) my word.*" (On the repentance of God, see the remarks on Gen. vi. 6.) That this does not express any changeableness in the divine nature, but simply the sorrow of the divine love at the rebellion of sinners, is evident enough from ver. 29. וְשָׁב מֵאַחֲרַי, to turn round from following God, in order to go his own ways. This was Saul's real sin. He would no longer be the follower and servant of the Lord, but would be absolute ruler in Israel. Pride arising from the consciousness of his own strength, led him astray to break the command of God. What more God said to Samuel is not communicated here, because it could easily be gathered and supplied from what Samuel himself proceeded to do (see more particularly vers. 16 sqq.). In order to avoid repetitions, only the principal feature in the divine revelation is mentioned here, and the details are given fully afterwards in the account of the fulfilment of the instructions. Samuel was deeply agitated by this word of the Lord. "*It burned (in) him,*" sc. wrath (אֵשׁ, compare Gen. xxxi. 36 with xxx. 2), not on account of the repentance to which God had given utterance at having raised up Saul as king, nor merely at Saul's disobedience, but at the frustration of the purpose of God in calling him to be king in consequence of his disobedience, from which he might justly dread the worst results in relation to the glory of Jehovah and his own prophetic labours.¹ The opinion

¹ "Many grave thoughts seem to have presented themselves at once to Samuel and disturbed his mind, when he reflected upon the dishonour which might be heaped upon the name of God, and the occasion which the rejection and deposition of Saul would furnish to wicked men for blaspheming God. For Saul had been anointed by the ministry of Samuel, and he

that יָרָה is also used to signify deep distress cannot be established from 2 Sam. iv. 8. "*And he cried to Jehovah the whole night,*" *sc.* praying for Saul to be forgiven. But it was in vain. This is evident from what follows, where Samuel maintains the cause of his God with strength and decision, after having wrestled with God in prayer.—Ver. 12. The next morning, after receiving the revelation from God (ver. 11), Samuel rose up early, to go and meet Saul as he was returning from the war. On the way it was told him, "*Saul has come to Carmel*"—*i.e.* *Kurmul*, upon the mountains of Judah to the south-east of Hebron (see at Josh. xv. 55)—"*setting himself a memorial*" (נָתַן, a hand, then a memorial or monument, inasmuch as the hand calls attention to anything: see 2 Sam. xviii. 18), "*and has turned and proceeded farther, and gone down to Gilgal*" (in the valley of the Jordan, as in ch. xiii. 4).—Ver. 13. When Samuel met him there, Saul attempted to hide his consciousness of guilt by a feigned friendly welcome. "*Blessed be thou of the Lord*" (*vid.* Ruth ii. 20, Gen. xiv. 19, etc.) was his greeting to the prophet; "*I have set up the word of Jehovah.*"—Vers. 14, 15. But the prophet stripped his hypocrisy at once with the question, "*What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears, and a lowing of oxen that I hear?*" Saul replied (ver. 15), "*They have brought them from the Amalekites, because the people spared the best sheep and oxen, to sacrifice them to the Lord thy God; and the rest we have banned.*" So that it was not Saul, but the people, who had transgressed the command of the Lord, and that with the most laudable intention, *viz.* to offer the best of the cattle that had been taken, as a thank-offering to the Lord. The falsehood and hypocrisy of these words lay upon the very surface; for even if the cattle spared were really intended as sacrifices to the Lord, not only the people, but Saul also, would have had their own interests in view (*vid.* ver. 9), since the flesh of thank-offerings was appropriated to sacrificial meals.—Vers. 16 sqq.

had been chosen by God himself from all the people, and called by Him to the throne. If, therefore, he was nevertheless deposed, it seemed likely that so much would be detracted from the authority of Samuel and the confidence of the people in his teaching, and, moreover, that the worship of God would be overturned, and the greatest disturbance ensue; in fact, that universal confusion would burst upon the nation. These were probably the grounds upon which Samuel's great indignation rested."—*Calvin.*

Samuel therefore bade him be silent. הָרַף, "leave off," excusing thyself any further. "I will tell thee what Jehovah hath said to me this night." (The *Chethibh* וַיֹּאמֶר is evidently a copyist's error for וַיִּסְמַח.) "Is it not true, when thou wast little in thine eyes (a reference to Saul's own words, ch. ix. 21), thou didst become head of the tribes of Israel? and Jehovah anointed thee king over Israel, and Jehovah sent thee on the way, and said, Go and ban the sinners, the Amalekites, and make war against them, until thou exterminatest them. And wherefore hast thou not hearkened to the voice of Jehovah, and hast fallen upon the booty," etc. ? (חָטָאת, see at ch. xiv. 32.)

Even after this Saul wanted to justify himself, and to throw the blame of sparing the cattle upon the people.—Ver. 20. "Yea, I have hearkened to the voice of Jehovah (וַיִּשְׁמָע serving, like יָ, to introduce the reply : here it is used in the sense of asseveration, *utique*, yea), and have brought Agag the king of the Amalekites, and banned Amalek." Bringing Agag he mentioned probably as a practical proof that he had carried out the war of extermination against the Amalekites.—Ver. 21. Even the sparing of the cattle he endeavoured to defend as the fulfilment of a religious duty. The people had taken sheep and oxen from the booty, "as *firstlings of the ban*," to sacrifice to Jehovah. Sacrificing the best of the booty taken in war as an offering of first-fruits to the Lord, was not indeed prescribed in the law, but was a praiseworthy sign of piety, by which all honour was rendered to the Lord as the giver of the victory (see Num. xxxi. 48 sqq.). This, Saul meant to say, was what the people had done on the present occasion ; only he overlooked the fact, that what was banned to the Lord could not be offered to Him as a burnt-offering, because, being most holy, it belonged to Him already (Lev. xxvii. 29), and according to Deut. xiii. 16, was to be put to death, as Samuel had expressly said to Saul (ver. 3).—Vers. 22, 23. Without entering, therefore, into any discussion of the meaning of the ban, as Saul only wanted to cover over his own wrong-doings by giving this turn to the affair, Samuel put a stop to any further excuses, by saying, "Hath Jehovah delight in burnt-offerings and slain-offerings as in hearkening to the voice of Jehovah ? (*i.e.* in obedience to His word.) Behold, hearing (obeying) is better than slain-offerings, attending better than fat of rams." By saying this, Samuel did

not reject sacrifices as worthless; he did not say that God took no pleasure in burnt-offerings and slain-offerings, but simply compared sacrifice with obedience to the command of God, and pronounced the latter of greater worth than the former. "It was as much as to say that the sum and substance of divine worship consisted in obedience, with which it should always begin, and that sacrifices were, so to speak, simple appendices, the force and worth of which were not so great as of obedience to the precepts of God" (Calvin). But it necessarily follows that sacrifices without obedience to the commandments of God are utterly worthless; in fact, are displeasing to God, as Ps. l. 8 sqq., Isa. i. 11 sqq., lxvi. 3, Jer. vi. 20, and all the prophets, distinctly affirm. There was no necessity, however, to carry out this truth any further. To tear off the cloak of hypocrisy, with which Saul hoped to cover his disobedience, it was quite enough to affirm that God's first demand was obedience, and that observing His word was better than sacrifice; because, as the *Berleb. Bible* puts it, "in sacrifices a man offers only the strange flesh of irrational animals, whereas in obedience he offers his own will, which is rational or spiritual worship" (Rom. xii. 8). This spiritual worship was shadowed forth in the sacrificial worship of the Old Testament. In the sacrificial animal the Israelite was to give up and sanctify his own person and life to the Lord. (For an examination of the meaning of the different sacrifices, see *Pent.* vol. ii. pp. 274 sqq., and Keil's *Bibl. Archäol.* i. § 41 sqq.) But if this were the design of the sacrifices, it was clear enough that God did not desire the animal sacrifice in itself, but first and chiefly obedience to His own word. In ver. 22, טוב is not to be connected as an adjective with זֶבֶח, "more than good sacrifice," as the Sept. and Thenius render it; it is rather to be taken as a predicate, "better than slain-offerings," and מִזֶּבֶחַ is placed first simply for the sake of emphasis. Any contrast between good and bad sacrifices, such as the former construction would introduce into the words, is not only foreign to the context, but also opposed to the parallelism. For חֵלֶב אֵילִים does not mean fat rams, but the fat of rams; the fat portions taken from the ram, which were placed upon the altar in the case of the slain-offerings, and for which חֵלֶב is the technical expression (compare Lev. iii. 9, 16, with vers. 4, 11, etc.). "For," continued Samuel (ver. 23),

"*rebellion is the sin of soothsaying, and opposition is heathenism and idolatry.*" מַרְדֵּי and הַפְּעִיר are the subjects, and synonymous in their meaning. חַטֹּאת קָסָם, the sin of soothsaying, *i.e.* of divination in connection with the worship of idolatrous and demoniacal powers. In the second clause idols are mentioned instead of idolatry, and compared to resistance, but without any particle of comparison. Opposition is keeping idols and teraphim, *i.e.* it is like worshipping idols and teraphim. הָאֵל, nothingness, then an idol or image (*vid.* Isa. lxvi. 3; Hos. iv. 15, x. 5, 8). On the *teraphim* as domestic and oracular deities, see at Gen. xxxi. 19. Opposition to God is compared by Samuel to soothsaying and oracles, because idolatry was manifested in both of them. All conscious disobedience is actually idolatry, because it makes self-will, the human I, into a god. So that all manifest opposition to the word and commandment of God is, like idolatry, a rejection of the true God. "*Because thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, He hath rejected thee, that thou mayst be no longer king.*" מִהְיוֹת מֶלֶךְ = מִפְּלֶךְ (ver. 26), away from being king.

Vers. 24-35. This sentence made so powerful an impression upon Saul, that he confessed, "*I have sinned: for I have transgressed the command of the Lord and thy words, because I feared the people, and hearkened to their voice.*" But these last words, with which he endeavoured to make his sin appear as small as possible, show that the consciousness of his guilt did not go very deep. Even if the people had really desired that the best of the cattle should be spared, he ought not as king to have given his consent to their wish, since God had commanded that they should all be banned (*i.e.* destroyed); and even though he had yielded from weakness, this weakness could not lessen his guilt before God. This repentance, therefore, was rather the effect of alarm at the rejection which had been announced to him, than the fruit of any genuine consciousness of sin. "It was not true and serious repentance, or the result of genuine sorrow of heart because he had offended God, but was merely repentance of the lips arising from fear of losing the kingdom, and of incurring public disgrace" (C. v. Lapide). This is apparent even from ver. 25, but still more from ver. 30. In ver. 25 he not only entreats Samuel for the forgiveness of his sin, but says, "*Return with me, that I may pray to the Lord.*"

The שׁוּב presupposes that Samuel was about to go away after executing his commission. Saul entreated him to remain that he might pray, *i.e.* not only in order to obtain for him the forgiveness of his sin through his intercession, but, according to ver. 30, to show him honour before the elders of the people and before Israel, that his rejection might not be known.—Vers. 26, 27. This request Samuel refused, repeating at the same time the sentence of rejection, and turned to depart. “*Then Saul laid hold of the lappet of his mantle (i.e. his upper garment), and it tore*” (*lit.* was torn off). That the *Niphal* וִיקַרְעֵהוּ is correct, and is not to be altered into וִיקַרְעֵה אֹתוֹ, “Saul tore off the lappet,” according to the rendering of the LXX., as Thenius supposes, is evident from the explanation which Samuel gave of the occurrence (ver. 28): “*Jehovah hath torn the sovereignty of Israel from thee to-day, and given it to thy neighbour, who is better than thou.*” As Saul was about to hold back the prophet by force, that he might obtain from him a revocation of the divine sentence, the tearing of the mantle, which took place accidentally, and evidently without any such intention on the part of Saul, was to serve as a sign of the rending away of the sovereignty from him. Samuel did not yet know to whom Jehovah would give it; he therefore used the expression לְרֵעִי, as רֵעִי is applied to any one with whom a person associates. To confirm his own words, he adds in ver. 29: “*And also the Trust of Israel doth not lie and doth not repent, for He is not a man to repent.*” נֶצִיחַ signifies constancy, endurance, then confidence, trust, because a man can trust in what is constant. This meaning is to be retained here, where the word is used as a name for God, and not the meaning *gloria*, which is taken in 1 Chron. xxix. 11 from the Aramæan usage of speech, and would be altogether unsuitable here, where the context suggests the idea of unchangeableness. For a man’s repentance or regret arises from his changeableness, from the fluctuations in his desires and actions. This is never the case with God; consequently He is נֶצִיחַ יִשְׂרָאֵל, *the unchangeable One, in whom Israel can trust, since He does not lie or deceive, or repent of His purposes.* These words are spoken θεομορφῶς (theomorphically), whereas in ver. 11 and other passages, which speak of God as repenting, the words are to be understood ἀνθρωποπαθῶς (anthropomorphically; cf. Num. xxiii. 19).—Vers. 30,

31. After this declaration as to the irrevocable character of the determination of God to reject Saul, Samuel yielded to the renewed entreaty of Saul, that he would honour him by his presence before the elders and the people, and remained whilst Saul worshipped, not merely "for the purpose of preserving the outward order until a new king should take his place" (O. v. Gerlach), but also to carry out the ban upon Agag, whom Saul had spared.—Ver. 32. After Saul had prayed, Samuel directed him to bring Agag the king of the Amalekites. Agag came *מְעִרְוֶה*, i.e. in a contented and joyous state of mind, and said (in his heart), "*Surely the bitterness of death is vanished,*" not from any special pleasure at the thought of death, or from a heroic contempt of death, but because he thought that his life was to be granted him, as he had not been put to death at once, and was now about to be presented to the prophet (Clericus).—Ver. 33. But Samuel pronounced the sentence of death upon him: "*As thy sword hath made women childless, so be thy mother childless before women!*" *מְנַשִּׁים* is to be understood as a comparative: more childless than (other) women, i.e. the most childless of women, namely, because her son was the king. From these words of Samuel, it is very evident that Agag had carried on his wars with great cruelty, and had therefore forfeited his life according to the *lex talionis*. Samuel then hewed him in pieces "*before the Lord at Gilgal,*" i.e. before the altar of Jehovah there; for the slaying of Agag being the execution of the ban, was an act performed for the glory of God.—Vers. 34, 35. After the prophet had thus maintained the rights of Jehovah in the presence of Saul, and carried out the ban upon Agag, he returned to his own home at Ramah; and Saul went to his house at Gibeah. From that time forward Samuel broke off all intercourse with the king whom Jehovah had rejected. "*For Samuel was grieved for Saul, and it repented the Lord that he had made Saul king,*" i.e. because Samuel had loved Saul on account of his previous election; and yet, as Jehovah had rejected him unconditionally, he felt that he was precluded from doing anything to effect a change of heart in Saul, and his reinstatement as king.

III. SAUL'S FALL AND DAVID'S ELECTION.

CHAP. XVI.-XXXI.

Although the rejection of Saul on the part of God, which was announced to him by Samuel, was not followed by immediate deposition, but Saul remained king until his death, the consequences of his rejection were very speedily brought to light. Whilst Samuel, by the command of God, was secretly anointing David, the youngest son of Jesse, at Bethlehem, as king (ch. xvi. 1-13), the Spirit of Jehovah departed from Saul, and an evil spirit began to terrify him, so that he fell into melancholy; and his servants fetched David to the court, as a man who could play on stringed instruments, that he might charm away the king's melancholy by his playing (ch. xvi. 14-23). Another war with the Philistines soon furnished David with the opportunity for displaying his heroic courage, by the defeat of the giant Goliath, before whom the whole army of the Israelites trembled; and to attract the eyes of the whole nation to himself, as the deliverer of Israel from its foes (ch. xvii. 1-54), in consequence of which Saul placed him above the men of war, whilst Saul's brave son Jonathan formed a bond of friendship with him (ch. xvii. 55-xviii. 5). But this victory, in commemorating which the women sang, "Saul hath slain a thousand, David ten thousand" (ch. xviii. 7), excited the jealousy of the melancholy king, so that the next day, in an attack of madness, he threw his spear at David, who was playing before him, and after that not only removed him from his presence, but by elevating him to the rank of chief captain, and by the promise to give him his daughter in marriage for the performance of brave deeds, endeavoured to entangle him in such conflicts with the Philistines as should cost him his life. And when this failed, and David prospered in all his undertakings, he began to be afraid of him, and cherished a lifelong hatred towards him (ch. xviii. 6-30). Jonathan did indeed try to intercede and allay his father's suspicions, and effect a reconciliation between Saul and David; but the evil spirit soon drove the jealous king to a fresh attack upon David's life, so that he was obliged to flee not only from the presence of Saul,

but from his own house also, and went to Ramah, to the prophet Samuel, whither, however, Saul soon followed him, though he was so overpowered by the Spirit of the prophets, that he could not do anything to David (ch. xix.). Another attempt on the part of Jonathan to change his father's mind entirely failed, and so excited the wrath of Saul, that he actually threw the spear at his own son; so that no other course now remained for David, than to separate himself from his noble friend Jonathan, and seek safety in flight (ch. xx.). He therefore fled with his attendant first of all to Nob, where Ahimelech the high priest gave him some of the holy loaves and the sword of Goliath, on his representing to him that he was travelling hastily in the affairs of the king. He then proceeded to Achish, the king of the Philistines, at Gath; but having been recognised as the conqueror of Goliath, he was obliged to feign madness in order to save his life; and being driven away by Achish as a madman, he went to the cave of Adullam, and thence into the land of Moab. But he was summoned by the prophet to return to his own land, and went into the wood Hareth, in the land of Judah; whilst Saul, who had been informed by the Edomite Doeg of the occurrence at Nob, ordered all the priests who were there to be put to death, and the town itself to be ruthlessly destroyed, with all the men and beasts that it contained. Only one of Ahimelech's sons escaped the massacre, viz. Abiathar; and he took refuge with David (ch. xxi. xxii.). Saul now commenced a regular pursuit of David, who had gradually collected around him a company of 600 men. On receiving intelligence that David had smitten a marauding company of Philistines at Keilah, Saul followed him, with the hope of catching him in this fortified town; and when this plan failed, on account of the flight of David into the wilderness of Ziph, because the high priest had informed him of the intention of the inhabitants to deliver him up, Saul pursued him thither, and had actually surrounded David with his warriors, when a messenger arrived with the intelligence of an invasion of the land by the Philistines, and he was suddenly called away to make war upon these foes (ch. xxiii.). But he had no sooner returned from the attack upon the Philistines, than he pursued David still farther into the wilderness of Engedi, where he entered into a large cave,

behind which David and his men were concealed, so that he actually fell into David's hands, who might have put him to death. But from reverence for the anointed of the Lord, instead of doing him any harm, David merely cut off a corner of his coat, to show his pursuer, when he had left the cave, in what manner he had acted towards him, and to convince him of the injustice of his hostility. Saul was indeed moved to tears; but he was not disposed for all that to give up any further pursuit (ch. xxiv.). David was still obliged to wander about from place to place in the wilderness of Judah; and at length he was actually in want of the necessaries of life, so that on one occasion, when the rich Nabal had churlishly turned away the messengers who had been sent to him to ask for a present, he formed the resolution to take bloody revenge upon this hard-hearted fool, and was only restrained from carrying the resolution out by the timely and friendly intervention of the wise Abigail (ch. xxv.). Soon after this Saul came a second time into such a situation, that David could have killed him; but during the night, whilst Saul and all his people were sleeping, he slipped with Abishai into the camp of his enemy, and carried off as booty the spear that was at the king's head, that he might show him a second time how very far he was from seeking to take his life (ch. xxvi.). But all this only made David's situation an increasingly desperate one; so that eventually, in order to save his life, he resolved to fly into the country of the Philistines, and take refuge with Achish, the king of Gath, by whom he was now received in the most friendly manner, as a fugitive who had been proscribed by the king of Israel. At his request Achish assigned him the town of Ziklag as a dwelling-place for himself and his men, whence he made sundry excursions against different Bedouin tribes of the desert. In consequence of this, however, he was brought into a state of dependence upon this Philistian prince (ch. xxvii.); and shortly afterwards, when the Philistines made an attack upon the Israelites, he would have been perfectly unable to escape the necessity of fighting in their ranks against his own people and fatherland, if the other princes of the Philistines had not felt some mistrust of "these Hebrews," and compelled Achish to send David and his fighting men back to Ziklag (ch. xxix.). But this was also to put an end to his prolonged flight.

Saul's fear of the power of the Philistines, and the fact that he could not obtain any revelation from God, induced him to have recourse to a necromantist woman, and he was obliged to hear from the mouth of Samuel, whom she had invoked, not only the confirmation of his own rejection on the part of God, but also the announcement of his death (ch. xxviii.). In the battle which followed on the mountains of Gilboa, after his three sons had been put to death by his side, he fell upon his own sword, that he might not fall alive into the hands of the archers of the enemy, who were hotly pursuing him (ch. xxxi.), whilst David in the meantime chastised the Amalekites for their attack upon Ziklag (ch. xxx.).

It is not stated anywhere how long the pursuit of David by Saul continued; the only notice given is that David dwelt a year and four months in the land of the Philistines (ch. xxvii. 7). If we compare with this the statement in 2 Sam. v. 4, that David was thirty years old when he became king (over Judah), the supposition that he was about twenty years old when Samuel anointed him, and therefore that the interval between Saul's rejection and his death was about ten years, will not be very far from the truth. The events which occurred during this interval are described in the most elaborate way, on the one hand because they show how Saul sank deeper and deeper, after the Spirit of God had left him on account of his rebellion against Jehovah, and not only was unable to procure any longer for the people that deliverance which they had expected from the king, but so weakened the power of the throne through the conflict which he carried on against David, whom the Lord had chosen ruler of the nation in his stead, that when he died the Philistines were able to inflict a total defeat upon the Israelites, and occupy a large portion of the land of Israel; and, on the other hand, because they teach how, after the Lord had anointed David ruler over His people, and had opened the way to the throne through the victory which he gained over Goliath, He humbled him by trouble and want, and trained him up as king after His own heart. On a closer examination of these occurrences, which we have only briefly hinted at, giving their main features merely, we see clearly how, from the very day when Samuel announced to Saul his rejection by God, he hardened himself more and more against

the leadings of divine grace, and continued steadily ripening for the judgment of death. Immediately after this announcement an evil spirit took possession of his soul, so that he fell into trouble and melancholy ; and when jealousy towards David was stirred up in his heart, he was seized with fits of raving madness, in which he tried to pierce David with a spear, and thus destroy the man whom he had come to love on account of his musical talent, which had exerted so beneficial an influence upon his mind (ch. xvi. 23, xviii. 10, 11, xix. 9, 10). These attacks of madness gradually gave place to hatred, which developed itself with full consciousness, and to a most deliberately planned hostility, which he concealed at first not only from David but also from all his own attendants, with the hope that he should be able to put an end to David's life through his stratagems, but which he afterwards proclaimed most openly as soon as these plans had failed. When his hostility was first openly declared, his eagerness to seize upon his enemy carried him to such a length that he got into the company of prophets at Ramah, and was so completely overpowered by the Spirit of God dwelling there, that he lay before Samuel for a whole day in a state of prophetic ecstasy (ch. xix. 22 sqq.). But this irresistible power of the Spirit of God over him produced no change of heart. For immediately afterwards, when Jonathan began to intercede for David, Saul threw the spear at his own son (ch. xx. 33), and this time not in an attack of madness or insanity, but in full consciousness ; for we do not read in this instance, as in ch. xviii. xix., that the evil spirit came upon him. He now proceeded to a consistent carrying out of his purpose of murder. He accused his courtiers of having conspired against him like Jonathan, and formed an alliance with David (ch. xxii. 6 sqq.), and caused the priests at Nob to be murdered in cold blood, and the whole town smitten with the edge of the sword, because Ahimelech had supplied David with bread ; and this he did without paying any attention to the conclusive evidence of his innocence (ch. xxii. 11 sqq.). He then went with 3000 men in pursuit of David ; and even after he had fallen twice into David's hands, and on both occasions had been magnanimously spared by him, he did not desist from plotting for his life until he had driven him out of the land ; so that we may clearly see how each fresh proof of the

righteousness of David's cause only increased his hatred, until at length, in the war against the Philistines, he rashly resorted to the godless arts of a necromancer which he himself had formerly prohibited, and eventually put an end to his own life by falling upon his sword.

Just as clearly may we discern in the guidance of David, from his anointing by Samuel to the death of Saul, how the Lord, as King of His people, trained him in the school of affliction to be His servant, and led him miraculously on to the goal of his divine calling. Having been lifted up as a young man by his anointing, and by the favour which he had acquired with Saul through his playing upon the harp, and still more by his victory over Goliath, far above the limited circumstances of his previous life, he might very easily have been puffed up in the consciousness of the spiritual gifts and powers conferred upon him, if God had not humbled his heart by want and tribulation. The first outbursts of jealousy on the part of Saul, and his first attempts to get rid of the favourite of the people, only furnished him with the opportunity to distinguish himself still more by brave deeds, and to make his name still dearer to the people (ch. xviii. 30). When, therefore, Saul's hostility was openly displayed, and neither Jonathan's friendship nor Samuel's prophetic authority could protect him any longer, he fled to the high priest Ahimelech, and from him to king Achish at Gath, and endeavoured to help himself through by resorting to falsehood. He did save himself in this way no doubt, but he brought destruction upon the priests at Nob. And he was very soon to learn how all that he did for his people was rewarded with ingratitude. The inhabitants of Keilah, whom he had rescued from their plunderers, wanted to deliver him up to Saul (ch. xxiii. 5, 12); and even the men of his own tribe, the Ziphites, betrayed him twice, so that he was no longer sure of his life even in his own land. But the more this necessarily shook his confidence in his own strength and wisdom, the more clearly did the Lord manifest himself as his faithful Shepherd. After Ahimelech had been put to death, his son Abiathar fled to David with the light and right of the high priest, so that he was now in a position to inquire the will and counsel of God in any difficulty into which he might be brought (ch. xxiii. 6). On two occasions God brought his

mortal foe Saul into his hand, and David's conduct in both these cases shows how the deliverance of God which he had hitherto experienced had strengthened his confidence in the Lord, and in the fulfilment of His promises (compare ch. xxiv. with ch. xxvi.). And his gracious preservation from carrying out his purposes of vengeance against Nabal (ch. xxv.) could not fail to strengthen him still more. Nevertheless, when his troubles threatened to continue without intermission, his courage began to sink and his faith to waver, so that he took refuge in the land of the Philistines, where, however, his wisdom and cunning brought him into a situation of such difficulty that nothing but the grace and fidelity of his God could possibly extricate him, and out of which he was delivered without any act of his own.

In this manner was the divine sentence of rejection fulfilled upon Saul, and the prospect which the anointing of David had set before him, of ascending the throne of Israel, carried out to completion. The account before us of the events which led to this result of the various complications, bears in all respects so thoroughly the stamp of internal truth and trustworthiness, that even modern critics are unanimous in acknowledging the genuine historical character of the biblical narrative upon the whole. At the same time, there are some things, such as the supposed irreconcilable discrepancy between ch. xvi. 14-23 and ch. xvii. 55-58, and certain repetitions, such as Saul's throwing the spear at David (ch. xviii. 10 and xix. 9, 10), the treachery of the Ziphites (ch. xxiii. 19 sqq. and xxvi. 1 sqq.), David's sparing Saul (ch. xxiv. 4 sqq. and xxvi. 5 sqq.), which they cannot explain in any other way than by the favourite hypothesis that we have here divergent accounts, or legendary traditions derived from two different sources that are here woven together; whereas, as we shall see when we come to the exposition of the chapters in question, not only do the discrepancies vanish on a more thorough and minute examination of the matter, but the repetitions are very clearly founded on facts.

ANOINTING OF DAVID. HIS PLAYING BEFORE SAUL.—

CHAP. XVI.

After the rejection of Saul, the Lord commanded Samuel the prophet to go to Bethlehem and anoint one of Jesse's sons as king; and when he went to carry out this commission, He pointed out David, the youngest of eight sons, as the chosen one, whereupon the prophet anointed him (vers. 1-13). Through the overruling providence of God, it came to pass after this, that David was brought to the court of Saul, to play upon the harp, and so cheer up the king, who was troubled with an evil spirit (vers. 14-23).

Vers. 1-13. ANOINTING OF DAVID.—Ver. 1. The words in which God summoned Samuel to proceed to the anointing of another king, "*How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, whom I have rejected, that he may not be king over Israel?*" show that the prophet had not yet been able to reconcile himself to the hidden ways of the Lord; that he was still afraid that the people and kingdom of God would suffer from the rejection of Saul; and that he continued to mourn for Saul, not merely from his own personal attachment to the fallen king, but also, or perhaps still more, from anxiety for the welfare of Israel. He was now to put an end to this mourning, and to fill his horn with oil and go to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for the Lord had chosen a king from among his sons.—Ver. 2. But Samuel replied, "*How shall I go? If Saul hear it, he will kill me.*" This fear on the part of the prophet, who did not generally show himself either hesitating or timid, can only be explained, as we may see from ver. 14, on the supposition that Saul was already given up to the power of the evil spirit, so that the very worst might be dreaded from his madness, if he discovered that Samuel had anointed another king. That there was some foundation for Samuel's anxiety, we may infer from the fact that the Lord did not blame him for his fear, but pointed out the way by which he might anoint David without attracting attention (vers. 2, 3). "*Take a young heifer with thee, and say (sc. if any one ask the reason for your going to Bethlehem), I am come to sacrifice to the Lord.*" There was no untruth in this, for Samuel was really about to conduct a sacrificial festival, and was to invite Jesse's

family to it, and then anoint the one whom Jehovah should point out to him as the chosen one. It was simply a concealment of the principal object of his mission from any who might make inquiry about it, because they themselves had not been invited. "There was no dissimulation or falsehood in this, since God really wished His prophet to find safety under the pretext of the sacrifice. A sacrifice was therefore really offered, and the prophet was protected thereby, so that he was not exposed to any danger until the time of full revelation arrived" (Calvin).—Ver. 4. When Samuel arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the city came to meet him in a state of the greatest anxiety, and asked him whether his coming was peace, or promised good. The singular *וַיִּאָמֶר* may be explained on the ground that one of the elders spoke for the rest. The anxious inquiry of the elders presupposes that even in the time of Saul the prophet Samuel was frequently in the habit of coming unexpectedly to one place and another, for the purpose of reproof and punishing wrong-doing and sin.—Ver. 5. Samuel quieted them with the reply that he was come to offer sacrifice to the Lord, and called upon them to sanctify themselves and take part in the sacrifice. It is evident from this that the prophet was accustomed to turn his visits to account by offering sacrifice, and so building up the people in fellowship with the Lord. The reason why sacrifices were offered at different places was, that since the removal of the ark from the tabernacle, this sanctuary had ceased to be the only place of the nation's worship. *וַיִּתְקַדֵּשׁ*, to sanctify one's self by washings and legal purifications, which probably preceded every sacrificial festival (*vid.* Ex. xix. 10, 22). The expression, "*Come with me to the sacrifice,*" is *constructio prægna*ns for "*Come and take part in the sacrifice.*" "*Call to the sacrifice*" (ver. 3) is to be understood in the same way. *וַיִּבֶחַ* is the slain-offering, which was connected with every sacrificial meal. It is evident from the following words, "*and he sanctified Jesse and his sons,*" that Samuel addressed the general summons to sanctify themselves more especially to Jesse and his sons. For it was with them that he was about to celebrate the sacrificial meal.—Vers. 6 sqq. When they came, *sc.* to the sacrificial meal, which was no doubt held in Jesse's house, after the sacrifice had been presented upon an altar, and when Samuel saw the eldest son Eliab, who was

tall and handsome according to ver. 7, "*he thought (lit. he said, sc. in his heart), Surely His anointed is before Jehovah,*" i.e. surely the man is now standing before Jehovah whom He hath chosen to be His anointed. But Jehovah said to him in the spirit, "*Look not at his form and the height of his stature, for I have rejected him: for not as man seeth (sc. do I see); for man looketh at the eyes, and Jehovah looketh at the heart.*" The eyes, as contrasted with the heart, are figuratively employed to denote the outward form.—Vers. 8 sqq. When Jesse thereupon brought up his other sons, one after another, before Samuel, the prophet said in the case of each, "*This also Jehovah hath not chosen.*" As Samuel must be the subject to the verb *וַיִּבְחַר* in vers. 8-10, we may assume that he had communicated the object of his coming to Jesse.—Ver. 11. After the seventh had been presented, and the Lord had not pointed any one of them out as the chosen one, "*Samuel said to Jesse, Are these all the boys?*" When Jesse replied that there was still *the smallest*, i.e. the youngest, left, and he was keeping the sheep, he directed him to fetch him; "*for,*" said he, "*we will not sit down till he has come hither.*" *כָּבֵד*, to surround, sc. the table, upon which the meal was arranged. This is implied in the context.—Vers. 12, 13. When David arrived,—and he was *ruddy*, also *of beautiful eyes and good looks* (*אֲדָמִי*, used to denote the reddish colour of the hair, which was regarded as a mark of beauty in southern lands, where the hair is generally black. *וְעַל* is an adverb here = therewith), and therefore, so far as his looks and figure were concerned, well fitted, notwithstanding his youth, for the office to which the Lord had chosen him, since corporeal beauty was one of the outward distinctions of a king,—the Lord pointed him out to the prophet as the chosen one; whereupon he anointed him in the midst of his brethren. Along with the anointing the Spirit of Jehovah came upon David from that day forward. But Samuel returned to Ramah when the sacrificial meal was over. There is nothing recorded concerning any words of Samuel to David at the time of the anointing and in explanation of its meaning, as in the case of Saul (ch. x. 1). In all probability Samuel said nothing at the time, since, according to ver. 2, he had good reason for keeping the matter secret, not only on his own account, but still more for David's sake; so that even the brethren of David who were present knew nothing about the

meaning and object of the anointing, but may have imagined that Samuel merely intended to consecrate David as a pupil of the prophets. At the same time, we can hardly suppose that Samuel left Jesse, and even David, in uncertainty as to the object of his mission, and of the anointing which he had performed. He may have communicated all this to both of them, without letting the other sons know. It by no means follows, that because David remained with his father and kept the sheep as before, therefore his calling to be king must have been unknown to him; but only that in the anointing which he had received he did not discern either the necessity or obligation to appear openly as the anointed of the Lord, and that after receiving the Spirit of the Lord in consequence of the anointing, he left the further development of the matter to the Lord in childlike submission, assured that He would prepare and show him the way to the throne in His own good time.

Vers. 14–23. DAVID'S INTRODUCTION TO THE COURT OF SAUL.—Ver. 14. With the rejection of Saul on the part of God, the Spirit of Jehovah had departed from him, and an evil spirit from Jehovah had come upon him, who filled him with fear and anguish. The "*evil spirit from Jehovah*" which came into Saul in the place of the Spirit of Jehovah, was not merely an inward feeling of depression at the rejection announced to him, which grew into melancholy, and occasionally broke out in passing fits of insanity, but a higher evil power, which took possession of him, and not only deprived him of his peace of mind, but stirred up the feelings, ideas, imagination, and thoughts of his soul to such an extent that at times it drove him even into madness. This demon is called "*an evil spirit (coming) from Jehovah*," because Jehovah had sent it as a punishment, or "*an evil spirit of God*" (*Elohim*: ver. 15), or briefly "*a spirit of God*" (*Elohim*), or "*the evil spirit*" (ver. 23, compare ch. xviii. 10), as being a supernatural, spiritual, evil power; but never "*the Spirit of Jehovah*," because this is the Spirit proceeding from the holy God, which works upon men as the spirit of strength, wisdom, and knowledge, and generates and fosters the spiritual or divine life. The expression רָעָה יְהוָה (ch. xix. 9) is an abbreviated form for רָעָה יְהוָה מֵאֵת יְהוָה, and is to be interpreted accordingly.—Ver.

15. When Saul's attendants, *i.e.* his officers at court, perceived the mental ailment of the king, they advised him to let the evil spirit which troubled him be charmed away by instrumental music. "*Let our lord speak (command); thy servants are before thee (i.e. ready to serve thee): they will seek a man skilled in playing upon the harp; so will it be well with thee when an evil spirit of God comes upon thee, and he (the man referred to) plays with his hand.*" The powerful influence exerted by music upon the state of the mind was well known even in the earliest times; so that the wise men of ancient Greece recommended music to soothe the passions, to heal mental diseases, and even to check tumults among the people. From the many examples collected by Grotius, Clericus, and more especially Bochart in the *Hieroz.* P. i. l. 2, c. 44, we will merely cite the words of Censorinus (*de die natali*, c. 12): "*Pythagoras ut animum sua semper divinitate imbueret, priusquam se somno daret et cum esset expergitus, cithara ut ferunt cantare consueverat, et Asclepiades medicus phreneticorum mentes morbo turbatas sæpe per symphoniam suæ naturæ reddidit.*"—Vers. 17, 18. When Saul commanded them to seek out a good player upon a stringed instrument in accordance with this advice, one of the youths (נְעָרִים, a lower class of court servants) said, "*I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, skilled in playing, and a brave man, and a man of war, eloquent, and a handsome man, and Jehovah is with him.*" The description of David as "*a mighty man*" and "*a man of war*" does not presuppose that David had already fought bravely in war, but may be perfectly explained from what David himself afterwards affirmed respecting his conflicts with lions and bears (ch. xvii. 34, 35). The courage and strength which he had then displayed furnished sufficient proofs of heroism for any one to discern in him the future warrior.—Vers. 19, 20. Saul thereupon sent to ask Jesse for his son David; and Jesse sent him with a present of an ass's burden of bread, a bottle of wine, and a buck-kid. Instead of the singular expression חֲמֹר לֶחֶם, an ass with bread, *i.e.* laden with bread, the LXX. read חֲמֹר לֶחֶם, and rendered it γόμου ἄπρων; but this is certainly wrong, as they were not accustomed to measure bread in bushels. These presents show how simple were the customs of Israel and in the court of Saul at that time.—Ver. 21. When David came to Saul and stood before

him, *i.e.* served him by playing upon his harp, Saul took a great liking to him, and nominated him his armour-bearer, *i.e.* his adjutant, as a proof of his satisfaction with him, and sent to Jesse to say, "*Let David stand before me,*" *i.e.* remain in my service, "*for he has found favour in my sight.*" The historian then adds (ver. 23): "*When the (evil) spirit of God came to Saul* (^{לַסָּד}, as in ch. xix. 9, is really equivalent to ^{לַיָּד}), *and David took the harp and played, there came refreshing to Saul, and he became well, and the evil spirit departed from him.*" Thus David came to Saul's court, and that as his benefactor, without Saul having any suspicion of David's divine election to be king of Israel. This guidance on the part of God was a school of preparation to David for his future calling. In the first place, he was thereby lifted out of his quiet and homely calling in the country into the higher sphere of court-life; and thus an opportunity was afforded him not only for intercourse with men of high rank, and to become acquainted with the affairs of the kingdom, but also to display those superior gifts of his intellect and heart with which God had endowed him, and thereby to gain the love and confidence of the people. But at the same time he was also brought into a severe school of affliction, in which his inner man was to be trained by conflicts from without and within, so that he might become a man after God's heart, who should be well fitted to found the true monarchy in Israel.

DAVID'S VICTORY OVER GOLIATH.—CHAP. XVII. 1-54.

A war between the Philistines and the Israelites furnished David with the opportunity of displaying before Saul and all Israel, and greatly to the terror of the enemies of his people, that heroic power which was firmly based upon his bold and pious trust in the omnipotence of the faithful covenant God (vers. 1-3). A powerful giant, named Goliath, came forward from the ranks of the Philistines, and scornfully challenged the Israelites to produce a man who would decide the war by a single combat with him (vers. 4-11). David, who had returned home for a time from the court of Saul, and had just been sent into the camp by his father with provisions for his elder brothers who were serving in the army, as soon as he heard the challenge and the scornful words of the Philistine, offered to fight with

him (vers. 15-37), and killed the giant with a stone from a sling; whereupon the Philistines took to flight, and were pursued by the Israelites to Gath and Ekron (vers. 38-54).

Vers. 1-11. Some time after David first came to Saul for the purpose of playing, and when he had gone back to his father to Bethlehem, probably because Saul's condition had improved, the Philistines made a fresh attempt to subjugate the Israelites. They collected their army together (*machaneh*, as in Ex. xiv. 24, Judg. iv. 16) to war at *Shochoh*, the present *Shuweikeh*, in the Wady *Sumt*, three hours and a half to the south-west of Jerusalem, in the hilly region between the mountains of Judah and the plain of Philistia (see at Josh. xv. 35), and encamped between *Shochoh* and *Azekah*, at *Ephes-dammim*, which has been preserved in the ruins of *Damûm*, about an hour and a half east by north of Shuweikeh; so that *Azekah*, which has not yet been certainly traced, must be sought for to the east or north-east of Damûm (see at Josh. x. 10).—Vers. 2, 3. Saul and the Israelites encamped opposite to them in the *terebinth* valley (*Emek ha-Elah*), i.e. a plain by the Wady *Musur*, and stood in battle array opposite to the Philistines, in such order that the latter stood *on that side against the mountain* (on the slope of the mountain), and the Israelites *on this side against the mountain*; and the valley (עמק, the deeper cutting made by the brook in the plain) *was between them*.—Vers. 4 sqq. And the (well-known) *champion* came out of the camps of the Philistines (יָמִי שֶׁלֵּמִי, the middle-man, who decides a war between two armies by a single combat; Luther, “the giant,” according to the ἀνὴρ δυνάτος of the LXX., although in ver. 23 the Septuagint translators have rendered the word correctly ἀνὴρ ὁ ἀμεσσαῖος, which is probably only another form of ὁ μεσαῖος), named *Goliath* of Gath, one of the chief cities of the Philistines, where there were Anakim still left, according to Josh. xi. 22. His height was *six cubits and a span* (6½ cubits), i.e., according to the calculation made by Thenius, about nine feet two inches Parisian measure,—a great height no doubt, though not altogether unparalleled, and hardly greater than that of the great uncle of Iren, who came to Berlin in the year 1857 (see Pentateuch, vol. iii. p. 303, note).¹ The armour

¹ According to Pliny (h. n. vii. 16), the giant *Pusio* and the giantess *Secundilla*, who lived in the time of Augustus, were ten feet three inches

of Goliath corresponded to his gigantic stature: "a helmet of brass upon his head, and clothed in scale armour, the weight of which was five thousand shekels of brass." The meaning scales is sustained by the words שָׁשְׁקִים in Lev. xi. 9, 10, and Deut. xiv. 9, 10, and שָׁשְׁקִים in Ezek. xxix. 4. שָׁרִיף קְשָׁשִׁים, therefore, is not *θώραξ ἀλυσιδωτός* (LXX.), a coat of mail made of rings worked together like chains, such as were used in the army of the Seleucidæ (1 Macc. vi. 35), but according to Aquila's *φολιδωτόν* (scaled), a coat made of plates of brass lying one upon another like scales, such as we find upon the old Assyrian sculptures, where the warriors fighting in chariots, and in attendance upon the king, wear coats of scale armour, descending either to the knees or ankles, and consisting of scales of iron or brass, which were probably fastened to a shirt of felt or coarse linen (see Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 335). The account of the weight, 5000 shekels, *i.e.* according to Thenius, 148 Dresden pounds, is hardly founded upon the actual weighing of the coat of mail, but probably rested upon a general estimate, which may have been somewhat too high, although we must bear in mind that the coat of mail not only covered the chest and back, but, as in the case of the Assyrian warriors, the lower part of the body also, and therefore must have been very large and very heavy.¹—Ver. 6. And "greaves of brass upon his feet, and a brazen lance (hung) between his shoulders," *i.e.* upon his back. קִיָּוִן signifies a lance, or small spear. The LXX. and Vulgate, however, adopt the rendering *ἀσπίς χαλκῇ*, *clypeus æneus*; and Luther has followed them, and translates

(Roman) in height; and a Jew is mentioned by Josephus (*Ant.* xviii. 4, 5), who was seven cubits in height, *i.e.* ten Parisian feet, or if the cubits are Roman, nine and a half.

¹ According to Thenius, the cuirass of *Augustus* the Strong, which has been preserved in the historical museum at Dresden, weighed fifty-five pounds; and from that he infers, that the weight given as that of Goliath's coat of mail is by no means too great. Ewald, on the other hand, seems to have no idea of the nature of the Hebrew weights, or of the bodily strength of a man, since he gives 5000 lbs. of brass as the weight of Goliath's coat of mail (*Gesch.* iii. p. 90), and merely observes that the pounds were of course much smaller than ours. But the shekel did not even weigh so much as our full ounce. With such statements as these you may easily turn the historical character of the scriptural narrative into incredible myths; but they cannot lay any claim to the name of science.

it a brazen shield. Thenius therefore proposes to alter בִּידֶן into בֵּן, because the expression "between his shoulders" does not appear applicable to a spear or javelin, which Goliath must have suspended by a strap, but only to a small shield slung over his back, whilst his armour-bearer carried the larger בֵּן in front of him. But the difficulty founded upon the expression "*between his shoulders*" has been fully met by Bochart (*Hieroz.* i. 2, c. 8), in the examples which he cites from Homer, Virgil, etc., to prove that the ancients carried their own swords slung over their shoulders (ἀμφὶ δ' ὤμοισιν: *Il.* ii. 45, etc.). And Josephus understood the expression in this way (*Ant.* vi. 9, 1). Goliath had no need of any shield to cover his back, as this was sufficiently protected by the coat of mail. Moreover, the allusion to the בִּידֶן in ver. 45 points to an offensive weapon, and not to a shield.—Ver. 7. "*And the shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and the point of it six hundred shekels of iron*" (about seventeen pounds). For יָד, according to the *Keri* and the parallel passages, 2 Sam. xxi. 19, 1 Chron. xx. 5, we should read יָז, wood, i.e. a shaft. Before him went the bearer of the zinnah, i.e. the great shield.—Ver. 8. This giant stood and cried to the ranks of the Israelites, "*Why come ye out to place yourselves in battle array? Am I not the Philistine, and ye the servants of Saul? Choose ye out a man who may come down to me*" (into the valley where Goliath was standing). The meaning is: "Why would you engage in battle with us? I am the man who represents the strength of the Philistines, and ye are only servants of Saul. If ye have heroes, choose one out, that we may decide the matter in a single combat."—Ver. 9. "*If he can fight with me, and kill me, we will be your servants; if I overcome him, and slay him, ye shall be our servants, and serve us.*" He then said still further (ver. 10), "*I have mocked the ranks of Israel this day* (the mockery consisted in his designating the Israelites as servants of Saul, and generally in the triumphant tone in which he issued the challenge to single combat); *give me a man, that we may fight together!*"—Ver. 11. At these words Saul and all Israel were dismayed and greatly afraid, because not one of them dared to accept the challenge to fight with such a giant.

Vers. 12-31. *David's arrival in the camp, and wish to fight with Goliath.*—David had been dismissed by Saul at that time,

and having returned home, he was feeding his father's sheep once more (vers. 12-15). Now, when the Israelites were standing opposite to the Philistines, and Goliath was repeating his challenge every day, David was sent by his father into the camp to bring provisions to his three eldest brothers, who were serving in Saul's army, and to inquire as to their welfare (vers. 16-19). He arrived when the Israelites had placed themselves in battle array; and running to his brethren in the ranks, he saw Goliath come out from the ranks of the Philistines, and heard his words, and also learned from the mouth of an Israelite what reward Saul would give to any one who would defeat this Philistine (vers. 20-25). He then inquired more minutely into the matter; and having thereby betrayed his own intention of trying to fight with him (vers. 26, 27), he was sharply re-proved by his eldest brother in consequence (vers. 28, 29). He did not allow this to deter him, however, but turned to another with the same question, and received a similar reply (ver. 30); whereupon his words were told to the king, who ordered David to come before him (ver. 31). This is, in a condensed form, the substance of the section, which introduces the conquest of Goliath by David in the character of an episode. This first heroic deed was of the greatest importance to David and all Israel, for it was David's first step on the way to the throne, to which Jehovah had resolved to raise him. This explains the fulness and circumstantiality of the narrative, in which the intention is very apparent to set forth most distinctly the marvellous overruling of all the circumstances by God himself. And this circumstantiality of the account is closely connected with the form of the narrative, which abounds in repetitions, that appear to us tautological in many instances, but which belong to the characteristic peculiarities of the early Hebrew style of historical composition.¹

¹ On account of these repetitions and certain apparent differences, the LXX. (*Cod. Vat.*) have omitted the section from ver. 12 to ver. 31, and also that from ver. 55 to ch. xviii. 5; and on the ground of this omission, Houbigant, Kennicott, Michaelis, Eichhorn, Dathe, Bertheau, and many others, have pronounced both these sections later interpolations; whereas the more recent critics, such as De Wette, Thenius, Ewald, Bleek, Stähelin, and others, reject the hypothesis that they are interpolations, and infer from the supposed discrepancies that ch. xvii. and xviii. were written by some one who was ignorant of the facts mentioned in ch. xvi., and was

Vers. 12-15 are closely connected with the preceding words, "*All Israel was alarmed at the challenge of the Philistine; but David the son of that Ephratite (Ephratite, as in Ruth i. 1, 2) of Bethlehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse,*" etc. The verb and predicate do not follow till ver. 15; so that the words occur here in the form of an anacolouthon. The traditional introduction of the verb הָיָה between וְדָוִד and בֶּן-אִישׁ (David was the son of that Ephratite) is both erroneous and misleading. If the words were to be understood in this way, הָיָה could no more be omitted here than הָיָה in 2 Chron. xxii. 3, 11. The true explanation is rather, that vers. 12-15 form one period expanded by parentheses, and that the historian lost sight of

altogether a different person from the author of this chapter. According to ch. xvi. 21 sqq., they say, David was Saul's armour-bearer already, and his family connections were well known to the king, whereas, according to ch. xvii. 15, David was absent just at the time when he ought as armour-bearer to have been in attendance upon Saul; whilst in ch. xvii. 33 he is represented as a shepherd boy who was unaccustomed to handle weapons, and as being an unauthorized spectator of the war, and, what is still more striking, even his lineage is represented in vers. 55 sqq. as unknown both to Ahner and the king. Moreover, in ver. 12 the writer introduces a notice concerning David with which the reader must be already well acquainted from ch. xvi. 5 sqq., and which is therefore, to say the least, superfluous; and in ver. 54 Jerusalem is mentioned in a manner which does not quite harmonize with the history, whilst the account of the manner in which he disposed of Goliath's armour is apparently at variance with ch. xxi. 9. But the notion, that the sections in question are interpolations that have crept into the text, cannot be sustained on the mere authority of the Septuagint version; since the arbitrary manner in which the translators of this version made omissions or additions at pleasure is obvious to any one. Again, the assertion that these sections cannot well be reconciled with ch. xvi., and emanated from an author who was unacquainted with the history in ch. xvi., is overthrown by the unquestionable reference to ch. xvi. which we find in ver. 12, "David the son of *that* Ephratite,"—where Jerome has correctly paraphrased הַזֶּה, *de quo supra dictum est*,—and also by the remark in ver. 15, that David went backwards and forwards from Saul to feed his father's sheep in Bethlehem. Neither of these can be pronounced interpolations of the compiler, unless the fact can be established that the supposed discrepancies are really well founded. But it by no means follows, that because Saul loved David on account of the beneficial effect which his playing upon the harp produced upon his mind, and appointed him his armour-bearer, therefore David had really to carry the king's armour in time of war. The appointment of armour-bearer was nothing more than conferring upon him the title of aide-de-camp, from which it cannot be

the construction with which he commenced in the intermediate clauses; so that he started afresh with the subject **וְדָוִד** in ver. 15, and proceeded with what he had to say concerning David, doing this at the same time in such a form that what he writes is attached, so far as the sense is concerned, to the parenthetical remarks concerning Jesse's eldest sons. To bring out distinctly the remarkable chain of circumstances by which David was led to undertake the conflict with Goliath, he links on to the reference to his father certain further notices respecting David's family and his position at that time. Jesse had eight sons and was an old man in the time of Saul. **בָּא בְּאֶנְשֵׁים**, "*come among the weak.*" **אֲנָשִׁים** generally means, no doubt,

inferred that David had already become well known to the king through the performance of warlike deeds. If Joab, the commander-in-chief, had ten armour-bearers (2 Sam. xviii. 15, compare ch. xxiii. 37), king Saul would certainly have other armour-bearers besides David, and such as were well used to war. Moreover, it is not stated anywhere in ch. xvi. that Saul took David at the very outset into his regular and permanent service, but, according to ver. 22, he merely asked his father Jesse that David might stand before him, *i.e.* might serve him; and there is no contradiction in the supposition, that when his melancholy left him for a time, he sent David back to his father to Bethlehem, so that on the breaking out of the war with the Philistines he was living at home and keeping sheep, whilst his three eldest brothers had gone to the war. The circumstance, however, that when David went to fight with Goliath, Saul asked Abner his captain, "Whose son is this youth?" and Abner could give no explanation to the king, so that after the defeat of Goliath, Saul himself asked David, "Whose son art thou?" (vers. 55-58), can hardly be comprehended, if all that Saul wanted to ascertain was the name of David's father. For even if Abner had not troubled himself about the lineage of Saul's harpist, Saul himself could not well have forgotten that David was a son of the Bethlehemite Jesse. But there was much more implied in Saul's question. It was not the name of David's father alone that he wanted to discover, but what kind of man the father of a youth who possessed the courage to accomplish so marvellous a heroic deed really was; and the question was put not merely in order that he might grant him an exemption of his house from taxes as the reward promised for the conquest of Goliath (ver. 25), but also in all probability that he might attach such a man to his court, since he inferred from the courage and bravery of the son the existence of similar qualities in the father. It is true that David merely replied, "The son of thy servant Jesse of Bethlehem;" but it is very evident from the expression in ch. xviii. 1, "when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul," that Saul conversed with him still further about his family affairs, since the very words imply a lengthened conversation. The other difficulties are very trivial, and will be answered in connection with the exposition of the passages in question.

people or men. But this meaning does not give any appropriate sense here; and the supposition that the word has crept in through a slip of the pen for בְּשָׁנָיו, is opposed not only by the authority of the early translators, all of whom read אֶלְשִׁים, but also by the circumstance that the expression בְּשָׁנָיו does not occur in the whole of the Old Testament, and that בְּיָמָיו alone is used with this signification.—Ver. 13. “*The three great (i.e. eldest) sons of Jesse had gone behind Saul into the war.*” הָלָכוּ, which appears superfluous after the foregoing הָלָכוּ, has been defended by Böttcher, as necessary to express the pluperfect, which the thought requires, since the *imperfect consec.* הָלָכוּ, when attached to a substantive and participial clause, merely expresses the force of the aorist. Properly, therefore, it reads thus: “*And then (in Jesse’s old age) the three eldest sons followed, had followed, Saul;*” a very ponderous construction indeed, but quite correct, and even necessary, with the great deficiency of forms, to express the pluperfect. The names of these three sons agree with ch. xvi. 6-9, whilst the third, *Shammah*, is called *Shimeah* (שִׁמְעָה) in 2 Sam. xiii. 3, 32, שִׁמְעִי in 2 Sam. xxi. 21, and שִׁמְעָה in 1 Chron. ii. 13, xx. 7.—Ver. 15. “*But David was going and returning away from Saul:*” i.e. he went backwards and forwards from Saul to feed his father’s sheep in Bethlehem; so that he was not in the permanent service of Saul, but at that very time was with his father. The latter is to be supplied from the context.—Ver. 16. The Philistine drew near (to the Israelitish ranks) morning and evening, and stationed himself for forty days (in front of them). This remark continues the description of Goliath’s appearance, and introduces the account which follows. Whilst the Philistine was coming out every day for forty days long with his challenge to single combat, Jesse sent his son David into the camp. “*Take now for thy brethren this ephah of parched grains (see Lev. xxiii. 14), and these ten loaves, and bring them quickly into the camp to thy brethren.*”—Ver. 18. “*And these ten slices of soft cheese (so the ancient versions render it) bring to the chief captain over thousand, and visit thy brethren to inquire after their welfare, and bring with you a pledge from them*”—a pledge that they are alive and well. This seems the simplest explanation of the word עֶרְבָּהָם, of which very different renderings were given by the early translators.—Ver. 19. “*But Saul and they*

(the brothers), and the whole of the men of Israel, are in the terebinth valley," etc. This statement forms part of Jesse's words.—Vers. 20, 21. In pursuance of this commission, David went in the morning to the waggon-rampart, when the army, which was going out (of the camp) into battle array, raised the war-cry, and Israel and the Philistines placed themselves battle-array against battle-array. וַיִּהְיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל וּפְלִשְׁתִּים בַּמַּלְחָמָה is a circumstantial clause, and the predicate is introduced with וַיִּהְיוּ, as וַיִּהְיוּ is placed at the head absolutely: "and as for the army which, etc., it raised a shout." וַיִּהְיוּ בַּמַּלְחָמָה, lit. to make a noise in war, i.e. to raise a war-cry.—Ver. 22. David left the vessels with the provisions in the charge of the keeper of the vessels, and ran into the ranks to inquire as to the health of his brethren.—Ver. 23. Whilst he was talking with them, the champion (middle-man) Goliath drew near, and spoke according to those words (the words contained in vers. 8 sqq.), and David heard it. מִמְּעֻזּוֹת פֶּלִי is probably an error for מִמְּעֻזּוֹת פֶּלִי (Keri, LXX., Vulg.; cf. ver. 26). If the *Chethibh* were the proper reading, it would suggest an Arabic word signifying a crowd of men (Dietrich on *Ges. Lex.*).—Vers. 24, 25. All the Israelites fled from Goliath, and were sore afraid. They said וַיֹּאמְרוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל is a collective noun), "Have ye seen this man who is coming? הֲרֹאִיָּהוּ, with *Dagesh dirim.* as in ch. x. 24.) Surely to defy Israel is he coming; and whoever shall slay him, the king will enrich him with great wealth, and give him his daughter, and make his father's house (i.e. his family) free in Israel," viz. from taxes and public burdens. There is nothing said afterwards about the fulfilment of these promises. But it by no means follows from this, that the statement is to be regarded as nothing more than an exaggeration, that had grown up among the people, of what Saul had really said. There is all the less probability in this, from the fact that, according to ver. 27, the people assured him again of the same thing. In all probability Saul had actually made some such promises as these, but did not feel himself bound to fulfil them afterwards, because he had not made them expressly to David himself.—Ver. 26. When David heard these words, he made more minute inquiries from the bystanders about the whole matter, and dropped some words which gave rise to the supposition that he wanted to go and fight with this Philistine himself. This is implied in the

words, "*For who is the Philistine, this uncircumcised one (i.e. standing as he does outside the covenant with Jehovah), that he insults the ranks of the living God!*" whom he has defied in His army. "He must know," says the *Berleburger Bible*, "that he has not to do with men, but with God. With a living God he will have to do, and not with an idol."—Ver. 28. David's eldest brother was greatly enraged at his talking thus with the men, and reproved David: "*Why hast thou come down (from Bethlehem, which stood upon high ground, to the scene of the war), and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the desert?*" "*Those few sheep,*" the loss of only one of which would be a very great loss to our family. "*I know thy presumption, and the wickedness of thy heart; for thou hast come down to look at the war;*" i.e. thou art not contented with thy lowly calling, but aspirest to lofty things; it gives thee pleasure to look upon bloodshed. Eliab sought for the splinter in his brother's eye, and was not aware of the beam in his own. The very things with which he charged his brother—presumption and wickedness of heart—were most apparent in his scornful reproof.—Vers. 29, 30. David answered very modestly, and so as to put the scorn of his reprover to shame: "*What have I done, then? It was only a word*"—a very allowable inquiry certainly. He then turned from him (Eliab) to another who was standing by; and having repeated his previous words, he received the same answer from the people.—Ver. 31. David's words were told to Saul, who had him sent for immediately.

Vers. 32-40. *David's resolution to fight with Goliath; and his equipment for the conflict.*—Ver. 32. When in the presence of Saul, David said, "*Let no man's heart (i.e. courage) fail on his account (on account of the Philistine, about whom they had been speaking): thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.*"—Vers. 33 sqq. To Saul's objection that he, a mere youth, could not fight with this Philistine, a man of war from his youth up, David replied, that as a shepherd he had taken a sheep out of the jaws of a lion and a bear, and had also slain them both. The article before *לִי־יָדָה* and *יָדָה* points out these animals as the well-known beasts of prey. By the expression *וְאַחֲרָיוֹהוּ* the bear is subordinated to the lion, or rather placed afterwards, as something which came in addition to it; so that *לִי־יָדָה* is to be taken as a *nota accus.* (vid. Ewald, § 277, a), though it is not to

be understood as implying that the lion and the bear went together in search of prey. The subordination or addition is merely a logical one: not only the lion, but also the bear, which seized the sheep, did David slay. וְהַיֵּשׁ֩ , which we find in most of the editions since the time of Jac. Chayim, 1525, is an error in writing, or more correctly in hearing, for וְהַיֵּשׁ֩ , a sheep. "*And I went out after it; and when it rose up against me, I seized it by its beard, and smote it, and killed it.*" וְהַיֵּשׁ֩ , beard and chin, signifies *the bearded chin*. Thenius proposes, though without any necessity, to alter וְהַיֵּשׁ֩ into וְהַיֵּשׁ֩ , for the simple but weak reason, that neither lions nor bears have any actual beard. We have only to think, for example, of the $\lambda\acute{\iota}\varsigma\ \eta\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\iota\omicron\varsigma$ in Homer (*Il.* xv. 275, xvii. 109), or the *barbam vellere mortuo leoni* of Martial (x. 9). Even in modern times we read of lions having been killed by Arabs with a stick (see Rosenmüller, *Bibl. Althk.* iv. 2, pp. 132-3). The constant use of the *singular* suffix is sufficient to show, that when David speaks of the lion and the bear, he connects together two different events, which took place at different times, and then proceeds to state how he smote both the one and the other of the two beasts of prey.—Ver. 36. "*Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and the Philistine, this uncircumcised one, shall become like one of them (i.e. the same thing shall happen to him as to the lion and the bear), because he has defied the ranks of the living God.*" "*And,*" he continued (ver. 37), "*the Lord who delivered me out of the hand (the power) of the lion and the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.*" David's courage rested, therefore, upon his confident belief that the living God would not let His people be defied by the heathen with impunity. Saul then desired for him the help of the Lord in carrying out his resolution, and bade him put on his own armour-clothes, and gird on his armour. כְּתָוִי (his clothes) signifies probably a peculiar kind of clothes which were worn under the armour, a kind of armour-coat to which the sword was fastened.—Vers. 39, 40. When he was thus equipped with brazen helmet, coat of mail, and sword, David began to walk, but soon found that he could do nothing with these. He therefore said to Saul, "*I cannot go in these things, for I have not tried them;*" and having taken them off, he took his shepherd's staff in his hand, sought out five smooth stones from the brook-valley, and put them in the shepherd's thing that he

had, namely his shepherd's bag. He then took the sling in his hand, and went up to the Philistine. In the exercise of his shepherd's calling he may have become so skilled in the use of the sling, that, like the Benjaminites mentioned in Judg. xx. 16, he could sling at a hair's-breadth, and not miss.

Vers. 41-54. *David and Goliath: fall of Goliath, and flight of the Philistines.*—Ver. 41. The Philistine came closer and closer to David.—Vers. 42 sqq. When he saw David, “*he looked at him, and despised him,*” i.e. he looked at him contemptuously, because he was a youth (as in ch. xvi. 12); “*and then said to him, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with sticks?*” (the plural מַקְלֹת is used in contemptuous exaggeration of the armour of David, which appeared so thoroughly unfit for the occasion); “*and cursed David by his God* (i.e. making use of the name of Jehovah in his cursing, and thus defying not David only, but the God of Israel also), *and finished with the challenge, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh to the birds of heaven and the beasts of the field*” (to eat). It was with such threats as these that Homer's heroes used to defy one another (*vid.* Hector's threat, for example, in *Il.* xiii. 831-2).—Vers. 45 sqq. David answered this defiance with bold, believing courage: “*Thou comest to me with sword, and javelin, and lance; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Sabaoth, the God of the ranks of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will Jehovah deliver thee into my hand; and I shall smite thee, and cut off thine head, and give the corpse of the army of the Philistines to the birds this day. . . . And all the world shall learn that Israel hath a God; and this whole assembly shall discover that Jehovah bringeth deliverance (victory) not by sword and spear: for war belongeth to Jehovah, and He will give you into our hand.*” Whilst Goliath boasted of his strength, David founded his own assurance of victory upon the Almighty God of Israel, whom the Philistine had defied. *יְהוָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל* is to be taken collectively. *יְהוָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל* does not mean “God is for Israel,” but “Israel hath a God,” so that *Elohim* is of course used here in a pregnant sense. This *God* is Jehovah; war is his, i.e. He is the Lord of war, who has both war and its results in His power.—Vers. 48, 49. When the Philistine rose up, drawing near towards David (וַיֵּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ simply serve to set forth the occurrence in a more pictorial manner), *David hastened and ran to the battle array to meet him*, took a stone out

of his pocket, hurled it, and hit the Philistine on his temples, so that the stone entered them, and Goliath fell upon his face to the ground.—Ver. 50 contains a remark by the historian with reference to the result of the conflict : “*Thus was David stronger than the Philistine, with sling and stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him without a sword in his hand.*” And then in ver. 51 the details are given, namely, that David cut off the head of the fallen giant with his own sword. Upon the downfall of their hero the Philistines were terrified and fled ; whereupon the Israelites rose up with a cry to pursue the flying foe, and pursued them “*to a valley, and to the gates of Ekron.*” The first place mentioned is a very striking one. The “*valley*” cannot mean the one which divided the two armies, according to ver. 3, not only because the article is wanting, but still more from the facts themselves. For it is neither stated, nor really probable, that the Philistines had crossed that valley, so as to make it possible to pursue them into it again. But if the word refers to some other valley, it seems very strange that nothing further should be said about it. Both these circumstances render the reading itself, גַּת, suspicious, and give great probability to the conjecture that גַּת is only a copyist’s error for *Gath*, which is the rendering given by the LXX., especially when taken in connection with the following clause, “*to Gath and to Ekron*” (ver. 52).—Ver. 52. “*And wounded of the Philistines fell on the way to Shaaraim, and to Gath and to Ekron.*” *Shaaraim* is the town of *Saarayim*, in the lowland of Judah, and has probably been preserved in the Tell *Kefr Zakariya* (see at Josh. xv. 36). On *Gath* and *Ekron*, see at Josh. xiii. 3.—Ver. 53. After returning from the pursuit of the flying foe, the Israelites plundered the camp of the Philistines. לָקַח אַחֲרָיו, to pursue hotly, as in Gen. xxxi. 36.—Ver. 54. But David took the head of Goliath and brought it to Jerusalem, and put his armour in his tent. מִקְדָּשׁ is an antiquated term for a dwelling-place, as in ch. iv. 10, xiii. 2, etc. The reference is to David’s house at Bethlehem, to which he returned with the booty after the defeat of Goliath, and that by the road which ran past Jerusalem, where he left the head of Goliath. There is no anachronism in these statements ; for the assertion made by some, that Jerusalem was not yet in the possession of the Israelites, rests upon a confusion between the citadel of Jebus upon Zion, which

was still in the hands of the Jebusites, and the city of Jerusalem, in which Israelites had dwelt for a long time (see at Josh. xv. 63, and Judg. i. 8). Nor is there any contradiction between this statement and ch. xxi. 9, where Goliath's sword is said to have been preserved in the tabernacle at Nob : for it is not affirmed that David *kept* Goliath's armour in his own home, but only that he took it thither ; and the supposition that Goliath's sword was afterwards deposited by him in the sanctuary in honour of the Lord, is easily reconcilable with this. Again, the statement in ch. xviii. 2, to the effect that, after David's victory over Goliath, Saul did not allow him to return to his father's house any more, is by no means at variance with this explanation of the verse before us. For the statement in question must be understood in accordance with ch. xvii. 15, viz. as signifying that from that time forward Saul did not allow David to return to his father's house to keep the sheep as he had done before, and by no means precludes his paying brief visits to Bethlehem.

JONATHAN'S FRIENDSHIP. SAUL'S JEALOUSY AND PLOTS
AGAINST DAVID.—CHAP. XVII. 55-XVIII. 30.

David's victory over Goliath was a turning-point in his life, which opened the way to the throne. But whilst this heroic deed brought him out of his rural shepherd life to the scene of Israel's conflict with its foes, and in these conflicts Jehovah crowned all his undertakings with such evident success, that the Israelites could not fail to discern more and more clearly in him the man whom God had chosen as their future king ; it brought him, on the other hand, into such a relation to the royal house, which had been rejected by God, though it still continued to reign, as produced lasting and beneficial results in connection with his future calling. In the king himself, from whom the Spirit of God had departed, there was soon stirred up such jealousy of David as his rival to whom the kingdom would one day come, that he attempted at first to get rid of him by stratagem ; and when this failed, and David's renown steadily increased, he proceeded to open hostility and persecution. On the other hand, the heart of Jonathan clung more and more firmly to David with self-denying love and sacrifice. This friendship on the part of the brave and noble son of the

king, not only helped David to bear the more easily all the enmity and persecution of the king when plagued by his evil spirit, but awakened and strengthened in his soul that pure feeling of unswerving fidelity towards the king himself, which amounted even to love of his enemy, and, according to the marvellous counsel of the Lord, contributed greatly to the training of David for his calling to be a king after God's own heart. In the account of the results which followed David's victory over Goliath, not only for himself but also for all Israel, the friendship of Jonathan is mentioned first (ver. 55—ch. xviii. 5); and this is followed by an account of the growing jealousy of Saul in its earliest stages (vers. 6–30).

Ch. xvii. 55–xviii. 5. *Jonathan's friendship*.—Vers. 55–58. The account of the relation into which David was brought to Saul through the defeat of Goliath is introduced by a supplementary remark, in vers. 55, 56, as to a conversation which took place between Saul and his commander-in-chief Abner concerning David, whilst he was fighting with the giant. So far, therefore, as the actual meaning is concerned, the verbs in vers. 55 and 56 should be rendered as pluperfects. When Saul saw the youth walk boldly up to meet the Philistine, he asked Abner whose son he was; whereupon Abner assured him with an oath that he did not know. In our remarks concerning the integrity of this section (p. 177) we have already observed, with regard to the meaning of the question put by Saul, that it does not presuppose an actual want of acquaintance with the person of David and the name of his father, but only ignorance of the social condition of David's family, with which both Abner and Saul may hitherto have failed to make themselves more fully acquainted.¹—Vers. 57, 58. When David returned "*from the slaughter of the Philistine*," i.e. after the defeat of Goliath, and when Abner, who probably went as commander to meet the brave hero and congratulate him upon his victory, had brought him to Saul, the king addressed the same question to David, who immediately gave him the information he desired. For it is evident that David said more than is

¹ The common solutions of this apparent discrepancy, such as that Saul pretended not to know David, or that his question is to be explained on the supposition that his disease affected his memory, have but little probability in them, although Karkar still adheres to them.

here communicated, viz. "*the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite*," as we have already observed, from the words of ch. xviii. 1, which presuppose a protracted conversation between Saul and David. The only reason, in all probability, why this conversation has not been recorded, is that it was not followed by any lasting results either for Jesse or David.

Ch. xviii. 1-5. The bond of friendship which Jonathan formed with David was so evidently the main point, that in ver. 1 the writer commences with the love of Jonathan to David, and then after that proceeds in ver. 2 to observe that Saul took David to himself from that day forward; whereas it is very evident that Saul told David, either at the time of his conversation with him or immediately afterwards, that he was henceforth to remain with him, *i.e.* in his service. "*The soul of Jonathan bound itself (lit. chained itself; cf. Gen. xlv. 30) to David's soul, and Jonathan loved him as his soul.*" The *Chethibh* וַיִּאָהֶב with the suffix י attached to the imperfect is very rare, and hence the *Keri* וַיִּאָהֶבְהוּ (vid. Ewald, § 249, b, and Olshausen, *Gramm.* p. 469). לָשׁוּב, to return to his house, viz. to engage in his former occupation as shepherd.—Ver. 3. Jonathan made a covenant (*i.e.* a covenant of friendship) and (*i.e.* with) David, because he loved him as his soul.—Ver. 4. As a sign and pledge of his friendship, Jonathan gave David his clothes and his armour. *Meil*, the upper coat or cloak. *Maddim* is probably the armour coat (vid. ch. xvii. 39). This is implied in the word מִדָּבָר, which is repeated three times, and by which the different arms were attached more closely to מִדָּבָר. For the act itself, compare the exchange of armour made by Glaucus and Diomedes (Hom. *Il.* vi. 230). This seems to have been a common custom in very ancient times, as we meet with it also among the early Celts (see Macpherson's *Ossian*).—Ver. 5. And David went out, *sc.* to battle; whithersoever Saul sent him, he acted wisely and prosperously (וַיַּשְׁכֵּחַ, as in Josh. i. 8: see at Deut. xxix. §). Saul placed him above the men of war in consequence, made him one of their commanders; and he pleased all the people, and the servants of Saul also, *i.e.* the courtiers of the king, who are envious as a general rule.

Vers. 6-16. *Saul's jealousy towards David.*¹—Saul had no

¹ The section vers. 6-14 is supposed by Thenius and others to have been taken by the compiler from a different source from the previous one, and

sooner attached the conqueror of Goliath to his court, than he began to be jealous of him. The occasion for his jealousy was the celebration of victory at the close of the war with the Philistines.—Vers. 6, 7. “*When they came,*” *i.e.* when the warriors returned with Saul from the war, “*when* (as is added to explain what follows) *David returned from the slaughter,*” *i.e.* from the war in which he had slain Goliath, the women came out of all the towns of Israel, “*to singing and dancing,*” *i.e.* to celebrate the victory with singing and choral dancing (see the remarks on Ex. xv. 20), “*to meet king Saul with tambourines, with joy, and with triangles.*” שִׁמְחָה is used here to signify expressions of joy, a *fête*, as in Judg. xvi. 23, etc. The striking position in which the word stands, viz. between two musical instruments, shows that the word is to be understood here as referring specially to songs of rejoicing, since according to ver. 7 their playing was accompanied with singing. The women who “*sported*” (שִׁמְחָה), *i.e.* performed mimic dances, sang in alternate choruses (“*answered,*” as in Ex. xv. 21), “*Saul hath slain*

not to have been written by the same author : (1) because the same thing is mentioned in vers. 13, 14, as in ver. 5, though in a somewhat altered form, and vers. 10, 11 occur again in ch. xix. 9, 10, with a few different words, and in a more appropriate connection ; (2) because the contents of ver. 9, and the word מְחֻרָּה in ver. 10, are most directly opposed to vers. 2 and 5. On these grounds, no doubt, the LXX. have not only omitted the beginning of ver. 6 from their version, but also vers. 9–11. But the supposed discrepancy between vers. 9 and 10 and vers. 2 and 5,—viz. that Saul could not have kept David by his side from attachment to him, or have placed him over his men of war after several prosperous expeditions, as is stated in vers. 2 and 5, if he had looked upon him with jealous eyes from the very first day, or if his jealousy had broken out on the second day in the way described in vers. 10, 11,—is founded upon two erroneous assumptions ; viz. (1) that the facts contained in vers. 1–5 were contemporaneous with those in vers. 6–14 ; and (2) that everything contained in these two sections is to be regarded as strictly chronological. But the fact recorded in ver. 2, namely, that Saul took David to himself, and did not allow him to go back to his father's house any more, occurred unquestionably some time earlier than those mentioned in vers. 6 sqq. with their consequences. Saul took David to himself immediately after the defeat of Goliath, and before the war had been brought to an end. But the celebration of the victory, in which the pæan of the women excited jealousy in Saul's mind, did not take place till the return of the people and of the king at the close of the war. How long the war lasted we do not know ; but from the fact that the Israelites pursued the flying Philistines to Gath

his thousands, and David his ten thousands.”—Ver. 8. Saul was enraged at this. The words displeased him, so that he said, “*They have given David ten thousands, and to me thousands, and there is only the kingdom more for him*” (i.e. left for him to obtain). “In this foreboding utterance of Saul there was involved not only a conjecture which the result confirmed, but a deep inward truth: if the king of Israel stood powerless before the subjugators of his kingdom at so decisive a period as this, and a shepherd boy came and decided the victory, this was an additional mark of his rejection” (O. v. Gerlach).—Ver. 9. From that day forward Saul *was looking askance* at David. רָאָה, a denom. verb, from עַיִן, an eye, looking askance, is used for קָרָא (Keri).—Vers. 10, 11. The next day the evil spirit fell upon Saul (“*the evil spirit of God;*” see at ch. xvi. 14), so that he raved *in his house*, and threw his javelin at David, who played before him “*as day by day,*” but did not hit him, because David *turned away before him twice*. הִתְנַחֵם does not

and Ekron, and then plundered the camp of the Philistines after that (ch. xvii. 52, 53), it certainly follows that some days, if not weeks, must have elapsed between David's victory over Goliath and the celebration of the triumph, after the expulsion of the Philistines from the land. Thus far the events described in the two sections are arranged in their chronological order; but for all the rest the facts are arranged antithetically, according to their peculiar character, whilst the consequences, which reached further than the facts that gave rise to them, and were to some extent contemporaneous, are appended immediately to the facts themselves. Thus David's going out whithersoever Saul sent him (ver. 5) may indeed have commenced during the pursuit of the flying Philistines; but it reached far beyond this war, and continued even while Saul was looking upon him with jealous eyes. Ver. 5 contains a general remark, with which the historian brings to a close one side of the relation between David and Saul, which grew out of David's victory. He then proceeds in ver. 6 to give the other side, and rounds off this paragraph also (vers. 14-16) with a general remark, the substance of which resembles, in the main, the substance of ver. 5. At the same time it implies some progress, inasmuch as the delight of the people at the acts performed by David (ver. 5) grew into love to David itself. This same progress is also apparent in ver. 13 (“*Saul made him captain over a thousand*”), as compared with ver. 5 (“*Saul set him over the men of war*”). Whether the elevation of David into a captain over a thousand was a higher promotion than his appointment over the men of war, or the latter expression is to be taken as simply a more general or indefinite term, denoting his promotion to the rank of commander-in-chief, is a point which can hardly be determined with certainty.

mean to prophesy in this instance, but “to rave.” This use of the word is founded upon the ecstatic utterances, in which the supernatural influence of the Spirit of God manifested itself in the prophets (see at ch. x. 5). ^{הִפִּיל}, from ^{הָפֵל}, he hurled the javelin, and said (to himself), “*I will pierce David and the wall.*” With such force did he hurl his spear; but David turned away from him, *i.e.* eluded it, twice. His doing so a second time presupposes that Saul hurled the javelin twice; that is to say, he probably swung it twice without letting it go out of his hand,—a supposition which is raised into certainty by the fact that it is not stated here that the javelin entered the wall, as in ch. xix. 10. But even with this view ^{הִפִּיל} is not to be changed into ^{הָפֵל}, as Thenius proposes, since the verb ^{הָפֵל} cannot be proved to have ever the meaning to swing. Saul seems to have held the javelin in his hand as a sceptre, according to ancient custom.—Vers. 12, 13. “*And Saul was afraid of David, because the Spirit of Jehovah was with him, and had departed from Saul;*” he “*removed him therefore from him,*” *i.e.* from his immediate presence, by appointing him chief captain over thousand. In this fear of David on the part of Saul, the true reason for his hostile behaviour is pointed out with deep psychological truth. The fear arose from the consciousness that the Lord had departed from him,—a consciousness which forced itself involuntarily upon him, and drove him to make the attempt, in a fit of madness, to put David to death. The fact that David did not leave Saul immediately after this attempt upon his life, may be explained not merely on the supposition that he looked upon this attack as being simply an outburst of momentary madness, which would pass away, but still more from his firm believing confidence, which kept him from forsaking the post in which the Lord had placed him without any act of his own, until he saw that Saul was plotting to take his life, not merely in these fits of insanity, but also at other times, in calm deliberation (*vid.* ch. xix. 1 sqq.).—Vers. 14 sqq. As chief commander over thousand, he went out and in before the people, *i.e.* he carried out military enterprises, and that so wisely and prosperously, that the blessing of the Lord rested upon all he did. But these successes on David’s part increased Saul’s fear of him, whereas all Israel and Judah came to love him as their leader. David’s success in all that he took

in hand compelled Saul to promote him; and his standing with the people increased with his promotion. But as the Spirit of God had departed from Saul, this only filled him more and more with dread of David as his rival. As the hand of the Lord was visibly displayed in David's success, so, on the other hand, Saul's rejection by God was manifested in his increasing fear of David.

Vers. 17-30. *Craftiness of Saul in the betrothal of his daughters to David.*—Vers. 17 sqq. As Saul had promised to give his daughter for a wife to the conqueror of Goliath (ch. xvii. 25), he felt obliged, by the growing love and attachment of the people to David, to fulfil this promise, and told him that he was ready to do so, with the hope of finding in this some means of destroying David. He therefore offered him his elder daughter *Merab* with words that sounded friendly and kind: "*Only be a brave man to me, and wage the wars of the Lord.*" He called the wars with the Philistines "*wars of Jehovah,*" i.e. wars for the maintenance and defence of the kingdom of God, to conceal his own cunning design, and make David feel all the more sure that the king's heart was only set upon the welfare of the kingdom of God. Whoever waged the wars of the Lord might also hope for the help of the Lord. But Saul had intentions of a very different kind. He thought ("said," *sc.* to himself), "*My hand shall not be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him;*" i.e. I will not put him to death; the Philistines may do that. When Saul's reason had returned, he shrank from laying hands upon David again, as he had done before in a fit of madness. He therefore hoped to destroy him through the medium of the Philistines.—Ver. 18. But David replied with true humility, without suspecting the craftiness of Saul: "*Who am I, and what is my condition in life, my father's family in Israel, that I should become son-in-law to the king?*" *הֵי אֲנִי* is a difficult expression, and has been translated in different ways, as the meaning which suggests itself first (viz. "*what is my life*") is neither reconcilable with the *אֲנִי* (the interrogative personal pronoun), nor suitable to the context. Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 471) and Böttcher give the meaning "*people*" for *אֲנִי*, and Ewald (*Gramm.* § 179, b) the meaning "*family.*" But neither of these meanings can be established. *אֲנִי* seems evidently to signify the condition in life, the relation in which

a person stands to others, and *וְ* is to be explained on the ground that David referred to the persons who formed the class to which he belonged. "*My father's family*" includes all his relations. David's meaning was, that neither on personal grounds, nor on account of his social standing, nor because of his lineage, could he make the slightest pretension to the honour of becoming the son-in-law of the king.—Ver. 19. But Saul did not keep his promise. When the time arrived for its fulfilment, *he gave his daughter to Adriel the Meholathite*, a man of whom nothing further is known.¹—Vers. 20–24. *Michal is married to David*.—The pretext under which Saul broke his promise is not given, but it appears to have been, at any rate in part, that Merab had no love to David. This may be inferred from vers. 17, 18, compared with ver. 20. *Michal, the younger daughter of Saul, loved David*. When Saul was told this, the thing was quite right in his eyes. He said, "*I will give her to him, that she may become a snare to him, and the hand of the Philistines may come upon him*" (sc. if he tries to get the price which I shall require as dowry; cf. ver. 25). He therefore said to David, "*In a second way (בְּשֵׁנִי, as in Job xxxiii. 14) shalt thou become my son-in-law*." Saul said this casually to David; but he made no reply, because he had found out the fickleness of Saul, and therefore put no further trust in his words.—Ver. 22. Saul therefore employed his courtiers to persuade David to accept his offer. In this way we may reconcile in a very simple manner the apparent discrepancy, that Saul is said to have offered his daughter to David himself, and yet he commissioned his servants to talk to David privately of the king's willingness to give him his daughter. The omission of ver. 21b in the Septuagint is to be explained partly from the fact that בְּשֵׁנִי points back to vers. 17–19, which are wanting in this version, and partly also in all probability from the idea entertained by the translators that the statement itself is at variance with vers. 22 sqq. The courtiers were to talk to David בְּחֵטִי, "*in private*," i.e. as though they were doing it behind the king's back.—Ver. 23. David replied to the courtiers, "*Does it seem to you a little thing to become son-in-law to the king, seeing that I*

¹ Vers. 17–19 are omitted from the Septuagint version; but they are so, no doubt, only because Saul's first promise was without result so far as David was concerned.

am a poor and humble man?" "Poor," i.e. utterly unable to offer anything like a suitable dowry to the king. This reply was given by David in perfect sincerity, since he could not possibly suppose that the king would give him his daughter without a considerable marriage portion.—Vers. 24 sqq. When this answer was reported to the king, he sent word through his courtiers what the price was for which he would give him his daughter. He required no dowry (see at Gen. xxxiv. 12), but only a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, *i.e.* the slaughter of a hundred Philistines, and the proof that this had been done, to avenge himself upon the enemies of the king; whereas, as the writer observes, Saul supposed that he should thus cause David to fall, *i.e.* bring about his death by the hand of the Philistines.—Vers. 26, 27. But David was satisfied with Saul's demand, since he had no suspicion of his craftiness, and loved Michal. Even before the days were full, *i.e.* before the time appointed for the delivery of the dowry and for the marriage had arrived, he rose up with his men, smote two hundred Philistines, and brought their foreskins, which were placed in their full number before the king; whereupon Saul was obliged to give him Michal his daughter to wife. The words "*and the days were not full*" (ver. 26) form a circumstantial clause, which is to be connected with the following sentence, "*David arose,*" etc. David delivered twice the price demanded. "*They made them full to the king,*" *i.e.* they placed them in their full number before him.—Vers. 28, 29. The knowledge of the fact that David had carried out all his enterprises with success had already filled the melancholy king with fear. But when the failure of this new plan for devoting David to certain death had forced the conviction upon him that Jehovah was with David, and that he was miraculously protected by Him; and when, in addition to this, there was the love of his daughter Michal to David; his fear of David grew into a lifelong enmity. Thus his evil spirit urged him ever forward to greater and greater hardness of heart.—Ver. 30. The occasion for the practical manifestation of this enmity was the success of David in all his engagements with the Philistines. As often as the princes of the Philistines went out (*sc.* to war with Israel), David acted more wisely and prosperously than all the servants of Saul, so that his name was held in great honour. With this

general remark the way is prepared for the further history of Saul's conduct towards David.

JONATHAN'S INTERCESSION FOR DAVID. SAUL'S RENEWED ATTEMPTS TO MURDER HIM. DAVID'S FLIGHT TO SAMUEL.
—CHAP. XIX.

Vers. 1-7. Jonathan warded off the first outbreak of deadly enmity on the part of Saul towards David. When Saul spoke to his son Jonathan and all his servants about his intention to kill David (לְהַכּוֹת אֶת־דָּוִד, *i.e.* not that they should kill David, but "*that he intended to kill him*"), Jonathan reported this to David, because he was greatly attached to him, and gave him this advice: "*Take heed to thyself in the morning; keep thyself in a secret place, and hide thyself. I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will talk to my father about thee* (דַּבֵּר אֵלָיו, as in Deut. vi. 7, Ps. lxxxvii. 3, etc., to talk of or about a person), *and see what* (*sc.* he will say), *and show it to thee.*" David was to conceal himself in the field near to where Jonathan would converse with his father about him; not that he might hear the conversation in his hiding-place, but that Jonathan might immediately report to him the result of his conversation, without there being any necessity for going far away from his father, so as to excite suspicion that he was in league with David.—Vers. 4, 5. Jonathan then endeavoured with all the modesty of a son to point out most earnestly to his father the grievous wickedness involved in his conduct towards David. "*Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; for he hath not sinned against thee, and his works are very good* (*i.e.* very useful) *to thee. He hath risked his life* (see at Judg. xii. 3), *and smitten the Philistines, and Jehovah hath wrought a great salvation of all Israel. Thou hast seen it, and rejoiced; and wherefore wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?*"—Vers. 6, 7. These words made an impression upon Saul. He swore, "*As Jehovah liveth, he (David) shall not be put to death;*" whereupon Jonathan reported these words to David, and brought him to Saul, so that he was with him again as before. But this reconciliation, unfortunately, did not last long.

Vers. 8-17. Another great defeat which David had inflicted

upon the Philistines excited Saul to such an extent, that in a fit of insanity he endeavoured to pierce David with his javelin as he was playing before him. The words *Ruach Jehovah* describe the attack of madness in which Saul threw the javelin at David according to its higher cause, and that, as implied in the words *Ruach Jehovah* in contrast with *Ruach Elohim* (ch. xviii. 10, xvi. 15), as inflicted upon him by Jehovah. The thought expressed is, that the growth of Saul's melancholy was a sign of the hardness of heart to which Jehovah had given him up on account of his impenitence. David happily escaped this javelin also. He slipped away from Saul, so that he hurled the javelin into the wall; whereupon David fled and escaped the same night, *i.e.* the night after this occurrence. This remark somewhat anticipates the course of the events, as the author, according to the custom of Hebrew historians, gives the result at once, and then proceeds to describe in detail the more exact order of the events.—Ver. 11. “*Saul sent messengers to David's house,*” to which David had first fled, “*to watch him* (that he might not get away again), *and to put him to death in the (next) morning.*” Michal made him acquainted with this danger, and then let him down through the window, so that he escaped. The danger in which David was at that time is described by him in Ps. lix., from which we may see how Saul was surrounded by a number of cowardly courtiers, who stirred up his hatred against David, and were busily engaged in getting the dreaded rival out of the way.—Vers. 13, 14. Michal then took the *teraphim*,—*i.e.* in all probability an image of the household gods of the size of life, and, judging from what follows, in human form,—laid it in the bed, and put a piece of woven goats' hair *at his head*, *i.e.* either round or over the head of the image, and *covered it with the garment* (*begeg*, the upper garment, which was generally only a square piece of cloth for wrapping round), and told the messengers whom Saul had sent to fetch him that he was ill. Michal probably kept *teraphim* in secret, like Rachel, because of her barrenness (see at Gen. xxxi. 19). The meaning of פְּבִיר הָעֵימִים is doubtful. The earlier translators took it to mean goat-skin, with the exception of the Seventy, who confounded פְּבִיר with כִּבֶּר, *liver*, upon which Josephus founds his account of Michal having placed a still moving goat's liver in the bed, to make the messengers believe that there was a

breathing invalid beneath. כְּבִיר, from כָּבַד, signifies something woven, and עֵיִם goats' hair, as in Ex. xxv. 4. But it is impossible to decide with certainty what purpose the cloth of goats' hair was to serve; whether it was merely to cover the head of the teraphim with hair, and so make it like a human head, or to cover the head and face as if of a person sleeping. The definite article not only before תְּרָפִים and בְּנֵי, but also with הָעֵיִם, suggests the idea that all these things belonged to Michal's house furniture, and that כְּבִיר עֵיִם was probably a counterpane made of goats' hair, with which persons in the East are in the habit of covering the head and face when sleeping.—Vers. 15 sqq. But when Saul sent the messengers again to see David, and that with the command, "*Bring him up to me in the bed,*" and when they only found the teraphim in the bed, and Saul charged Michal with this act of deceit, she replied, "*He (David) said to me, Let me go; why should I kill thee?*"—"Behold, teraphim were (laid) in the bed." The verb can be naturally supplied from ver. 13. In the words "*Why should I kill thee?*" Michal intimates that she did not mean to let David escape, but was obliged to yield to his threat that he would kill her if she continued to refuse. This prevarication she seems to have considered perfectly justifiable.

Vers. 18-24. David fled to Samuel at Ramah, and reported to him all that Saul had done, partly to seek for further advice from the prophet who had anointed him, as to his further course, and partly to strengthen himself, by intercourse with him, for the troubles that still awaited him. He therefore went along with Samuel, and dwelt with him in *Naioth*. נֵיִת (to be read נֵיִת according to the *Chethibh*, for which the Masoretes have substituted the form נֵיִת, vers. 19, 23, and xx. 1), from נָה or נָה, signifies dwellings; but here it is in a certain sense a proper name, applied to the *coenobium* of the pupils of the prophets, who had assembled round Samuel in the neighbourhood of Ramah. The plural נֵיִת points to the fact, that this *coenobium* consisted of a considerable number of dwelling-places or houses, connected together by a hedge or wall.—Vers. 19, 20. When Saul was told where this place was, he sent messengers to fetch David. But as soon as the messengers saw the company of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came upon them, so that

they also prophesied. The singular **נִרְאָה** is certainly very striking here; but it is hardly to be regarded as merely a copyist's error for the plural **נִרְאָה**, because it is extremely improbable that such an error as this should have found universal admission into the MSS.; so that it is in all probability to be taken as the original and correct reading, and understood either as relating to the leader of the messengers, or as used because the whole company of messengers were regarded as one body. The *ἀπ. λεγ.* **לְהִקָּה** signifies, according to the ancient versions, an assembly, equivalent to **קְהִלָּה**, from which it arose according to Kinchi and other Rabbins by simple inversion.—Ver. 21. The same thing happened to a second and third company of messengers, whom Saul sent one after another when the thing was reported to him.—Vers. 22 sqq. Saul then set out to Ramah himself, and inquired, as soon as he had arrived at the great pit at *Sechu* (a place near Ramah with which we are not acquainted), where Samuel and David were, and went, according to the answer he received, to the Naioth at Ramah. There the Spirit of God came upon him also, so that he went along prophesying, until he came to the Naioth at Ramah; and there he even took off his clothes, and prophesied before Samuel, and lay there naked all that day, and the whole night as well. **עָרֹם, γυμνός**, does not always signify complete nudity, but is also applied to a person with his upper garment off (cf. Isa. xx. 2; Micah i. 8; John xxi. 7). From the repeated expression "*he also*," in vers. 23, 24, it is not only evident that Saul came into an ecstatic condition of prophesying as well as his servants, but that the prophets themselves, and not merely the servants, took off their clothes like Saul when they prophesied. It is only in the case of **יִפְּלֵ עָרֹם** that the expression "*he also*" is not repeated; from which we must infer, that Saul alone lay there the whole day and night with his clothes off, and in an ecstatic state of external unconsciousness; whereas the ecstasy of his servants and the prophets lasted only a short time, and the clear self-consciousness returned earlier than with Saul. This difference is not without significance in relation to the true explanation of the whole affair. Saul had experienced a similar influence of the Spirit of God before, namely, immediately after his anointing by Samuel, when he met a company of prophets who were prophesying at Gibeah, and he had been thereby changed into

another man (ch. x. 6 sqq.). This miraculous seizure by the Spirit of God was repeated again here, when he came near to the seat of the prophets; and it also affected the servants whom he had sent to apprehend David, so that Saul was obliged to relinquish the attempt to seize him. This result, however, we cannot regard as the principal object of the whole occurrence, as Vatablus does when he says, "The spirit of prophecy came into Saul, that David might the more easily escape from his power." Calvin's remarks go much deeper into the meaning: "God," he says, "changed their (the messengers') thoughts and purpose, not only so that they failed to apprehend David according to the royal command, but so that they actually became the companions of the prophets. And God effected this, that the fact itself might show how He holds the hearts of men in His hand and power, and turns and moves them according to His will." Even this, however, does not bring out the full meaning of the miracle, and more especially fails to explain why the same thing should have happened to Saul in an intensified degree. Upon this point Calvin simply observes, that "Saul ought indeed to have been strongly moved by these things, and to have discerned the impossibility of his accomplishing anything by fighting against the Lord; but he was so hardened that he did not perceive the hand of God: for he hastened to Naioth himself, when he found that his servants mocked him;" and in this proceeding on Saul's part he discovers a sign of his increasing hardness of heart. Saul and his messengers, the zealous performers of his will, ought no doubt to have learned, from what happened to them in the presence of the prophets, that God had the hearts of men in His power, and guided them at His will; but they were also to be seized by the might of the Spirit of God, which worked in the prophets, and thus brought to the consciousness, that Saul's raging against David was fighting against Jehovah and His Spirit, and so to be led to give up the evil thoughts of their heart. Saul was seized by this mighty influence of the Spirit of God in a more powerful manner than his servants were, both because he had most obstinately resisted the leadings of divine grace, and also in order that, if it were possible, his hard heart might be broken and subdued by the power of grace. If, however, he should nevertheless continue obstinately in his rebellion against God, he

would then fall under the judgment of hardening, which would be speedily followed by his destruction. This new occurrence in Saul's life occasioned a renewal of the proverb: "*Is Saul also among the prophets?*" The words "*wherefore they say*" do not imply that the proverb was first used at this time, but only that it received a new exemplification and basis in the new event in Saul's experience. The origin of it has been already mentioned in ch. x. 12, and the meaning of it was there explained.

This account is also worthy of note, as having an important bearing upon the so-called *Schools of the Prophets* in the time of Samuel, to which, however, we have only casual allusions. From the passage before us we learn that there was a company of prophets at Ramah, under the superintendence of Samuel, whose members lived in a common building (בית), and that Samuel had his own house at Ramah (ch. vii. 17), though he sometimes lived in the *Naioth* (cf. vers. 18 sqq.). The origin and history of these schools are involved in obscurity. If we bear in mind, that, according to ch. iii. 1, before the call of Samuel as prophet, the prophetic word was very rare in Israel, and prophecy was not widely spread, there can be no doubt that these unions of prophets arose in the time of Samuel, and were called into existence by him. The only uncertainty is whether there were other such unions in different parts of the land beside the one at Ramah. In ch. x. 5, 10, we find a band of prophesying prophets at Gibeah, coming down from the sacrificial height there, and going to meet Saul; but it is not stated there that this company had its seat at Gibeah, although it may be inferred as probable, from the name "*Gibeah of God*" (see the commentary on ch. x. 5, 6). No further mention is made of these in the time of Samuel; nor do we meet with them again till the times of Elijah and Elisha, when we find them, under the name of *sons of the prophets* (1 Kings xx. 35), living in considerable numbers at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho (vid. 2 Kings iv. 38, ii. 3, 5, 7, 15, iv. 1, vi. 1, ix. 1). According to ch. iv. 38, 42, 43, about a hundred sons of the prophets sat before Elisha at Gilgal, and took their meals together. The number at Jericho may have been quite as great; for fifty men of the sons of the prophets went with Elijah and Elisha to the Jordan (comp. ch. ii. 7 with vers. 16, 17). These passages render it very probable that the sons of the prophets also lived

in a common house. And this conjecture is raised into a certainty by ch. vi. 1 sqq. In this passage, for example, they are represented as saying to Elisha : "The place where we sit before thee is too strait for us ; let us go to the Jordan, and let each one fetch thence a beam, and build ourselves a place to dwell in there." It is true that we might, if necessary, supply לִפְנֵי from ver. 1, after לִשְׁבֹּת שָׁם, "to sit before thee," and so understand the words as merely referring to the erection of a more commodious place of meeting. But if they built it by the Jordan, we can hardly imagine that it was merely to serve as a place of meeting, to which they would have to make pilgrimages from a distance, but can only assume that they intended to live there, and assemble together under the superintendence of a prophet. In all probability, however, only such as were unmarried lived in a common building. Many of them were married, and therefore most likely lived in houses of their own (2 Kings iv. 1 sqq.). We may also certainly assume the same with reference to the unions of prophets in the time of Samuel, even if it is impossible to prove that these unions continued uninterruptedly from the time of Samuel down to the times of Elijah and Elisha. Oehler argues in support of this, "that the historical connection, which can be traced in the influence of prophecy from the time of Samuel forwards, may be most easily explained from the uninterrupted continuance of these supports ; and also that the large number of prophets, who must have been already there according to 1 Kings xviii. 13 when Elijah first appeared, points to the existence of such unions as these." But the historical connection in the influence of prophecy, or, in other words, the uninterrupted succession of prophets, was also to be found in the kingdom of Judah both before and after the times of Elijah and Elisha, and down to the Babylonian captivity, without our discovering the slightest trace of any schools of the prophets in that kingdom. All that can be inferred from 1 Kings xviii. is, that the large number of prophets mentioned there (vers. 4 and 13) were living in the time of Elijah, but not that they were there when he first appeared. The first mission of Elijah to king Ahab (ch. xvii.) took place about three years before the events described in 1 Kings xviii., and even this first appearance of the prophet in the presence of the king is not to be regarded as the commencement of his prophetic labours.

How long Elijah had laboured before he announced to Ahab the judgment of three years' drought, cannot indeed be decided; but if we consider that he received instructions to call Elisha to be his assistant and successor not very long after this period of judgment had expired (1 Kings xix. 16 sqq.), we may certainly assume that he had laboured in Israel for many years, and may therefore have founded unions of the prophets. In addition, however, to the absence of any allusion to the continuance of these schools of the prophets, there is another thing which seems to preclude the idea that they were perpetuated from the time of Samuel to that of Elijah, viz. the fact that the schools which existed under Elijah and Elisha were only to be found in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and never in that of Judah, where we should certainly expect to find them if they had been handed down from Samuel's time. Moreover, Oehler also acknowledges that "the design of the schools of the prophets, and apparently their constitution, were not the same under Samuel as in the time of Elijah." This is confirmed by the fact, that the members of the prophets' unions which arose under Samuel are never called "sons of the prophets," as those who were under the superintendence of Elijah and Elisha invariably are (see the passages quoted above). Does not this peculiar epithet seem to indicate, that the "sons of the prophets" stood in a much more intimate relation to Elijah and Elisha, as their spiritual fathers, than the *הַבָּל הַנְּבִיאִים* or *לְהִקַּח הַנְּבִיאִים* did to Samuel as their president? (1 Sam. xix. 20.) *בְּנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים* does not mean *filii prophetæ*, i.e. sons who are prophets, as some maintain, though without being able to show that *בְּנֵי* is ever used in this sense, but *filii prophetarum*, disciples or scholars of the prophets, from which it is very evident that these sons of the prophets stood in a relation of dependence to the prophets (Elijah and Elisha), i.e. of subordination to them, and followed their instructions and admonitions. They received commissions from them, and carried them out (*vid.* 2 Kings ix. 1). On the other hand, the expressions *הַבָּל* and *לְהִקַּח* simply point to combinations for common working under the presidency of Samuel, although the words *נָצַב עֲלֵיהֶם* certainly show that the direction of these unions, and probably the first impulse to form them, proceeded from Samuel, so that we might also call these societies schools of the prophets.

The opinions entertained with regard to the nature of these unions, and their importance in relation to the development of the kingdom of God in Israel, differ very widely from one another. Whilst some of the fathers (Jerome for example) looked upon them as an Old Testament order of monks; others, such as Tennemann, Meiners, and Winer, compare them to the Pythagorean societies. Kranichfeld supposes that they were free associations, and chose a distinguished prophet like Samuel as their president, in order that they might be able to cement their union the more firmly through his influence, and carry out their vocation with the greater success.¹ The truth lies between these two extremes. The latter view, which precludes almost every relation of dependence and community, is not reconcilable with the name "sons of the prophets," or with ch. xix. 20, where Samuel is said to have stood at the head of the prophesying prophets as נָצַב עֲלֵיהֶם, and has no support whatever in the Scriptures, but is simply founded upon the views of modern times and our ideas of liberty and equality. The prophets' unions had indeed so far a certain resemblance to the monastic orders of the early church, that the members lived together in the same buildings, and performed certain sacred duties in common; but if we look into the aim and purpose of monasticism, they were the very opposite of those of the prophetic life. The prophets did not wish to withdraw from the tumult of the world into solitude, for the purpose of carrying on a contemplative life of holiness in this retirement from the earthly life and its affairs; but their unions were associations formed for the purpose of mental and spiritual training, that they might exert a more powerful influence upon their contemporaries. They were called into existence by chosen instruments of the Lord, such as Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha, whom the Lord had called to be His prophets, and endowed with a peculiar measure of His Spirit for this particular calling, that they might check the decline of religious life in the nation, and bring back the rebellious "to the law and the testimony."

¹ Compare Jerome (*Epist. iv. ad Rustic. Monach.* c. 7): "The sons of the prophets, whom we call the monks of the Old Testament, built themselves cells near the streams of the Jordan, and, forsaking the crowded cities, lived on meal and wild herbs." Compare with this his *Epist. xiii. ad Paulin.* c. 5.

Societies which follow this as their purpose in life, so long as they do not lose sight of it, will only separate and cut themselves off from the external world, so far as the world itself opposes them, and pursues them with hostility and persecution. The name "schools of the prophets" is the one which expresses most fully the character of these associations; only we must not think of them as merely educational institutions, in which the pupils of the prophets received instruction in prophesying or in theological studies.¹ We are not in possession indeed of any minute information concerning their constitution. Prophesying could neither be taught nor communicated by instruction, but was a gift of God which He communicated according to His free will to whomsoever He would. But the communication of this divine gift was by no means an arbitrary thing, but presupposed such a mental and spiritual disposition on the part of the recipient as fitted him to receive it; whilst the exercise of the gift required a thorough acquaintance with the law and the earlier revelations of God, which the schools of the prophets were well adapted to promote. It is therefore justly and generally assumed, that the study of the law and of the history of the divine guidance of Israel formed a leading feature in the occupations of the pupils of the prophets, which also included the cultivation of sacred poetry and music, and united exercises for the promotion of the prophetic inspiration. That the study of the earlier revelations of God was carried on, may be very safely inferred from the fact that from the time of Samuel downwards the writing of sacred history formed an essential part of the prophet's labours, as has been already observed at vol. iv. pp. 9, 10 (translation). The cultivation of sacred music and poetry may be inferred partly from the fact that, according to ch. x. 5, musicians walked in front of the

¹ Thus the Rabbins regarded them as *בתי מדרש*; and the earlier theologians as colleges, in which, as Vitranga expresses it, "philosophers, or if you please theologians, and candidates or students of theology, assembled for the purpose of devoting themselves assiduously to the study of divinity under the guidance of some one who was well skilled as a teacher;" whilst others regarded them as schools for the training of teachers for the people, and leaders in the worship of God. The English Deists—Morgan for example—regarded them as seats of scientific learning, in which the study of history, rhetoric, poetry, natural science, and moral philosophy was carried on.

prophesying prophets, playing as they went along, and partly also from the fact that sacred music not only received a fresh impulse from David, who stood in a close relation to the association of prophets at Ramah, but was also raised by him into an integral part of public worship. At the same time, music was by no means cultivated merely that the sons of the prophets might employ it in connection with their discourses, but also as means of awakening holy susceptibilities and emotions in the soul, and of lifting up the spirit to God, and so preparing it for the reception of divine revelations (see at 2 Kings iii. 15). And lastly, we must include among the spiritual exercises prophesying in companies, as at Gibeah (ch. x. 5) and Ramah (ch. xix. 20).

The outward occasion for the formation of these communities we have to seek for partly in the creative spirit of the prophets Samuel and Elijah, and partly in the circumstances of the times in which they lived. The time of Samuel forms a turning-point in the development of the Old Testament kingdom of God. Shortly after the call of Samuel the judgment fell upon the sanctuary, which had been profaned by the shameful conduct of the priests: the tabernacle lost the ark of the covenant, and ceased in consequence to be the scene of the gracious presence of God in Israel. Thus the task fell upon Samuel, as prophet of the Lord, to found a new house for that religious life which he had kindled, by collecting together into closer communities, those who had been awakened by his word, not only for the promotion of their own faith under his direction, but also for joining with him in the spread of the fear of God and obedience to the law of the Lord among their contemporaries. But just as, in the time of Samuel, it was the fall of the legal sanctuary and priesthood which created the necessity for the founding of schools of the prophets; so in the times of Elijah and Elisha, and in the kingdom of the ten tribes, it was the utter absence of any sanctuary of Jehovah which led these prophets to found societies of prophets, and so furnish the worshippers of Jehovah, who would not bend their knees to Baal, with places and means of edification, as a substitute for what the righteous in the kingdom of Judah possessed in the temple and the Levitical priesthood. But the reasons for the establishment of prophets' schools were not to be found merely in the circumstances of

the times. There was a higher reason still, which must not be overlooked in our examination of these unions, and their importance in relation to the theocracy. We may learn from the fact that the disciples of the prophets who were associated together under Samuel are found prophesying (ch. x. 10, xix. 20), that they were also seized by the Spirit of God, and that the Divine Spirit which moved them exerted a powerful influence upon all who came into contact with them. Consequently the founding of associations of prophets is to be regarded as an operation of divine grace, which is generally manifested with all the greater might where sin most mightily abounds. As the Lord raised up prophets for His people at the times when apostasy had become great and strong, that they might resist idolatry with almighty power; so did He also create for himself organs of His Spirit in the schools of the prophets, who united with their spiritual fathers in fighting for His honour. It was by no means an accidental circumstance, therefore, that these unions are only met with in the times of Samuel and of the prophets Elijah and Elisha. These times resembled one another in the fact, that in both of them idolatry had gained the upper hand; though, at the same time, there were some respects in which they differed essentially from one another. In the time of Samuel the people did not manifest the same hostility to the prophets as in the time of Elijah. Samuel stood at the head of the nation as judge even during the reign of Saul; and after the rejection of the latter, he still stood so high in authority and esteem, that Saul never ventured to attack the prophets even in his madness. Elijah and Elisha, on the other hand, stood opposed to a royal house which was bent upon making the worship of Baal the leading religion of the kingdom; and they had to contend against priests of calves and prophets of Baal, who could only be compelled by hard strokes to acknowledge the Lord of Sabaoth and His prophets. In the case of the former, what had to be done was to bring the nation to a recognition of its apostasy, to foster the new life which was just awakening, and to remove whatever hindrances might be placed in its way by the monarchy. In the time of the latter, on the contrary, what was needed was "a compact phalanx to stand against the corruption which had penetrated so deeply into the nation." These differences in the times would certainly not be

without their influence upon the constitution and operations of the schools of the prophets.

JONATHAN'S LAST ATTEMPT TO RECONCILE HIS FATHER TO DAVID.—CHAP. XX.—XXI. 1.

Vers. 1–11. After the occurrence which had taken place at Naioth, David fled thence and met with Jonathan, to whom he poured out his heart.¹ Though he had been delivered for the moment from the death which threatened him, through the marvellous influence of the divine inspiration of the prophets upon Saul and his messengers, he could not find in this any lasting protection from the plots of his mortal enemy. He therefore sought for his friend Jonathan, and complained to him, “What have I done? what is my crime, my sin before thy father, that he seeks my life?”—Ver. 2. Jonathan endeavoured to pacify him: “*Far be it! thou shalt not die: behold, my father does nothing great or small (i.e. not the smallest thing; cf. ch. xxv. 36 and Num. xxii. 18) that he does not reveal to me; why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so.*” The לֹא after הִנֵּה stands for אֵל: the *Chethibh* הִנֵּה is probably to be preferred to the *Keri* הִנֵּה, and to be understood in this sense: “My father has (hitherto) done nothing at all, which he has not told to me.” This answer of Jonathan does not presuppose that he knew nothing of the occurrences described in ch. xix. 9–24, although it is possible enough that he might not have been with his father just at that time; but it is easily explained from the fact that Saul had made the fresh attack upon David's life in a state of madness, in which he was no longer master of himself; so that it could not be inferred with certainty from this that he would

¹ According to Ewald and Thenius, this chapter was not written by the author of the previous one, but was borrowed from an earlier source, and ver. 1 was inserted by the compiler to connect the two together. But the principal reason for this conjecture—namely, that David could never have thought of sitting at the royal table again after what had taken place, and that Saul would still less have expected him to come—is overthrown by the simple suggestion, that all that Saul had hitherto attempted against David, according to ch. xix. 8 sqq., had been done in fits of insanity (cf. ch. xix. 9 sqq.), which had passed away again; so that it formed no criterion by which to judge of Saul's actual feelings towards David when he was in a state of mental sanity.

still plot against David's life in a state of clear consciousness. Hitherto Saul had no doubt talked over all his plans and undertakings with Jonathan, but he had not uttered a single word to him about his deadly hatred, or his intention of killing David; so that Jonathan might really have regarded his previous attacks upon David's life as nothing more than symptoms of temporary aberration of mind.—Ver. 3. But David had looked deeper into Saul's heart. He replied with an oath ("he swore again," *i.e.* a second time), "*Thy father knoweth that I have found favour in thine eyes (i.e. that thou art attached to me); and thinketh Jonathan shall not know this, lest he be grieved. But truly, as surely as Jehovah liveth, and thy soul liveth, there is hardly a step (lit. about a step) between me and death.*" יׁ introduces the substance of the oath, as in ch. xiv. 44, etc.—Ver. 4. When Jonathan answered, "*What thy soul saith, will I do to thee,*" *i.e.* fulfil every wish, David made this request, "*Behold, to-morrow is new moon, and I ought to sit and eat with the king: let me go, that I may conceal myself in the field (i.e. in the open air) till the third evening.*" This request implies that Saul gave a feast at the new moon, and therefore that the new moon was not merely a religious festival, according to the law in Num. x. 10, xxviii. 11-15, but that it was kept as a civil festival also, and in the latter character for two days; as we may infer both from the fact that David reckoned to the third evening, *i.e.* the evening of the third day from the day then present, and therefore proposed to hide himself on the new moon's day and the day following, and also still more clearly from vers. 12, 27, and 34, where Saul is said to have expected David at table on the day after the new moon. We cannot, indeed, conclude from this that there was a religious festival of two days' duration; nor does it follow, that because Saul supposed that David might have absented himself on the first day on account of Levitical uncleanness (ver. 26), therefore the royal feast was a sacrificial meal. It was evidently contrary to social propriety to take part in a public feast in a state of Levitical uncleanness, even though it is not expressly forbidden in the law.—Ver. 6. "*If thy father should miss me, then say, David hath asked permission of me to hasten to Bethlehem, his native town; for there is a yearly sacrifice for the whole family there.*" This ground of excuse shows that families and households were accustomed to

keep united sacrificial feasts once a year. According to the law in Deut. xii. 5 sqq., they ought to have been kept at the tabernacle; but at this time, when the central sanctuary had fallen into disuse, they were held in different places, wherever there were altars of Jehovah—as, for example, at Bethlehem (cf. ch. xvi. 2 sqq.). We see from these words that David did not look upon prevarication as a sin.—Ver. 7. “*If thy father says, It is well, there is peace to thy servant (i.e. he cherishes no murderous thoughts against me); but if he be very wroth, know that evil is determined by him.*” וְיָדָעְתָּ, to be completed; hence to be firmly and unalterably determined (cf. ch. xxv. 17; Esther vii. 7). Seb. Schmidt infers from the closing words that the fact was certain enough to David, but not to Jonathan. Thenius, on the other hand, observes much more correctly, that “it is perfectly obvious from this that David was not quite clear as to Saul’s intentions,” though he upsets his own previous assertion, that after what David had gone through, he could never think of sitting again at the king’s table as he had done before.—Ver. 8. David made sure that Jonathan would grant this request on account of his friendship, as he had *brought him into a covenant of Jehovah with himself*. David calls the covenant of friendship with Jonathan (ch. xviii. 3) a *covenant of Jehovah*, because he had made it with a solemn invocation of Jehovah. But in order to make quite sure of the fulfilment of his request on the part of Jonathan, David added, “*But if there is a fault in me, do thou kill me* (וְהָרַגְתָּ used to strengthen the suffix); *for why wilt thou bring me to thy father?*” sc. that he may put me to death.—Ver. 9. Jonathan replied, “*This be far from thee!*” sc. that I should kill thee, or deliver thee up to my father. וְלֹא־יָרֵם points back to what precedes, as in ver. 2. “*But* (וְ after a previous negative assertion) *if I certainly discover that evil is determined by my father to come upon thee, and I do not tell it thee,*” sc. “may God do so to me,” etc. The words are to be understood as an asseveration on oath, in which the formula of an oath is to be supplied in thought. This view is apparently a more correct one, on account of the cop. וְ before אֲנִי, than to take the last clause as a question, “Shall I not tell it thee?”—Ver. 10. To this friendly assurance David replied, “*Who will tell me?*” sc. how thy father expresses himself concerning me; “*or what will thy father answer thee roughly?*” sc. if thou shouldst

attempt to do it thyself. This is the correct explanation given by De Wette and Maurer. Gesenius and Thenius, on the contrary, take *is* in the sense of "*if perchance*." But this is evidently incorrect; for even though there are certain passages in which *is* may be so rendered, it is only where some other case is supposed, and therefore the meaning *or* still lies at the foundation. These questions of David were suggested by a correct estimate of the circumstances, namely, that Saul's suspicions would leave him to the conclusion that there was some understanding between Jonathan and David, and that he would take steps in consequence to prevent Jonathan from making David acquainted with the result of his conversation with Saul.—Ver. 11. Before replying to these questions, Jonathan asked David to go with him to the field, that they might there fix upon the sign by which he would let him know, in a way in which no one could suspect, what was the state of his father's mind.

Vers. 12-23. In the field, where they were both entirely free from observation, Jonathan first of all renewed his covenant with David, by vowing to him on oath that he would give him information of his father's feelings towards him (vers. 12, 13); and then entreated him, with a certain presentiment that David would one day be king, even then to maintain his love towards him and his family for ever (vers. 14-16); and lastly, he made David swear again concerning his love (ver. 17), and then gave him the sign by which he would communicate the promised information (vers. 18-23).—Vers. 12 and 13a are connected. Jonathan commences with a solemn invocation of God: "*Jehovah, God of Israel!*" and thus introduces his oath. We have neither to supply "*Jehovah is witness*," nor "*as truly as Jehovah liveth*," as some have suggested. "*When I inquire of my father about this time to-morrow, the day after to-morrow* (a concise mode of saying 'to-morrow or the day after'), *and behold it is* (stands) *well for David, and then I do not send to thee and make it known to thee, Jehovah shall do so to Jonathan*," etc. ("The Lord do so," etc., the ordinary formula used in an oath: see ch. xiv. 44). The other case is then added without an adversative particle: "*If it should please my father evil against thee* (lit. as regards evil), *I will make it known to thee, and let thee go, that thou mayest go in peace; and Jehovah be with thee, as He has been with my father*." In this wish there is

expressed the presentiment that David would one day occupy that place in Israel which Saul occupied then, *i.e.* the throne. —In vers. 14 and 15 the Masoretic text gives no appropriate meaning. Luther's rendering, in which he follows the Rabbins and takes the first לֹא (ver. 14) by itself, and then completes the sentence from the context ("but if I do it not, show me no mercy, because I live, not even if I die"), contains indeed a certain permissible sense when considered in itself; but it is hardly reconcilable with what follows, "*and do not tear away thy compassion for ever from my house.*" The request that he would show no compassion to him (Jonathan) even if he died, and yet would not withdraw his compassion from his house for ever, contains an antithesis which would have been expressed most clearly and unambiguously in the words themselves, if this had been really what Jonathan intended to say. De Wette's rendering gives a still more striking contradiction: "*But let not (Jehovah be with thee) if I still live, and thou showest not the love of Jehovah to me, that I die not, and thou withdrawest not thy love from my house for ever.*" There is really no other course open than to follow the Syriac and Arabic, as Maurer, Thenius, and Ewald have done, and change the לֹא in the first two clauses of ver. 14 into וְלֹא or וְלֹא , according to the analogy of the form לֹא (ch. xiv. 30), and to render the passage thus: "And mayest thou, if I still live, mayest thou show to me the favour of the Lord, and not if I die, not withdraw thy favour from my house for ever, not even (וְלֹא) when Jehovah shall cut off the enemies of David, every one from the face of the earth!" "*The favour of Jehovah*" is favour such as Jehovah shows to His people. The expression "when Jehovah shall cut off," etc., shows very clearly Jonathan's conviction that Jehovah would give to David a victory over all his enemies.—Ver. 16. Thus Jonathan concluded a covenant with the house of David, namely, by bringing David to promise kindness to his family for ever. The word בְּרִית must be supplied in thought to וְיָרִית , as in ch. xxii. 8 and 2 Chron. vii. 18. "*And Jehovah required it (what Jonathan had predicted) at the hand of David's enemies.*" Understood in this manner, the second clause contains a remark of the historian himself, namely, that Jonathan's words were really fulfilled in due time. The traditional rendering of וַיִּבְרָשׁ as a relative preterite, with אָמַר

understood, "*and said, Let Jehovah take vengeance,*" is not only precluded by the harshness of the introduction of the word "saying," but still more by the fact, that if אָמַר (saying) is introduced between the copula *vav* and the verb בָּקַשׁ, the perfect cannot stand for the optative בִּקְשׁ, as in Josh. xxii. 23.

—Ver. 17. "*And Jonathan adjured David again by his love to him, because he loved him as his own soul*" (cf. ch. xviii. 1, 3); *i.e.* he once more implored David most earnestly with an oath to show favour to him and his house.—Vers. 18 sqq. He then discussed the sign with him for letting him know about his father's state of mind: "*To-morrow is new moon, and thou wilt be missed, for thy seat will be empty,*" *sc.* at Saul's table (see at ver. 5). "*And on the third day come down quickly (from thy sojourning place), and go to the spot where thou didst hide thyself on the day of the deed, and place thyself by the side of the stone Ezel.*" The first words in this (19th) verse are not without difficulty. The meaning "on the third day" for the verb שָׁלַח cannot be sustained by parallel passages, but is fully established, partly by הַשְּׁלִישִׁית, the third day, and partly by the Arabic usage (*vid.* Ges. *Thes.* s. v.). מָאָר after יָרַד, *lit.* "*go violently down,*" is more striking still. Nevertheless the correctness of the text is not to be called in question, since שָׁלַח is sustained by *τρισεύσει* in the Septuagint, and יָרַד מָאָר by *descende ergo festinus* in the Vulgate, and also by the rendering in the Chaldee, Arabic, and Syriac versions, "*and on the third day thou wilt be missed still more,*" which is evidently merely a conjecture founded upon the context. The meaning of הַיּוֹם הַמַּעֲשֶׂה is doubtful. Gesenius, De Wette, and Maurer render it "*on the day of the deed,*" and understand it as referring to Saul's deed mentioned in ch. xix. 2, *viz.* his design of killing David; others render it "*on the day of business,*" *i.e.* the working day (Luther, after the LXX. and Vulgate), but this is not so good a rendering. The best is probably that of Thenius, "*on the day of the business*" (which is known to thee). Nothing further can be said concerning the stone Ezel than that Ezel is a proper name.—Ver. 20. "*And I will shoot off three arrows to the side of it (the stone Ezel), to shoot for me at the mark,*" *i.e.* as if shooting at the mark. The article attached to הַחֲצִים is either to be explained as denoting that the historian assumed the thing as already well known, or on the supposition

that Jonathan went to the field armed, and when giving the sign pointed to the arrows in his quiver. In the word צַרְחָה the *Raphe* indicates that the suffix of צַרְחָה is not a mere toneless ה, although it has no mappik, having given up its strong breathing on account of the harsh צ sound.—Ver. 21. “*And, behold (הִנֵּה), directing attention to what follows as the main point), I will send the boy (saying), Go, get the arrows. If I shall say to the boy, Behold, the arrows are from thee hitherwards, fetch them; then come, for peace is to thee, and it is nothing, as truly as Jehovah liveth.*”—Ver. 22. “*But if I say to the youth, Behold, the arrows are from thee farther off; then go, for Jehovah sendeth thee away,*” i.e. bids thee flee. The appointment of this sign was just as simple as it was suitable to the purpose.—Ver. 23. This arrangement was to remain an eternal secret between them. “*And (as for) the word that we have spoken, I and thou, behold, the Lord is between me and thee for ever,*” namely, a witness and judge in case one of us two should break the covenant (vid. Gen. xxxi. 48, 49). This is implied in the words, without there being any necessity to assume that עַר had dropped out of the text. “*The word*” refers not merely to the sign agreed upon, but to the whole matter, including the renewal of the bond of friendship.

Vers. 24–34. David thereupon concealed himself in the field, whilst Jonathan, as agreed upon, endeavoured to apologize for his absence from the king’s table.—Vers. 24, 25. On the new moon’s day Saul sat at table, and as always, at his seat by the wall, i.e. at the top, just as, in eastern lands at the present day, the place of honour is the seat in the corner (see *Harmar Beobachtungen* ii. pp. 66 sqq.). “*And Jonathan rose up, and Abner seated himself by the side of Saul, and David’s place remained empty.*” The difficult passage, “*And Jonathan rose up,*” etc., can hardly be understood in any other way than as signifying that, when Abner entered, Jonathan rose from his seat by the side of Saul, and gave up the place to Abner, in which case all that is wanting is an account of the place to which Jonathan moved. Every other attempted explanation is exposed to much graver difficulties. The suggestion made by Gesenius, that the cop. ׁ should be supplied before אָבְנֵר, and יֹשֵׁב referred to Jonathan (“and Jonathan rose up and sat down, and Abner (sat

down) by the side of Saul”), as in the Syriac, is open to this objection, that in addition to the necessity of supplying γ , it is impossible to see why Jonathan should have risen up for the purpose of sitting down again. The rendering “and Jonathan came,” which is the one adopted by Maurer and De Wette, cannot be philologically sustained; inasmuch as, although בָּא is used to signify rise up, in the sense of the occurrence of important events, or the appearance of celebrated persons, it never means simply “to come.” And lastly, the conjecture of Thenius, that וַיָּבֹא should be altered into וַיִּקָּבֵץ , according to the senseless rendering of the LXX., *προέφθασε τὸν Ἰονάθαν*, is overthrown by the fact, that whilst בָּא does indeed mean to anticipate or come to meet, it never means to sit in front of, *i.e.* opposite to a person.—Ver. 26. On this (first) day Saul said nothing, *sc.* about David’s absenting himself, “*for he thought there has (something) happened to him, that he is not clean; surely (וַיָּבֹא) he is not clean*” (*vid.* Lev. xv. 16 sqq.; Deut. xxiii. 11).—Vers. 27 sqq. But on the second day, the day after the new moon (*lit. the morrow after the new moon, the second day*: $\text{וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם הַשֵּׁנִי}$ is a nominative, and to be joined to וַיְהִי , and not a genitive belonging to $\text{וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם הַשֵּׁנִי}$), when David was absent from table again, Saul said to Jonathan, “*Why is the son of Jesse not come to meat, neither yesterday nor to-day?*” Whereupon Jonathan answered, as arranged with David (compare vers. 28 and 29 with ver. 6). “*And my brother, he hath commanded me,*” *i.e.* ordered me to come. וַיִּצְוֵה as in Ex. vi. 13, and וַיִּצְוֵהוּ , the elder brother, who was then at the head of the family, and arranged the sacrificial meal.—Vers. 30, 31. Saul was greatly enraged at this, and said to Jonathan, “*Son of a perverse woman (וַיְהִי בְּעֵינַי) is a participle, Niph. fem. from וַיְהִי of rebellion,*”—*i.e.* son of a perverse and rebellious woman (an insult offered to the mother, and therefore so much the greater to the son), hence the meaning really is, “*Thou perverse, rebellious fellow,*”—“*do I not know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own shame, and to the shame of thy mother’s nakedness?*” בְּחַר , to choose a person out of love, to take pleasure in a person; generally construed with ב *pers.*, here with ל , although many Codd. have ב here also. “*For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the earth, thou and thy kingdom (kingship, throne) will not stand.*” Thus Saul evidently suspected David as his rival, who would either wrest the

government from him, or at any rate after his death from his son. "*Now send and fetch him to me, for he is a child of death,*" i.e. he has deserved to die, and shall be put to death.—Vers. 32 sqq. When Jonathan replied, "*My father, why shall he die? what has he done?*" Saul was so enraged that he hurled his javelin at Jonathan (cf. ch. xviii. 11). Thus Jonathan saw that his father had firmly resolved to put David to death, and rose up from the table in fierce anger, and did not eat that day; for he was grieved concerning David, because his father had done him shame. פָּלָה is a substantive in the sense of unalterable resolution, like the verb in ver. 9. בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא הָרַשׁ הָשִׁיב, on the second day of the new moon or month.

Vers. 35–42. The next morning Jonathan made David acquainted with what had occurred, by means of the sign agreed upon with David. The account of this, and of the meeting between Jonathan and David which followed, is given very concisely, only the main points being touched upon. In the morning (after what had occurred) Jonathan went to the field, לְמוֹעֵד דָּוִד, either "*at the time agreed upon with David,*" or "*to the meeting with David,*" or perhaps better still, "*according to the appointment (agreement) with David,*" and a small boy with him.—Ver. 36. To the latter he said, namely as soon as they had come to the field, Run, get the arrows which I shoot. The boy ran, and he shot off the arrows, "*to go out beyond him,*" i.e. so that the arrows flew farther than the boy had run. The form הָיָי for הָיָ only occurs in connection with disjunctive accents; beside the present chapter (vers. 36, 37, 38, *Chethibh*) we find it again in 2 Kings ix. 24. The singular is used here with indefinite generality, as the historian did not consider it necessary to mention expressly, after what he had previously written, that Jonathan shot off three arrows one after another.—Ver. 37. When the boy came to the place of the shot arrow (i.e. to the place to which the arrow had flown), Jonathan called after him, "*See, the arrow is (lies) away from thee, farther off;*" and again, "*Quickly, haste, do not stand still,*" that he might not see David, who was somewhere near; and the boy picked up the arrow and came to his lord. The *Chethibh* הָיָי is evidently the original reading, and the singular is to be understood as in ver. 37; the *Keri* הָיָיִם is an emendation, according to the meaning of the words. The writer here introduces the remark in ver. 39,

that the boy knew nothing of what had been arranged between Jonathan and David.—Ver. 40. Jonathan then gave the boy his things (bow, arrows, and quiver), and sent him with them to the town, that he might be able to converse with David for a few seconds after his departure, and take leave of him unobserved.—Ver. 41. When the boy had gone, *David rose* (from his hiding-place) *from the south side, fell down upon his face to the ground, and bowed three times* (before Jonathan); they then kissed each other, and wept for one another, “*till David wept strongly*,” i.e. to such a degree that David wept very loud. מֵאֵצֶל הַנֶּגֶב, “*from the side of the south*,” which is the expression used to describe David’s hiding-place, according to its direction in relation to the place where Jonathan was standing, has not been correctly rendered by any of the early translators except Aquila and Jerome. In the Septuagint, the Chaldee, the Syriac, and the Arabic, the statement in ver. 19 is repeated, simply because the translators could not see the force of מֵאֵצֶל הַנֶּגֶב, although it is intelligible enough in relation to what follows, according to which David fled from thence *southwards to Nob*.—Ver. 42. All that is given of the conversation between the two friends is the parting word spoken by Jonathan to David: “*Go in peace. What we two have sworn in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever:*” sc. let it stand, or let us abide by it. The clause contains an aposiopesis, which may be accounted for from Jonathan’s deep emotion, and in which the apodosis may be gathered from the sense. For it is evident, from a comparison of ver. 23, that the expression “for ever” must be understood as forming part of the oath.—Ch. xxi. 1. David then set out upon his journey, and Jonathan returned to the town. This verse ought, strictly speaking, to form the conclusion of ch. xx.¹ The subject to “*arose*” is David; not because Jonathan was the last one spoken of (Thenius), but because the following words, “and Jonathan came,” etc., are in evident antithesis to “he arose and went.”

¹ In our English version it does; but in the Hebrew, which is followed here, it forms the opening verse of ch. xxi. In the exposition of the following chapter it has been thought better to follow the numbering of the verses in our version rather than that of the original, although the latter is conformed to the Hebrew.—Tr.

DAVID'S FLIGHT TO NOB, AND THENCE TO GATH.—

CHAP. XXI. 2-16.

After the information which David had received from Jonathan, nothing remained for him in order to save his life but immediate flight. He could not return to the prophets at Ramah, where he had been miraculously preserved from the first outbreak of Saul's wrath, because they could not ensure him permanent protection against the death with which he was threatened. He therefore fled first of all to Nob, to Ahimelech the high priest, to inquire the will of God through him concerning his future course (ch. xxii. 10, 15), and induced him to give him bread and the sword of Goliath also, under the pretext of having to perform a secret commission from the king with the greatest speed; for which Saul afterwards took fearful vengeance upon the priests at Nob when he was made acquainted with the affair through the treachery of Doeg (vers. 1-9). David then fled to Gath to the Philistian king Achish; but here he was quickly recognised as the conqueror of Goliath, and obliged to feign insanity in order to save his life, and then to flee still farther (vers. 10-15). The state of his mind at this time he poured out before God in the words of Ps. lvi., lii., and xxxiv.

Vers. 1-9. *David at Nob*.—The town of *Nob* or *Nobeh* (unless indeed the form נֹבֶה stands for נֹבָה here and in ch. xxii. 9, and the ה attached is merely ה local, as the name is always written נב in other places: *vid.* ch. xxii. 11, 32; 2 Sam. xxi. 16; Isa. x. 32; Neh. xi. 32) was at that time a priests' city (ch. xxii. 19), in which, according to the following account, the tabernacle was then standing, and the legal worship carried on. According to Isa. x. 30, 32, it was between Anathoth (*Anata*) and Jerusalem, and in all probability it has been preserved in the village of *el-Isawiyeh*, *i.e.* probably the village of Esau or Edom, which is midway between Anata and Jerusalem, an hour from the latter, and the same distance to the south-east of Gibeah of Saul (Tell el Phul), and which bears all the marks of an ancient place, partly in its dwellings, the stones of which date from a great antiquity, and partly in many marble columns which are found there (*vid.* Tobler, *Topogr. v. Jerusalem* ii. p. 720). Hence v. Raumer (*Pal.* p. 215, ed. 4) follows Kiepert

in the map which he has appended to Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, and set down this place as the ancient *Nob*, for which Robinson indeed searched in vain (see *Pal.* ii. p. 150). Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub, most probably the same person as Ahiah (ch. xiv. 3), was "*the priest*," i.e. the high priest (see at ch. xiv. 3). When David came to him, the priest "*went trembling to meet him*" (יִתְרַד לִקְרֹאתוֹ) with the inquiry, "*Why art thou alone, and no one is with thee?*" The unexpected appearance of David, the son-in-law of the king, without any attendants, alarmed Ahimelech, who probably imagined that he had come with a commission from the king which might involve him in danger. David had left the few servants who accompanied him in his flight somewhere in the neighbourhood, as we may gather from ver. 2, because he wished to converse with the high priest alone. Ahimelech's anxious inquiry led David to resort to the fabrication described in ver. 2: "*The king hath commanded me a business, and said to me, No one is to know anything of this matter, in which (lit. in relation to the matter with regard to which) I send thee, and which I have entrusted to thee (i.e. no one is to know either the occasion or the nature of the commission); and the servants I have directed to such and such a place.*" יָדַעַת, *Poel*, to cause to know, point, show. Ahimelech had received no information as yet concerning the most recent occurrences between Saul and David; and David would not confess to him that he was fleeing from Saul, because he was evidently afraid that the high priest would not give him any assistance, lest he should draw down the wrath of the king. This falsehood brought the greatest calamities upon Ahimelech and the priests at Nob (ch. xxii. 9-19), and David was afterwards obliged to confess that he had occasioned it all (ch. xxii. 22).—Ver. 3. "*And now what is under thy hand? give into my hand (i.e. hand me) five loaves, or whatever (else) is to be found.*" David asked for five loaves, because he had spoken of several attendants, and probably wanted to make provision for two or three days (Thenius).—Ver. 4. The priest answered that he had no common bread, but only holy bread, viz., according to ver. 6, shew-bread that had been removed, which none but priests were allowed to eat, and that in a sacred place; but that he was willing to give him some of these loaves, as David had said that he was travelling upon an important mission from the

king, provided only that "*the young men had kept themselves at least from women,*" i.e. had not been defiled by sexual intercourse (Lev. xv. 18). If they were clean at any rate in this respect, he would in such a case of necessity depart from the Levitical law concerning the eating of the shew-bread, for the sake of observing the higher commandment of love to a neighbour (Lev. xix. 18; cf. Matt. xii. 5, 6, Mark ii. 25, 26).¹—Ver. 5. David quieted him concerning this scruple, and said, "*Nay, but women have been kept from us since yesterday and the day before.*" The use of *כִּי אִם* may be explained from the fact, that in David's reply he paid more attention to the sense than to the form of the priest's scruple, and expressed himself as concisely as possible. The words, "if the young men have only kept themselves from women," simply meant, if only they are not unclean; and David replied, That is certainly not the case, *but* women have been kept from us; so that *כִּי אִם* has the meaning *but* in this passage also, as it frequently has after a previous negative, which is implied in the thought here as in 2 Sam. xiii. 33. "*When I came out, the young men's things were holy* (Leviticallly clean); *and if it is an unholy way, it becomes even holy through the instrument.*" David does not say that the young men were clean when he came out (for the rendering given to *כִּלְיֵי הַנְּעָרִים* in the Septuagint, *πάντα τὰ παιδάριον*, is without any critical value, and is only a mistaken attempt to explain the word *כִּלְיֵי*, which was unintelligible to the translator), but simply affirms that *כִּלְיֵי הַנְּעָרִים קֳדֵשׁ*, i.e., according to Luther's rendering (*der Knaben Zeug war heilig*), the young men's things (clothes, etc.) were holy. *כִּלְיֵי* does not mean merely vessels, arms, or tools, but also the dress (Deut. xxii. 5), or rather the clothes as well as such things as were most necessary to meet the wants of life. By the *coitus*, or strictly speaking, by the *emissio seminis* in connection with the *coitus*, not only were the persons themselves defiled, but also every article of clothing or leather upon which any of the *semen* fell (Lev. xv. 18); so that it was necessary for the purpose of purification that the things which a man had on should all be washed. David explains, with evident allusion to this provision, that the young

¹ When Mark (ii. 26) assigns this action to the days of Abiathar the high priest, the statement rests upon an error of memory, in which Ahimelech is confounded with Abiathar.

men's things were holy, *i.e.* perfectly clean, for the purpose of assuring the priest that there was not the smallest Levitical uncleanness attaching to them. The clause which follows is to be taken as conditional, and as supposing a possible case: "*and if it is an unholy way.*" דָּרָךְ, the way that David was going with his young men, *i.e.* his purpose or enterprise, by which, however, we are not to understand his request of holy bread from Ahimelech, but the performance of the king's commission of which he had spoken. וְאֵתָּה בִּי, *lit.* besides (there is) also that, = moreover there is also the fact, that it becomes holy through the instrument; *i.e.*, as O. v. Gerlach has correctly explained it, "on the supposition of the important royal mission, upon which David pretended to be sent, *through me* as an ambassador of the anointed of the Lord," in which, at any rate, David's meaning really was, "the way was sanctified before God, when he, as His chosen servant, the preserver of the true kingdom of God in Israel, went to him in his extremity." That בִּי in the sense of instrument is also applied to *men*, is evident from Isa. xiii. 5 and Jer. l. 25.—Ver. 6. The priest then gave him (what was) holy, namely the shew-loaves "*that were taken from before Jehovah,*" *i.e.* from the holy table, upon which they had lain before Jehovah for seven days (*vid.* Lev. xxiv. 6-9).—In ver. 7 there is a parenthetical remark introduced, which was of great importance in relation to the consequences of this occurrence. There at the sanctuary there was a man of Saul's servants, נֶעְצָר, *i.e.* "*kept back (shut off) before Jehovah:*" *i.e.* at the sanctuary of the tabernacle, either for the sake of purification or as a proselyte, who wished to be received into the religious communion of Israel, or because of supposed leprosy, according to Lev. xiii. 4. His name was Doeg the Edomite, אֶבְיִיר הָעֵדְוִיטִים, "*the strong one (i.e. the overseer) of the herdsmen of Saul.*"¹—Ver. 8.

¹ The Septuagint translators have rendered these words νέμων τὰς ἡμιόνας, "feeding the mules of Saul;" and accordingly in ch. xxii. 9 also they have changed Saul's servants into mules, in accordance with which Thenius makes Doeg the upper herdsman of Saul. But it is very evident that the text of the LXX. is nothing more than a subjective interpretation of the expression before us, and does not presuppose any other text, from the simple fact that all the other ancient versions are founded upon the Hebrew text both here and in ch. xxii. 9, including even the Vulgate (*potentissimus pastorum*); and the clause contained in some of the MSS. of the Vulgate (*hic pascebat mulas Saul*) is nothing more than a gloss that has

David also asked Ahimelech whether he had not a sword or a javelin at hand; "*for I have neither brought my sword nor my (other) weapons with me, because the affair of the king was pressing*," i.e. very urgent, נְהִיץ, ἀπ. λει., literally, compressed.—Ver. 9. The priest replied, that there was only the sword of Goliath, whom David slew in the terebinth valley (ch. xvii. 2), wrapped up in a cloth hanging behind the ephod (the high priest's shoulder-dress),—a sign of the great worth attached to this dedicatory offering. He could take that. David accepted it, as a weapon of greater value to him than any other, because he had not only taken this sword as booty from the Philistine, but had cut off the head of Goliath with it (see ch. xvii. 51). When and how this sword had come into the tabernacle is not known (see the remarks on ch. xvii. 54). The form בַּיָּדָה for בַּיָּדָה is only met with here. On the *Piska*, see at Josh. iv. 1.

Vers. 10-15. *David with Achish at Gath*.—David fled from Nob to Achish of Gath. This Philistian king is called *Abimelech* in the heading of Ps. xxxiv., according to the standing title of the Philistian princes at Gath. The fact that David fled at once out of the land, and that to the Philistines at Gath, may be accounted for from the great agitation into which he had been thrown by the information he had received from Jonathan concerning Saul's implacable hatred. As some years had passed since the defeat of Goliath, and the conqueror of Goliath was probably not personally known to many of the Philistines, he might hope that he should not be recognised in Gath, and that he might receive a welcome there with his few attendants, as a fugitive who had been driven away by Saul, the leading foe of the Philistines.¹ But in this he

crept in from the Itala; and this is still more obvious in ch. xxii. 9, where נָצַב is applicable enough to עֶבְרִי, but is altogether unsuitable in connection with פָּרָדִי, since נָצַב is no more applied in Hebrew to herdsmen or keepers of animals, than we should think of speaking of presidents of asses, horses, etc. Moreover, it is not till the reign of David that we read of mules being used as riding animals by royal princes (2 Sam. xiii. 29, xviii. 9); and they are mentioned for the first time as beasts of burden, along with asses, camels, and oxen, in 1 Chron. xii. 40, where they are said to have been employed by the northern tribes to carry provisions to Hebron to the festival held at the recognition of David as king. Before David's time the sons of princes rode upon asses (*vid.* Judg. x. 4, xii. 14).

¹ This removes the objection raised by modern critics to the historical

was mistaken. He was recognised at once by the courtiers of Achish. They said to their prince, "*Is not this David the king of the land? Have they not sung in circles, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?*" (cf. ch. xviii. 6, 7.) "*King of the land*" they call David, not because his anointing and divine election were known to them, but on account of his victorious deeds, which had thrown Saul entirely into the shade. Whether they intended by these words to celebrate David as a hero, or to point him out to their prince as a dangerous man, cannot be gathered from the words themselves, nor can the question be decided with certainty at all (cf. ch. xxix. 5).—Ver. 12. But David took these words to heart, and was in great fear of Achish, lest he should treat him as an enemy, and kill him. In order to escape this danger, "*he disguised his understanding (i.e. pretended to be out of his mind) in their eyes (i.e. before the courtiers of Achish), behaved insanely under their hands (when they tried to hold him as a madman), scribbled upon the door-wings, and let his spittle run down into his beard.*" The suffix to וַיִּשְׁכַּח is apparently superfluous, as the object, אֶת־מַטְעָמוֹ, follows immediately afterwards. But it may be accounted for from the circumstantiality of the conversation of every-day life, as in 2 Sam. xiv. 6, and (though these cases are not perfectly parallel) Ex. ii. 6, Prov. v. 22, Ezek. x. 3 (cf. Gesenius' *Gramm.* § 121, 6, Anm. 3). וַיִּשְׁכַּח, from שָׁחַח, to make signs, i.e. to scribble. The Sept.

credibility of the narrative before us, namely, that David would certainly not have taken refuge at once with the Philistines, but would only have gone to them in the utmost extremity (Thenius). It is impossible to see how the words "*he fled that day for fear of Saul*" (ver. 11) are to prove that this section originally stood in a different connection, and are only arbitrarily inserted here (Thenius). Unless we tear away the words in the most arbitrary manner from the foregoing word וַיִּבְרַח, they not only appear quite suitable, but even necessary, since David's journey to Abimelech was not a flight, or at all events it is not described as a flight in the text; and David's flight from Saul really began with his departure from Nob. Still less can the legendary origin of this account be inferred from the fact that some years afterwards David really did take refuge with Achish in the Philistian country (ch. xxvii. and xxix.), or the conjecture sustained that this is only a distorted legend of that occurrence. For if the later sojourn of David with Achish be a historical fact, the popular legend could not possibly have assumed a form so utterly different as the account before us, to say nothing of the fact that this occurrence has a firm historical support in Ps. xxxiv. 1.

and Vulgate render it *ἐτυμπάνιζεν*, *impingebat*, *he drummed*, smote with his fists upon the wings of the door, which would make it appear as if they had read *הִתְנִיף* (from *הִתְנִיף*), which seems more suitable to the condition of a madman whose saliva ran out of his mouth.—Vers. 14, 15. By this dissimulation David escaped the danger which threatened him; for Achish thought him mad, and would have nothing to do with him. “*Wherefore do ye bring him to me? Have I need of madmen, that ye have brought this man hither to rave against me? Shall this man come into my house?*” Thus Achish refused to receive him into his house. But whether he had David taken over the border, or at any rate out of the town; or whether David went away of his own accord; or whether he was taken away by his servants, and then hurried as quickly as possible out of the land of the Philistines, is not expressly mentioned, as being of no importance in relation to the principal object of the narrative. All that is stated is, that he departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam.

DAVID'S WANDERINGS IN JUDAH AND MOAB. MASSACRE OF
PRIESTS BY SAUL.—CHAP. XXII.

Vers. 1–5. Having been driven away by Achish, the Philistian king at Gath, David took refuge in the cave Adullam, where his family joined him. The cave *Adullam* is not to be sought for in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, as some have inferred from 2 Sam. xxiii. 13, 14, but near the town *Adullam*, which is classed in Josh. xv. 35 among the towns in the lowlands of Judah, and at the foot of the mountains; though it has not yet been traced with any certainty, as the caves of *Deir Dubban*, of which Van de Velde speaks, are not the only large caves on the western slope of the mountains of Judah. When his brethren and his father's house, *i.e.* the rest of his family, heard of his being there, they came down to him, evidently because they no longer felt themselves safe in Bethlehem from Saul's revenge. The cave Adullam cannot have been more than three hours from Bethlehem, as Socoh and Jarmuth, which were near to Adullam, were only three hours and a half from Jerusalem (see at Josh. xii. 15).—Ver. 2. There a large number of malcontents gathered together round David, *viz.* all who

were in distress, and all who had creditors, and all who were embittered in spirit (bitter of soul), *i.e.* people who were dissatisfied with the general state of affairs or with the government of Saul,—about four hundred men, whose leader he became. David must in all probability have stayed there a considerable time. The number of those who went over to him soon amounted to six hundred men (xxiii. 13), who were for the most part brave and reckless, and who ripened into heroic men under the command of David during his long flight. A list of the bravest of them is given in 1 Chron. xii., with which compare 2 Sam. xxiii. 13 sqq. and 1 Chron. xi. 15 sqq. — Vers. 3-5. David proceeded thence to *Mizpeh* in Moab, and placed his parents in safety with the king of the Moabites. His ancestress Ruth was a Moabitess. *Mizpeh*: literally a watch-tower or mountain height commanding a very extensive prospect. Here it is probably a proper name, belonging to a mountain fastness on the high land, which bounded the Arboth Moab on the eastern side of the Dead Sea, most likely on the mountains of Abarim or Pisgah (Deut. xxxiv. 1), and which could easily be reached from the country round Bethlehem, by crossing the Jordan near the point where it entered the Dead Sea. As David came to the king of Moab, the Moabites had probably taken possession of the most southerly portion of the eastern lands of the Israelites; we may also infer this from the fact that, according to ch. xiv. 47, Saul had also made war upon Moab, for *Mizpeh Moab* is hardly to be sought for in the actual land of the Moabites, on the south side of the Arnou (Mojeb). מִצְפֵּה . . . מוֹאָב, "*May my father and my mother go out with you.*" The construction of מִצְפֵּה with מוֹאָב is a pregnant one: to go out of their home and stay with you (Moabites). "*Till I know what God will do to me.*" Being well assured of the justice of his cause, as contrasted with the insane persecutions of Saul, David confidently hoped that God would bring his flight to an end. His parents remained with the king of Moab as long as David was בְּמִצְפֵּה, *i.e.* upon the mountain height, or citadel. This can only refer to the place of refuge which David had found at Mizpeh Moab. For it is perfectly clear from ver. 5, where the prophet Gad calls upon David not to remain any longer בְּמִצְפֵּה, but to return to the land of Judah, that the expression cannot refer either to the cave Adullam, or to any other place of refuge in the

neighbourhood of Bethlehem. The prophet *Gad* had probably come to David from Samuel's school of prophets; but whether he remained with David from that time forward to assist him with his counsel in his several undertakings, cannot be determined, on account of our want of information. In 1 Chron. xxi. 9 he is called David's seer. In the last year of David's reign he announced to him the punishment which would fall upon him from God on account of his sin in numbering the people (2 Sam. xxiv. 11 sqq.); and according to 1 Chron. xxix. 29 he also wrote the acts of David. In consequence of this admonition, David returned to Judah, and went into the wood *Hareth*, a woody region on the mountains of Judah, which is never mentioned again, and the situation of which is unknown. According to the counsels of God, David was not to seek for refuge outside the land; not only that he might not be estranged from his fatherland and the people of Israel, which would have been opposed to his calling to be the king of Israel, but also that he might learn to trust entirely in the Lord as his only refuge and fortress.

Vers. 6-23. MURDER OF THE PRIESTS BY SAUL.—Vers. 6 sqq. When Saul heard that David and the men with him *were known*, i.e. that information had been received as to their abode or hiding-place, he said to his servants when they were gathered round him, "*Hear*," etc. The words, "*and Saul was sitting at Gibeah under the tamarisk upon the height*," etc., show that what follows took place in a solemn conclave of all the servants of Saul, who were gathered round their king to deliberate upon the more important affairs of the kingdom. This sitting took place at Gibeah, the residence of Saul, and in the open air "*under the tamarisk*." גִּבְעָה, *upon the height*, not "*under a grove at Ramah*" (*Luther*); for *Ramah* is an appellative, and גִּבְעָה, which belongs to הַהֵם הַשָּׂמֶל, is a more minute definition of the locality, which is indicated by the definite article (*the tamarisk upon the height*) as the well-known place where Saul's deliberative assemblies were held. From the king's address ("*hear, ye Benjaminites; will the son of Jesse also give you all fields and vineyards?*") we perceive that Saul had chosen his immediate attendants from the members of his own tribe, and had rewarded their services right royally.

גַּם-לְבִלָּם is placed first for the sake of emphasis, "*You Benjaminites also*," and not rather to Judahites, the members of his own tribe. The second לְבִלָּם (before יְשׁוּם) is not a dative; but ל merely serves to give greater prominence to the object which is placed at the head of the clause: *As for all of you, will he make* (you: see Ewald, § 310, a).—Ver. 8. "*That you have all of you conspired against me, and no one informs me of it, since my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse.*" בְּכִרָה, *lit.* at the making of a covenant. Saul may possibly have heard something of the facts related in ch. xx. 12-17; at the same time, his words may merely refer to Jonathan's friendship with David, which was well known to him. וְאִין-חֵלָה, "*and no one of you is grieved on my account . . . that my son has set my servant (David) as a liar in wait against me,*" i.e. to plot against my life, and wrest the throne to himself. We may see from this, that Saul was carried by his suspicions very far beyond the actual facts. "*As at this day:*" cf. Deut. viii. 18, etc.—Vers. 9, 10. The Edomite Doeg could not refrain from yielding to this appeal, and telling Saul what he had seen when staying at Nob; namely, that Ahimelech had inquired of God for David, and given him food as well as Goliath's sword. For the fact itself, see ch. xxi. 1-10, where there is no reference indeed to his inquiring of God; though it certainly took place, as Ahimelech (ver. 15) does not disclaim it. Doeg is here designated נָזִיב, "*the superintendent of Saul's servants,*" so that apparently he had been invested with the office of marshal of the court.—Vers. 11 sqq. On receiving this information, Saul immediately summoned the priest Ahimelech and "*all his father's house,*" i.e. the whole priesthood, to Nob, to answer for what they had done. To Saul's appeal, "*Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, by giving him bread?*" Ahimelech, who was not conscious of any such crime, since David had come to him with a false pretext, and the priest had probably but very little knowledge of what took place at court, replied both calmly and worthily (ver. 14): "*And who of all thy servants is so faithful* (proved, attested, as in Num. xii. 7) *as David, and son-in-law of the king, and having access to thy private audience, and honoured in thy house?*" The true explanation of אֶל-מִשְׁמַעְתָּהּ פָּרַד may be gathered from a comparison of 2 Sam. xxiii. 23 and 1 Chron. xi. 25, where מִשְׁמַעְתָּה occurs

again, as the context clearly shows, in the sense of a privy councillor of the king, who hears his personal revelations and converses with him about them, so that it corresponds to our "*audience.*" סֹדֵר, *lit.* to turn aside from the way, to go in to any one, or to look after anything (Ex. iii. 3; Ruth iv. 1, etc.); hence in the passage before us "*to have access,*" to be attached to a person. This is the explanation given by Gesenius and most of the modern expositors, whereas the early translators entirely misunderstood the passage, though they have given the meaning correctly enough at 2 Sam. xxiii. 23. But if this was the relation in which David stood to Saul,—and he had really done so for a long time,—there was nothing wrong in what the high priest had done for him; but he had acted according to the best of his knowledge, and quite conscientiously as a faithful subject of the king. Ahimelech then added still further (ver. 15): "*Did I then begin to inquire of God for him this day?*" *i.e.* was it the first time that I had obtained the decision of God for David concerning important enterprises, which he had to carry out in the service of the king? "*Far be from me,*" *sc.* any conspiracy against the king, like that of which I am accused. "*Let not the king lay it as a burden upon thy servant, my whole father's house* (the omission of the *cop.* ו before בְּכָל־בֵּית may be accounted for from the excitement of the speaker); *for thy servant knows not the least of all this.*" בְּכָל־זֹאת, of all that Saul had charged him with.—Vers. 16, 17. Notwithstanding this truthful assertion of his innocence, Saul pronounced sentence of death, not only upon the high priest, but upon all the priests at Nob, and commanded his רָצִים, "*runners,*" *i.e.* halberdiers, to put the priests to death, because, as he declared in his wrath, "*their hand is with David* (*i.e.* because they side with David), *and because they knew that he fled and did not tell me.*" Instead of the *Chethibh* חֲזָוִי, it is probably more correct to read חֲזָוִי, according to the *Keri*, although the *Chethibh* may be accounted for if necessary from a sudden transition from a direct to an indirect form of address: "*and (as he said) had not told him.*" This sentence was so cruel, and so nearly bordering upon madness, that the halberdiers would not carry it out, but refused to lay hands upon "*the priests of Jehovah.*"—Ver. 18. Saul then commanded Doeg to cut down the priests, and he at once per-

formed the bloody deed. On the expression "*wearing the linen ephod*," compare the remarks at ch. ii. 18. The allusion to the priestly clothing, like the repetition of the expression "*priests of Jehovah*," serves to bring out into its true light the crime of the bloodthirsty Saul and his executioner Doeg. The very dress which the priests wore, as the consecrated servants of Jehovah, ought to have made them shrink from the commission of such a murder.—Ver. 19. But not content with even this revenge, Saul had the whole city of Nob destroyed, like a city that was laid under the ban (*vid.* Deut. xiii. 13 sqq.). So completely did Saul identify his private revenge with the cause of Jehovah, that he avenged a supposed conspiracy against his own person as treason against Jehovah the God-king.—Vers. 20-23. The only one of the whole body of priests who escaped this bloody death was a son of Ahimelech, named Abiathar, who "*fled after David*," i.e. to David the fugitive, and informed him of the barbarous vengeance which Saul had taken upon the priests of the Lord. Then David recognised and confessed his guilt. "*I knew that day that the Edomite Doeg was there, that he* (i.e. that as the Edomite Doeg was there, he) *would tell Saul: I am the cause of all the souls of thy father's house*," i.e. of their death. פָּבֵב is used here in the sense of being the cause of a thing, which is one of the meanings of the verb in the Arabic and Talmudic (*vid.* Ges. *Lex.* s.v.). "*Stay with me, fear not; for he who seeks my life seeks thy life: for thou art safe with me.*" The abstract *mishmereth*, protection, keeping (Ex. xii. 6, xvi. 33, 34), is used for the concrete, in the sense of protected, well kept. The thought is the following: As no other is seeking thy life than Saul, who also wants to kill me, thou mayest stay with me without fear, as I am sure of divine protection. David spoke thus in the firm belief that the Lord would deliver him from his foe, and give him the kingdom. The action of Saul, which had just been reported to him, could only strengthen him in this belief, as it was a sign of the growing hardness of Saul, which must accelerate his destruction.

DAVID DELIVERS KEILAH. HE IS BETRAYED BY THE ZIPHITES,
AND MARVELLOUSLY SAVED FROM SAUL IN THE DESERT
OF MAON.—CHAP. XXIII.

The following events show how, on the one hand, the Lord gave pledges to His servant David that he would eventually become king, but yet on the other hand plunged him into deeper and deeper trouble, that He might refine him and train him to be a king after His own heart. Saul's rage against the priests at Nob not only drove the high priest into David's camp, but procured for David the help of the "light and right" of the high priest in all his undertakings. Moreover, after the prophet Gad had called David back to Judah, an attack of the Philistines upon Keilah furnished him with the opportunity to show himself to the people as their deliverer. And although this enterprise of his exposed him to fresh persecutions on the part of Saul, who was thirsting for revenge, he experienced in connection therewith not only the renewal of Jonathan's friendship on this occasion, but a marvellous interposition on the part of the faithful covenant God.

Vers. 1-14. RESCUE OF KEILAH.—After his return to the mountains of Judah, David received intelligence that Philistines, *i.e.* a marauding company of these enemies of Israel, were fighting against Keilah, and plundering the threshing-floors, upon which the corn that had been reaped was lying ready for threshing. *Keilah* belonged to the towns of the lowlands of Judah (Josh. xv. 44); and although it has not yet been discovered, was certainly very close to the Philistian frontier.—Ver. 2. After receiving this information, David inquired of the Lord (through the Urim and Thummim of the high priest) whether he should go and smite these Philistines, and received an affirmative answer.—Vers. 3-5. But his men said to him, "*Behold, here in Judah we are in fear (i.e. are not safe from Saul's pursuit); how shall we go to Keilah against the ranks of the Philistines?*" In order, therefore, to infuse courage into them, he inquired of the Lord again, and received the assurance from God, "*I will give the Philistines into thy hand.*" He then proceeded with his men, fought against the Philistines, drove off their cattle, inflicted a severe defeat upon them, and thus

delivered the inhabitants of Keilah. In ver. 6 a supplementary remark is added in explanation of the expression "*inquired of the Lord*," to the effect that, when Abiathar fled to David to Keilah, the ephod had come to him. The words "*to David to Keilah*" are not to be understood as signifying that Abiathar did not come to David till he was in Keilah, but that when he fled after David (ch. xxii. 20), he met with him as he was already preparing for the march to Keilah, and immediately proceeded with him thither. For whilst it is not stated in ch. xxii. 20 that Abiathar came to David in the wood of Hareth, but the place of meeting is left indefinite, the fact that David had already inquired of Jehovah (*i.e.* through the oracle of the high priest) with reference to the march to Keilah, compels us to assume that Abiathar had come to him before he left the mountains for Keilah. So that the brief expression "*to David to Keilah*," which is left indefinite because of its brevity, must be interpreted in accordance with this fact.—Vers. 7-9. As soon as Saul received intelligence of David's march to Keilah, he said, "*God has rejected him (and delivered him) into my hand.*" נִבָּר does not mean simply to look at, but also to find strange, and treat as strange, and then absolutely to reject (Jer. xix. 4, as in the Arabic in the fourth conjugation). This is the meaning here, where the construction with נִבָּר is to be understood as a pregnant expression: "*rejected and delivered into my hand*" (*vid.* Ges. *Lex. s. v.*). The early translators have rendered it quite correctly according to the sense נִבָּר, πέπρακεν, tradidit, without there being any reason to suppose that they read נִבָּר instead of נִבָּר. "*For he hath shut himself in, to come (= coming, or by coming) into a city with gates and bolts.*"—Ver. 8. He therefore called all the people (*i.e.* men of war) together to war, to go down to Keilah, and to besiege David and his men.—Vers. 9 sqq. But David heard that Saul was *preparing mischief against him* (*lit.* forging, הִתְחַיֵּשׂ, from חָשׂ: Prov. iii. 29, vi. 14, etc.), and he inquired through the oracle of the high priest whether the inhabitants of Keilah would deliver him up to Saul, and whether Saul would come down; and as both questions were answered in the affirmative, he departed from the city with his six hundred men, before Saul carried out his plan. It is evident from vers. 9-12, that when the will of God was sought through the Urim and Thummim, the person

making the inquiry placed the matter before God in prayer, and received an answer; but always to *one* particular question. For when David had asked the two questions given in ver. 11, he received the answer to the second question only, and had to ask the first again (ver. 12).—Ver. 13. “*They went whithersoever they could go*” (*lit.* “they wandered about where they wandered about”), *i.e.* wherever they could go without danger.—Ver. 14. David retreated into the desert (of Judah), to the mountain heights (that were to be found there), and remained on the mountains in the desert of Ziph. The “*desert of Judah*” is the desert tract between the mountains of Judah and the Dead Sea, in its whole extent, from the northern boundary of the tribe of Judah to the Wady Fikreh in the south (see at Josh. xv. 61). Certain portions of this desert, however, received different names of their own, according to the names of different towns on the border of the mountains and desert. The desert of *Ziph* was that portion of the desert of Judah which was near to and surrounded the town of *Ziph*, the name of which has been retained in the ruins of *Tell Zif*, an hour and three-quarters to the south-east of Hebron (see at Josh. xv. 55).—Ver. 14b. “*And Saul sought him all the days, but God delivered him not into his hand.*” This is a general remark, intended to introduce the accounts which follow, of the various attempts made by Saul to get David into his power. “*All the days,*” *i.e.* as long as Saul lived.

Vers. 15–28. DAVID IN THE DESERTS OF ZIPH AND MAON.—The history of David’s persecution by Saul is introduced in vers. 15–18, with the account of an attempt made by the noble-minded prince Jonathan, in a private interview with his friend David, to renew his bond of friendship with him, and strengthen David by his friendly words for the sufferings that yet awaited him. Vers. 15, 16 are to be connected together so as to form one period: “*When David saw that Saul was come out . . . and David was in the desert of Ziph, Jonathan rose up and went to David into the wood.*” הָרֶשֶׁת, from הָרָשָׁה, with הַ paragogic, signifies a wood or thicket; here, however, it is probably a proper name for a district in the desert of Ziph that was overgrown with wood or bushes, and where David was stopping at that time. “There is no trace of this wood now. The land lost its

ornament of trees centuries ago through the desolating hand of man" (v. de Velde). "*And strengthened his hand in God,*" i.e. strengthened his heart, not by supplies, or by money, or any subsidy of that kind, but by consolation drawn from his innocence, and the promises of God (*vid.* Judg. ix. 24; Jer. xxiii. 14). "*Fear not,*" said Jonathan to him, "*for the hand of Saul my father will not reach thee; and thou wilt become king over Israel, and I will be the second to thee; and Saul my father also knows that it is so.*" Even though Jonathan had heard nothing from David about his anointing, he could learn from David's course thus far, and from his own father's conduct, that David would not be overcome, but would possess the sovereignty after the death of Saul. Jonathan expresses here, as his firm conviction, what he has intimated once before, in ch. xx. 13 sqq.; and with the most loving self-denial entreats David, when he shall be king, to let him occupy the second place in the kingdom. It by no means follows from the last words ("*Saul my father knoweth*"), that Saul had received distinct information concerning the anointing of David, and his divine calling to be king. The words merely contain the thought, he also sees that it will come. The assurance of this must have forced itself involuntarily upon the mind of Saul, both from his own rejection, as foretold by Samuel, and also from the marvellous success of David in all his undertakings.—Ver. 18. After these encouraging words, they two made a covenant before Jehovah: i.e. they renewed the covenant which they had already made by another solemn oath; after which Jonathan returned home, but David remained in the wood.

The *treachery of the Ziphites* forms a striking contrast to Jonathan's treatment of David. They went up to Gibeah to betray to Saul the fact that David was concealed in the wood upon their mountain heights, and indeed "*upon the hill Hachilah, which lies to the south of the waste.*" The hill of Ziph is a flattened hill standing by itself, of about a hundred feet in height. "There is no spot from which you can obtain a better view of David's wanderings backwards and forwards in the desert than from the hill of Ziph, which affords a true panorama. The Ziphites could see David and his men moving to and fro in the mountains of the desert of Ziph, and could also perceive how he showed himself in the distance upon the

hill *Hachilah* on the south side of *Ziph* (which lies to the right by the desert); whereupon they sent as quickly as possible to Saul, and betrayed to him the hiding-place of his enemy" (v. de Velde, ii. pp. 104-5). *Jeshimon* does not refer here to the waste land on the north-eastern coast of the Dead Sea, as in Num. xxi. 20, xxiii. 28, but to the western side of that sea, which is also desert.—Ver. 20 reads literally thus: "*And now, according to all the desire of thy soul, O king, to come down (from Gibeah, which stood upon higher ground), come down, and it is in us to deliver him (David) into the hand of the king.*"—Ver. 21. For this treachery Saul blessed them: "*Be blessed of the Lord, that ye have compassion upon me.*" In his evil conscience he suspected David of seeking to become his murderer, and therefore thanked God in his delusion that the Ziphites had had compassion upon him, and shown him David's hiding-place.—Ver. 22. In his anxiety, however, lest David should escape him after all, he charged them, "*Go, and give still further heed (וְהִנֵּה without לֵךְ, as in Judg. xii. 6), and reconnoitre and look at his place where his foot cometh (this simply serves as a more precise definition of the pronominal suffix in מְקוֹמִי, his place), who hath seen him there (sc. let them inquire into this, that they may not be deceived by uncertain or false reports): for it is told me that he dealeth very subtilly.*"—Ver. 23. They were to search him out in every corner (the object to שׁוּׁר must be supplied from the context). "*And come ye again to me with the certainty (i.e. when you have got some certain intelligence concerning his hiding-place), that I may go with you; and if he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands (i.e. families) of Judah.*"—Ver. 24. With this answer the Ziphites arose and "*went to Ziph before Saul*" (who would speedily follow with his warriors); but David had gone farther in the meantime, and was with his men "*in the desert of Maon, in the steppe to the south of the wilderness.*" *Maon*, now *Ma'in*, is about three hours and three-quarters s.s.e. of Hebron (see at Josli. xv. 55), and therefore only two hours from Ziph, from which it is visible. "The table-land appears to terminate here; nevertheless the principal ridge of the southern mountains runs for a considerable distance towards the south-west, whereas towards the south-east the land falls off more and more into a lower table-land." This is the *Arabah* or steppe on the right

of the wilderness (v. de Velde, ii. pp. 107-8).—Ver. 25. Having been informed of the arrival of Saul and his men (warriors), David went down the rock, and remained in the desert of Maon. “*The rock*” is probably the conical mountain of *Main* (*Maon*), the top of which is now surrounded with ruins, probably remains of a tower (Robinson, *Pal.* ii. p. 194), as the rock from which David came down can only have been the mountain (ver. 26), along one side of which David went with his men whilst Saul and his warriors went on the other, namely when Saul pursued him into the desert of Maon.—Vers. 26, 27. “*And David was anxiously concerned to escape from Saul, and Saul and his men were encircling David and his men to seize them; but a messenger came to Saul. . . . Then Saul turned from pursuing David.*” The two clauses, “for Saul and his men” (ver. 26b), and “there came a messenger” (ver. 27), are the circumstantial clauses by which the situation is more clearly defined: the apodosis to וַיֵּצֵא יְהוָה does not follow till וַיֵּצֵא in ver. 28. The apodosis cannot begin with וַיֵּצֵא, because the verb does not stand at the head. David had thus almost inextricably fallen into the hands of Saul; but God saved him by the fact that at that very moment a messenger arrived with the intelligence, “Hasten and go (come), for Philistines have fallen into the land,” and thus called Saul away from any further pursuit of David.—Ver. 28. From this occurrence the place received the name of *Sela-hammahlekoth*, “*rock of smoothnesses*,” i.e. of slipping away or escaping, from סֶלָה, in the sense of being smooth. This explanation is at any rate better supported than “rock of divisions, i.e. the rock at which Saul and David were separated” (Clericus), since סֶלָה does not mean to separate.

DAVID SPARES SAUL IN THE CAVE.—CHAP. XXIV.

Vers. 1-8. Whilst Saul had gone against the Philistines, David left this dangerous place, and went to the mountain heights of *Engedi*, i.e. the present *Ain-jidy* (goat-fountain), in the middle of the western coast of the Dead Sea (see at Josh. xv. 62), which he could reach from Maon in six or seven hours. The soil of the neighbourhood consists entirely of limestone; but the rocks contain a considerable admixture of chalk and flint. Round about there rise bare conical mountains, and

even ridges of from two to four hundred feet in height, which mostly run down to the sea. The steep mountains are intersected by wadys running down in deep ravines to the sea. "On all sides the country is full of caverns, which might then serve as lurking-places for David and his men, as they do for outlaws at the present day" (Rob. *Pal.* p. 203).—Vers. 1, 2. When Saul had returned from his march against the Philistines, and was informed of this, he set out thither with three thousand picked men to search for David and his men in the wild-goat rocks. The expression "*rocks of the wild goats*" is probably not a proper name for some particular rocks, but a general term applied to the rocks of that locality on account of the number of wild goats and chamois that were to be found in all that region, as mountain goats are still (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 204).—Ver. 3. When Saul came to the sheep-folds by the way, where there was a cave, he entered it to cover his feet, whilst David and his men sat behind in the cave. V. de Velde (*R.* ii. p. 74) supposes the place, where the sheep-folds by the roadside were, to have been the Wady *Chareitun*, on the south-west of the Frank mountain, and to the north-east of Tekoah, a very desolate and inaccessible valley. "Rocky, precipitous walls, which rise up one above another for many hundred feet, form the sides of this defile. Stone upon stone, and cliff above cliff, without any sign of being habitable, or of being capable of affording even a halting-place to anything but wild goats." Near the ruins of the village of *Chareitun*, hardly five minutes' walk to the east, there is a large cave or chamber in the rock, with a very narrow entrance entirely concealed by stones, and with many side vaults in which the deepest darkness reigns, at least to any one who has just entered the limestone vaults from the dazzling light of day. It may be argued in favour of the conjecture that this is the cave which Saul entered, and at the back of which David and his men were concealed, that this cave is on the road from Bethlehem to Ain-jidy, and one of the largest caves in that district, if not the largest of all, and that, according to Pococke (*Beschr. des Morgenl.* ii. p. 61), the Franks call it a labyrinth, the Arabs *Elmauma*, i.e. hiding-place, whilst the latter relate how at one time thirty thousand people hid themselves in it "to escape an evil wind," in all probability the simoom. The only difficulty connected with

this supposition is the distance from Ain-jidy, namely about four or five German miles (fifteen or twenty English), and the nearness of Tekoah, according to which it belongs to the desert of Tekoah rather than to that of Engedi. "*To cover his feet*" is a euphemism according to most of the ancient versions, as in Judg. iii. 24, for performing the necessities of nature, as it is a custom in the East to cover the feet. It does not mean "to sleep," as it is rendered in this passage in the *Peschito*, and also by Michaelis and others; for although what follows may seem to favour this, there is apparently no reason why any such euphemistic expression should have been chosen for sleep. "*The sides of the cave:*" i.e. the outermost or farthest sides.—Ver. 4. Then David's men said to him, "*See, this is the day of which Jehovah hath said to thee, Behold, I give thine enemy into thy hand, and do to him what seemeth good to thee.*" Although these words might refer to some divine oracle which David had received through a prophet, Gad for example, what follows clearly shows that David had received no such oracle; and the meaning of his men was simply this, "Behold, to-day is the day when God is saying to thee:" that is to say, the speakers regarded the leadings of providence by which Saul had been brought into David's power as a divine intimation to David himself to take this opportunity of slaying his deadly enemy, and called this intimation a word of Jehovah. *David then rose up, and cut off the edge of Saul's cloak privily.* Saul had probably laid the *meil* on one side, which rendered it possible for David to cut off a piece of it unobserved.—Ver. 5. But *his heart smote him* after he had done it; i.e. his conscience reproached him, because he regarded this as an injury done to the king himself.—Ver. 6. With all the greater firmness, therefore, did he repel the suggestions of his men: "*Far be it to me from Jehovah* (on Jehovah's account: see at Josh. xxii. 29), *that* (אֵין, a particle denoting an oath) *I should do such a thing to my lord, the anointed of Jehovah, to stretch out my hand against him.*" These words of David show clearly enough that no word of Jehovah had come to him to do as he liked with Saul.—Ver. 7. Thus he kept back his people with words (דַּבָּרִים, *verbis dilacere*), and did not allow them to rise up against Saul, *sc.* to slay him.

Vers. 8-16. But when Saul had gone out of the cave, David

went out, and called, "*My lord king,*" that when the king looked round he might expostulate with him, with the deepest reverence, but yet with earnest words, that should sharpen his conscience as to the unfounded nature of his suspicion and the injustice of his persecution. "*Why dost thou hearken to words of men, who say, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt? Behold, this day thine eyes have seen that Jehovah hath given thee to-day into my hand in the cave, and they said (אָמַר, thought) to kill thee, and I spared thee:*" *lit.* it (mine eye) spared thee (cf. Gen. xlv. 20, Deut. vii. 16, etc., which show that עָיַן is to be supplied).—Ver. 11. To confirm what he said, he then showed him the lappet of his coat which he had cut off, and said, "*My father, see.*" In these words there is an expression of the childlike reverence and affection which David cherished towards the anointed of the Lord. "*For that I cut off the lappet and did not kill thee, learn and see (from this) that (there is) not evil in my hand (i.e. that I do not go about for the purpose of injury and crime), and that I have not sinned against thee, as thou nevertheless layest wait for my soul to destroy it.*"—Vers. 12, 13. After he had proved to the king in this conclusive manner that he had no reason whatever for seeking his life, he invoked the Lord as judge between him and his adversary: "*Jehovah will avenge me upon thee, but my hand will not be against thee. As the proverb of the ancients (אָמַרְתִּים is used collectively) says, Evil proceedeth from the evil, but my hand shall not be upon thee.*" The meaning is this: Only a wicked man could wish to avenge himself; I do not.—Ver. 14. And even if he should wish to attack the king, he did not possess the power. This thought introduces ver. 14: "*After whom is the king of Israel gone out? After whom dost thou pursue? A dead dog, a single flea.*" By these similes David meant to describe himself as a perfectly harmless and insignificant man, of whom Saul had no occasion to be afraid, and whom the king of Israel ought to think it beneath his dignity to pursue. A dead dog cannot bite or hurt, and is an object about which a king ought not to trouble himself (cf. 2 Sam. ix. 8 and xvi. 9, where the idea of something contemptible is included). The point of comparison with a flea is the insignificance of such an animal (cf. ch. xxvi. 20).—Ver. 15. As Saul had therefore no good ground for persecuting David, the latter could very calmly commit his cause to the Lord God,

that He might decide it as judge, and deliver him out of the hand of Saul: "*Let Him look at it, and conduct my cause,*" etc.

Vers. 16-22 These words made an impression upon Saul. David's conduct went to his heart, so that he wept aloud, and confessed to him: "*Thou art more righteous than I, for thou hast shown me good, and I (have shown) thee evil; and thou hast given me a proof of this to-day.*"—Ver. 19. "*If a man meet with his enemy, will he send him (let him go) in peace?*" This sentence is to be regarded as a question, which requires a negative reply, and expresses the thought: When a man meets with an enemy, he does not generally let him escape without injury. But thou hast acted very differently towards me. This thought is easily supplied from the context, and what follows attaches itself to this: "*The Lord repay thee good for what thou hast done to me this day.*"—Vers. 20, 21. This wish was expressed in perfect sincerity. David's behaviour towards him had conquered for the moment the evil demon of his heart, and completely altered his feelings. In this better state of mind he felt impelled even to give utterance to these words, "*I know that thou wilt be king, and the sovereignty will have perpetuity in thy hand.*" Saul could not prevent this conviction from forcing itself upon him, after his own rejection and the failure of all that he attempted against David; and it was this which drove him to persecute David whenever the evil spirit had the upper hand in his soul. But now that better feelings had arisen in his mind, he uttered it without envy, and merely asked David to promise on oath that he would not cut off his descendants after his death, and seek to exterminate his name from his father's house. A name is exterminated when the whole of the descendants are destroyed,—a thing of frequent occurrence in the East in connection with a change of dynasties, and one which occurred again and again even in the kingdom of the ten tribes (*vid.* 1 Kings xv. 28 sqq., xvi. 11 sqq.; 2 Kings x.).—Ver. 22. When David had sworn this, Saul returned home. But David remained upon the mountain heights, because he did not regard the passing change in Saul's feelings as likely to continue. הַמְצִירָה (translated "*the hold*") is used here to denote the mountainous part of the desert of Judah. It is different in ch. xxii. 5.

DEATH OF SAMUEL. NABAL AND ABIGAIL.—CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. The *death of Samuel* is inserted here, because it occurred at that time. The fact that all Israel assembled together to his burial, and lamented him, *i.e.* mourned for him, was a sign that his labours as a prophet were recognised by the whole nation as a blessing for Israel. Since the days of Moses and Joshua, no man had arisen to whom the covenant nation owed so much as to Samuel, who has been justly called the reformer and restorer of the theocracy. They buried him "*in his house at Ramah.*" The expression "*his house*" does not mean his burial-place or family tomb, nor his native place, but the house in which he lived, with the court belonging to it, where Samuel was placed in a tomb erected especially for him. After the death of Samuel, David went down into the desert of *Paran*, *i.e.* into the northern portion of the desert of Arabia, which stretches up to the mountains of Judah (see at Num. x. 12); most likely for no other reason than because he could no longer find sufficient means of subsistence for himself and his six hundred men in the desert of Judah.

Vers. 2–44. The following history of *Nabal's* folly, and of the wise and generous behaviour of his pious and intelligent wife Abigail towards David, shows how Jehovah watched over His servant David, and not only preserved him from an act of passionate excitement, which might have endangered his calling to be king of Israel, but turned the trouble into which he had been brought into a source of prosperity and salvation.

Vers. 2–13. At *Maon*, *i.e.* Main or the mountains of Judah (see at Josh. xv. 55), there lived a rich man (נָבָל, *great* through property and riches), who had his establishment at *Carmel*. מַעֲשֵׂה, work, occupation, then establishment, possessions (*vid.* Ex. xxiii. 16). *Carmel* is not the promontory of that name (Thenius), but the present *Kurmul* on the mountains of Judah, scarcely half an hour's journey to the north-west of Maon (see at Josh. xv. 55). This man possessed three thousand sheep and a thousand goats, and was at the sheep-shearing at *Carmel*. His name was *Nabal* (*i.e.* fool): this was hardly his proper name, but was a surname by which he was popularly designated on account of his folly. His wife *Abigail* was "*of good understanding,*" *i.e.* intelligent, "*and of beautiful figure;*"

but the husband was "*harsh and evil in his doings.*" He sprang from the family of *Caleb*. This is the rendering adopted by the Chaldee and Vulgate, according to the *Keri* פִּלְבִּי. The *Chethibh* is to be read פִּלְבִּי, "according to his heart;" though the LXX. (ἀνθρώπος κυνικός) and Josephus, as well as the Arabic and Syriac, derive it from פִּלְבִּי, and understand it as referring to the dog-like, or shameless, character of the man.—Vers. 4, 5. When David heard in the desert (cf. ver. 1) that Nabal was shearing his sheep, which was generally accompanied with a festal meal (see at Gen. xxxviii. 12), he sent ten young men up to Carmel to him, and bade them wish him peace and prosperity in his name, and having reminded him of the friendly services rendered to his shepherds, solicit a present for himself and his people. שְׁאַל לוֹ לְשָׁלוֹם, ask him after his welfare, i.e. greet him in a friendly manner (cf. Ex. xviii. 7). The word שְׁאַל is obscure, and was interpreted by the early translators merely according to uncertain conjectures. The simplest explanation is apparently *in vitam*, long life, understood as a wish in the sense of "good fortune to you" (Luther, Maurer, etc.); although the word שְׁאַל in the singular can only be shown to have the meaning *life* in connection with the formula used in oaths, שְׁאַל נַפְשִׁי, etc. But even if שְׁאַל must be taken as an adjective, it is impossible to explain שְׁאַל in any other way than as an elliptical exclamation meaning "good fortune to the living man." For the idea that the word is to be connected with אָמַרְתָּה, "say to the living man," i.e. to the man if still alive, is overthrown by the fact that David had no doubt that Nabal was still living. The words which follow are also to be understood as a wish, "*May thou and thy house, and all that is thine, be well!*" After this salutation they were to proceed with the object of their visit: "*And now I have heard that thou hast sheep-shearers. Now thy shepherds have been with us; we have done them no harm* (פָּדִינוּם, as in Judg. xviii. 7: on the form, see Ges. § 53, 3, Anm. 6), *and nothing was missed by them so long as they were in Carmel.*" When living in the desert, David's men had associated with the shepherds of Nabal, rendered them various services, and protected them and their flocks against the southern inhabitants of the desert (the Bedouin Arabs); in return for which they may have given them food and information. Thus David proved himself a

protector of his people even in his banishment. וַיִּפְתָּח, “so may the young men (those sent by David) find favour in thine eyes! for we have come to a good (i.e. a festive) day. Give, I pray, what thy hand findeth (i.e. as much as thou canst) to thy servant, and to thy son David.” With the expression “thy son” David claims Nabal’s fatherly goodwill. So far as the fact itself is concerned, “on such a festive occasion near a town or village even in our own time, an Arab sheikh of the neighbouring desert would hardly fail to put in a word either in person or by message; and his message both in form and substance would be only the transcript of that of David” (Robinson, *Palestine*, p. 201).—Ver. 9. David’s messengers delivered their message to Nabal, וַיֵּשְׁבוּ, “and sat down,” sc. awaiting the fulfilment of their request. The rendering given by the Chaldee (ܐܬܝܪܘܢܬܐ, *cessaverunt loqui*) and the Vulgate (*siluerunt*) is less suitable, and cannot be philologically sustained. The Septuagint, on the other hand, has *καὶ ἀνερήδησε*, “and he (Nabal) sprang up,” as if the translators had read וַיָּקָם (*vid. LXX. at ch. xx. 34*). This rendering, according to which the word belongs to the following clause, gives a very appropriate sense, if only, supposing that וַיָּקָם really did stand in the text, the origin and general adoption of וַיֵּשְׁבוּ could in any way be explained.—Ver. 10. Nabal refused the petitioners in the most churlish manner: “Who is David? who the son of Jesse?” i.e. what have I to do with David? “There be many servants now-a-days who tear away every one from his master.” Thus, in order to justify his own covetousness, he set down David as a vagrant who had run away from his master.—Ver. 11. “And I should take my bread and my water (i.e. my food and drink), and my cattle, . . . and give them to men whom I do not know whence they are?” וְהָיָה is a perfect with *vav* consec., and the whole sentence is to be taken as a question.—Vers. 12, 13. The messengers returned to David with this answer. The churlish reply could not fail to excite his anger. He therefore commanded his people to gird on the sword, and started with 400 men to take vengeance upon Nabal, whilst 200 remained behind with the things.

Vers. 14–31. However intelligible David’s wrath may appear in the situation in which he was placed, it was not right before God, but a sudden burst of sinful passion, which was

unseemly in a servant of God. By carrying out his intention, he would have sinned against the Lord and against His people. But the Lord preserved him from this sin by the fact that, just at the right time, Abigail, the intelligent and pious wife of Nabal, heard of the affair, and was able to appease the wrath of David by her immediate and kindly interposition.—Vers. 14, 15. Abigail heard from one of (Nabal's) servants what had taken place (וַיִּשְׁלַח, to wish any one prosperity and health, *i.e.* to salute, as in ch. xiii. 10; and וַיִּשֶׁט, from וַיִּשֶׁט, to speak wrathfully: on the form, see at ch. xv. 19 and xiv. 32), and also what had been praiseworthy in the behaviour of David's men towards Nabal's shepherds; how they had not only done them no injury, had not robbed them of anything, but had defended them all the while. *"They were a wall (i.e. a firm protection) round us by night and by day, as long as we were with them feeding the sheep," i.e. a wall of defence against attacks from the Bedouins living in the desert.*—Ver. 17. *"And now,"* continued the servant, *"know and see what thou doest; for evil is determined (cf. ch. xx. 9) against our master and all his house: and he (Nabal) is a wicked man, that one cannot address him."*—Vers. 18, 19. Then Abigail took as quickly as possible a bountiful present of provisions,—*two hundred loaves, two bottles of wine, five prepared (i.e. slaughtered) sheep* (עֲשֻׂיִּים, a rare form for עֲשֻׂיִּים: see Ewald, § 189, a), *five seahs* (an ephah and two-thirds) *of roasted grains* (Kali: see ch. xvii. 17), *a hundred dried grapes* (עֲפָקִים, *i.e.* raisin-cakes: Ital. *simmuki*), *and two hundred fig-cakes* (consisting of pressed figs joined together),—and sent these gifts laden upon asses on before her to meet David, whilst she herself followed behind to appease his anger by coming to meet him in a friendly manner, but without saying a word to her husband about what she intended to do.—Ver. 20. When she came down riding upon the ass by a hidden part of the mountain, David and his men came to meet her, so that she lighted upon them. סֶתֶר הָהָר, a hidden part of the mountain, was probably a hollow between two peaks of a mountain. This would explain the use of the word יָרַד, to come down, with reference both to Abigail, who approached on the one side, and David, who came on the other.—Vers. 21 and 22 contain a circumstantial clause introduced parenthetically to explain what follows: but David had said,

Only for deception (i.e. for no other purpose than to be deceived in my expectation) *have I defended all that belongs to this man* (Nabal) *in the desert, so that nothing of his was missed, and (for) he hath repaid me evil for good. God do so to the enemies of David, if I leave, etc.; i.e.* “as truly as God will punish the enemies of David, so certainly will I not leave till the morning light, of all that belongeth to him, one that pisseth against the wall.” This oath, in which the punishment of God is not called down upon the swearer himself (God do so to me), as it generally is, but upon the enemies of David, is analogous to that in ch. iii. 17, where punishment is threatened upon the person addressed, who is there made to swear; except that here, as the oath could not be uttered in the ears of the person addressed, upon whom it was to fall, the enemies generally are mentioned instead of “to thee.” There is no doubt, therefore, as to the correctness of the text. The substance of this imprecation may be explained from the fact that David is so full of the consciousness of fighting and suffering for the cause of the kingdom of God, that he discerns in the insult heaped upon him by Nabal an act of hostility to the Lord and the cause of His kingdom. The phrase מִשְׁחַץ בָּקִיר, *mingens in parietem*, is only met with in passages which speak of the destruction of a family or household to the very last man (viz., besides this passage, 1 Kings xiv. 10, xvi. 11, xxi. 21; 2 Kings ix. 8), and neither refers primarily to dogs, as Ephraem Syrus, Juda ben Karish, and others maintain; nor to the lowest class of men, as Winer, Maurer, and others imagine; nor to little boys, as L. de Dieu, Gesenius, etc., suppose; but, as we may see from the explanatory clause appended to 1 Kings xiv. 10, xxi. 21, 2 Kings ix. 8, to every male (*quemcumque masculi generis hominem*: vid. Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. pp. 776 sqq., and Rödiger on Ges. *Thes.* pp. 1397–8).—Ver. 23 is connected with ver. 20.

When Abigail saw David, she descended hastily from the ass, fell upon her face before him, bowed to the ground, and fell at his feet, saying, “*Upon me, me, my lord, be the guilt; allow thy handmaid to reveal the thing to thee.*” She takes the guilt upon herself, because she hopes that David will not avenge it upon her.—Ver. 25. She prayed that David would take no notice of Nabal, for he was what his name declared—a fool, and folly in him; but she (Abigail) had not seen the messengers

of David. "The prudent woman uses a good argument; for a wise man should pardon a fool" (Seb. Schmidt). She then endeavours to bring David to a friendly state of mind by three arguments, introduced with וְעַתָּה (vers. 26, 27), before asking for forgiveness (ver. 28). She first of all pointed to the leadings of God, by which David had been kept from committing murder through her coming to meet him.¹ "*As truly as Jehovah liveth, and by the life of thy soul! yea, the Lord hath kept thee, that thou camest not into blood-guiltiness, and thy hand helped thee*" (i.e. and with thy hand thou didst procure thyself help). אֲשֶׁר, introducing her words, as in ch. xv. 20, lit. "as truly as thou livest, (so true is it) that," etc. In the second place, she points to the fact that God is the avenger of the wicked, by expressing the wish that all the enemies of David may become fools like Nabal; in connection with which it must be observed, in order to understand her words fully, that, according to the Old Testament representation, folly is a correlate of ungodliness, which inevitably brings down punishment.² The predicate to the sentence "*and they that seek evil to my lord*" must be supplied from the preceding words, viz. "*may they become just such fools.*"—Ver. 27. It is only in the third line that she finally mentions the present, but in such a manner that she does not offer it directly to David, but describes it as a gift for the men in his train. "*And now this blessing*" (בְּרָכָה here and ch. xxx. 26, as in Gen. xxxiii. 11: cf. ἡ εὐλογία, 2 Cor. ix. 5, 6), *which thine handmaid hath brought, let it be given to the young men in my lord's train*" (lit. "at the feet of:" cf. Ex. xi. 8; Judg. iv. 10, etc.).—Ver. 28. The shrewd and pious woman supports her prayer for

¹ "She founds her argument upon their meeting, which was so marvellously seasonable, that it might be easily and truly gathered from this fact that it had taken place through the providence of God; i.e. And now, because I meet thee so seasonably, do thou piously acknowledge with me the providence of God, which has so arranged all this, that innocent blood might not by chance be shed by thee."—Seb. Schmidt.

² Seb. Schmidt has justly observed, that "she reminds David of the promise of God. Not that she prophesies, but that she has gathered it from the general promises of the word of God. The promise referred to is, that whoever does good to his enemies, and takes no vengeance upon them, God himself will avenge him upon his enemies; according to the saying, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay.* And this is what Abigail says: And now thine enemies shall be as Nabal."

forgiveness of the wrong, which she takes upon herself, by promises of the rich blessing with which the Lord would recompense David. She thereby gives such clear and distinct expression to her firm belief in the divine election of David as king of Israel, that her words almost amount to prophecy: "*For Jehovah will make my lord a lasting house* (cf. ch. ii. 35; and for the fact itself, 2 Sam. vii. 8 sqq., where the Lord confirms this pious wish by His own promises to David himself); *for my lord fighteth the wars of Jehovah* (vid. ch. xviii. 17), *and evil is not discovered in thee thy whole life long.*" רָעָה, evil, i.e. misfortune, mischief; for the thought that he might also be preserved from wrong-doing is not expressed till ver. 31. "*All thy days,*" lit. "*from thy days,*" i.e. from the beginning of thy life.—Ver. 29. "*And should any one rise up to pursue thee, . . . the soul of my lord will be bound up in the bundle of the living with the Lord thy God.*" The metaphor is taken from the custom of binding up valuable things in a bundle, to prevent their being injured. The words do not refer primarily to eternal life with God in heaven, but only to the safe preservation of the righteous on this earth in the grace and fellowship of the Lord. But whoever is so hidden in the gracious fellowship of the Lord in this life, that no enemy can harm him or injure his life, the Lord will not allow to perish, even though temporal death should come, but will then receive him into eternal life. "*But the soul of thine enemies, He will hurl away in the cup of the sling.*" "*The cup* (caph: cf. Gen. xxxii. 26) *of the sling*" was the cavity in which the stone was placed for the purpose of hurling.—Vers. 30, 31. Abigail concluded her intercession with the assurance that the forgiveness of Nabal's act would be no occasion of anguish of heart to David when he should have become prince over Israel, on account of his having shed innocent blood and helped himself, and also with the hope that he would remember her. From the words, "*When Jehovah shall do to my lord according to all the good that He hath spoken concerning him, and shall make thee prince over Israel,*" it appears to follow that Abigail had received certain information of the anointing of David, and his designation to be the future king, probably through Samuel, or one of the pupils of the prophets. There is nothing to preclude this assumption, even if it cannot be historically sustained. Abigail manifests such an advance

and maturity in the life of faith, as could only have been derived from intercourse with prophets. It is expressly stated with regard to Elijah and Elisha, that at certain times the pious assembled together around the prophets. What prevents us from assuming the same with regard to Samuel? The absence of any distinct testimony to that effect is amply compensated for by the brief, and for the most part casual, notices that are given of the influence which Samuel exerted upon all Israel.—Ver. 31 introduces the apodosis to ver. 30: *So will this* (i.e. the forgiveness of Nabal's folly, for which she had prayed in ver. 28) *not be a stumbling-block* (*pukah*: anything in the road which causes a person to stagger) *and anguish of heart* (i.e. conscientious scruple) *to thee, and shedding innocent blood, and that my lord helps himself.* וְלֹא־יִשְׁפֹּךְ וְנֹא־יִכְאֹב is perfectly parallel to לֹא־יִכְאֹב וְנֹא, and cannot be taken as subordinate, as it is in the Vulgate, etc., in the sense of "that thou hast not shed blood innocently," etc. In this rendering not only is the *vav cop.* overlooked, but "not" is arbitrarily interpolated, to obtain a suitable sense, which the Vulgate rendering, *quod effuderis sanguinem innoxiam*, does not give. וְיִיטֵב is to be taken conditionally: "and if Jehovah shall deal well with my lord, then," etc.

Vers. 32-38. These words could not fail to appease David's wrath. In his reply he praised the Lord for having sent Abigail to meet him (ver. 32), and then congratulated Abigail upon her understanding and her actions, that she had kept him from bloodshed (ver. 33); otherwise he would certainly have carried out the revenge which he had resolved to take upon Nabal (ver. 34). וְאַיֵּם is strongly adversative: *nevertheless*. מִיָּדָע, *inf. constr. Hiph.* of רָצַע. כִּי, *Gr.* ὅτι, introduces the substance of the affirmation, and is repeated before the oath: כִּי לֹא . . . כִּי אִם, (that) *if thou hadst not*, etc., (that) *truly there would not have been left* (cf. 2 Sam. ii. 27). The very unusual form תְּבִאֲתִי, an imperfect with the termination of the perfect, might indeed possibly be a copyist's error for תְּבִאֲנִי (Olsh. *Gr.* pp. 452, 525), but in all probability it is only an intensified form of the second pers. fem. imperf., like תְּבִאֲתֶיךָ (Deut. xxxiii. 16; cf. Ewald, § 191, c).—Ver. 35. David then received the gifts brought for him, and bade Abigail return to her house, with the assurance that he had granted her request for pardon. נָשָׂא פָנַיִם, as in Gen.

xix. 21, etc.—Ver. 36. When Abigail returned home, she found her husband *at a great feast, like a king's feast, very merry* (עָלִי, “therewith,” refers to בְּשִׂמְחָה: cf. Prov. xxiii. 30), and *drunken above measure*, so that she told him nothing of what had occurred until the break of day.—Ver. 37. Then, “*when the wine had gone from Nabal,*” i.e. when he had become sober, she related the matter to him; whereat he was so terrified, that he was smitten with a stroke. This is the meaning of the words, “*his heart died within him, and it became as stone.*” The cause of it was not his anger at the loss he had sustained, or merely his alarm at the danger to which he had been exposed, and which he did not believe to be over yet, but also his vexation that his wife should have made him humble himself in such a manner; for he is described as a hard, i.e. an unbending, self-willed man.—Ver. 38. About ten days later *the Lord smote him so that he died*, i.e. the Lord put an end to his life by a second stroke.

Vers. 39–44. When David heard of Nabal's death, he praised Jehovah that He had avenged his shame upon Nabal, and held him back from self-revenge. אֲשֶׁר רָב וְנָ, “*who hath pleaded the cause of my reproach* (the disgrace inflicted upon me) *against Nabal.*” “*Against Nabal*” does not belong to “*my reproach,*” but to “*pleaded the cause.*” The construction of רָב with נָ is a pregnant one, to fight (and deliver) out of the power of a person (*vid.* Ps. xliii. 1); whereas here the fundamental idea is that of taking vengeance upon a person.—Ver. 40. He then sent messengers to Abigail, and conveyed to her his wish to marry her, to which she consented without hesitation. With deep reverence she said to the messengers (ver. 41), “*Behold, thy handmaid as servant* (i.e. is ready to become thy servant) *to wash the feet of the servants of my lord;*” i.e., in the obsequious style of the East, “*I am ready to perform the humblest possible services for thee.*”—Ver. 42. She then rose up hastily, and went after the messengers to David with five damsels in her train, and became his wife.—Ver. 43. The historian appends a few notices here concerning David's wives: “*And David had taken Ahinoam from Jezreel; thus they also both became his wives.*” The expression “*also*” points to David's marriage with Michal, the daughter of Saul (ch. xviii. 28). *Jezreel* is not the city of that name in the tribe

of Issachar (Josh. xix. 18), but the one in the mountains of Judah (Josh. xv. 56).—Ver. 44. But Saul had taken his daughter Michal away from David, and given her to *Palti* of Gallim. *Palti* is called *Paltiel* in 2 Sam. iii. 15. According to Isa. x. 30, *Gallim* was a place between Gibeah of Saul and Jerusalem. Valentiner supposes it to be the hill to the south of *Tuleil el Phul* (Gibeah of Sanl) called *Khirbet el Jisr*. After the death of Saul, however, David persuaded Ishbosheth to give him Michal back again (see 2 Sam. iii. 14 sqq.).

DAVID IS BETRAYED AGAIN BY THE ZIPHITES, AND SPARES
SAUL A SECOND TIME.—CHAP. XXVI.

The repetition not only of the treachery of the Ziphites, but also of the sparing of Saul by David, furnishes no proof in itself that the account contained in this chapter is only another legend of the occurrences already related in ch. xxiii. 19–xxiv. 23. As the pursuit of David by Saul lasted for several years, in so small a district as the desert of Judah, there is nothing strange in the repetition of the same scenes. And the assertion made by Thenius, that “Saul would have been a moral monster, which he evidently was not, if he had pursued David with quiet deliberation, and through the medium of the same persons, and had sought his life again, after his own life had been so magnanimously spared by him,” not only betrays a superficial acquaintance with the human heart, but is also founded upon the mere assertion, for which there is no proof, that Saul was *evidently* not so; and it is proved to be worthless by the fact, that after the first occasion on which his life was so magnanimously spared by David, he did not leave off seeking him up and down in the land, and that David was obliged to seek refuge with the Philistines in consequence, as may be seen from ch. xxvii., which Thenius himself assigns to the same source as ch. xxiv. The agreement between the two accounts reduces it entirely to outward and unessential things. It consists chiefly in the fact that the Ziphites came twice to Saul at Gibeah, and informed him that David was stopping in their neighbourhood, in the hill *Hachilah*, and also that Saul went out twice in pursuit of David with 3000 men. But the three thousand were the standing body of men that Saul had raised

from the very beginning of his reign out of the whole number of those who were capable of bearing arms, for the purpose of carrying on his smaller wars (ch. xiii. 2); and the hill of *Hachilah* appears to have been a place in the desert of Judah peculiarly well adapted for the site of an encampment. On the other hand, all the details, as well as the final results of the two occurrences, differ entirely from one another. When David was betrayed the first time, he drew back into the desert of Maon before the advance of Saul; and being completely surrounded by Saul upon one of the mountains there, was only saved from being taken prisoner by the circumstance that Saul was compelled suddenly to relinquish the pursuit of David on account of the report that the Philistines had invaded the land (ch. xxiii. 25-28). But on the second occasion Saul encamped upon the hill of Hachilah, whilst David had drawn back into the adjoining desert, from which he crept secretly into Saul's encampment, and might, if he had chosen, have put his enemy to death (ch. xxvi. 3 sqq.). There is quite as much difference in the minutest details connected with the sparing of Saul. On the first occasion, Saul entered a cave in the desert of Engedi, whilst David and his men were concealed in the interior of the cave, without having the smallest suspicion that they were anywhere near (ch. xxiv. 2-4). The second time David went with Abishai into the encampment of Saul upon the hill of Hachilah, while the king and all his men were sleeping (ch. xxvi. 3, 5). It is true that on both occasions David's men told him that God had given his enemy into his hand; but the first time they added, Do to him what seemeth good in thy sight; and David cut off the lappet of Saul's coat, whereupon his conscience smote him, and he said, "Far be it from me to lay my hand upon the Lord's anointed" (ch. xxiv. 5-8). In the second instance, on the contrary, when David saw Saul in the distance lying by the carriage rampart and the army sleeping round him, he called to two of his heroes, Ahimelech and Abishai, to go with him into the camp of the sleeping foe, and then went thither with Abishai, who thereupon said to him, "God hath delivered thine enemy into thy hand: let me alone, that I may pierce him with the spear." But David rejected this proposal, and merely took away the spear and water-bowl that were at Saul's head (ch. xxvi. 6-12). And lastly, notwithstanding the fact that the

words of David and replies of Saul agree in certain general thoughts, yet they differ entirely in the main. On the first occasion David showed the king that his life had been in his power, and yet he had spared him, to dispel the delusion that he was seeking his life (ch. xxiv. 10-16). On the second occasion he asked the king why he was pursuing him, and called to him to desist from his pursuit (ch. xxvi. 18 sqq.). But Saul was so affected the first time that he wept aloud, and openly declared that David would obtain the kingdom; and asked him to promise on oath, that when he did, he would not destroy his family (ch. xxiv. 17-23). The second time, on the contrary, he only declared that he had sinned and acted foolishly, and would do David no more harm, and that David would undertake and prevail; but he neither shed tears, nor brought himself to speak of David's ascending the throne, so that he was evidently much more hardened than before (ch. xxvi. 21-25). These decided differences prove clearly enough that the incident described in this chapter is not the same as the similar one mentioned in ch. xxiii. and xxiv., but belongs to a later date, when Saul's enmity and hardness had increased.

Vers. 1-12. The second betrayal of David by the Ziphites occurred after David had married Abigail at Carmel, and when he had already returned to the desert of Judah. On vers. 1 and 2 compare the explanations of ch. xxiii. 19 and xxiv. 3. Instead of "*before (in the face of) Jeshimon*" (*i.e.* the wilderness), we find the situation defined more precisely in ch. xxiii. 19, as "*to the right (i.e. on the south) of the wilderness*" (Jeshimon).—Vers. 3, 4. When David saw (*i.e.* perceived) in the desert that Saul was coming behind him, he sent out spies, and learned from them *that he certainly had come* (אֵלֶיךָ, for a certainty, as in ch. xxiii. 23).—Vers. 5 sqq. Upon the receipt of this information, David rose up with two attendants (mentioned in ver. 6) to reconnoitre the camp of Saul. When he saw the place where Saul and his general Abner were lying—Saul was lying *by the waggon rampart*, and the fighting men were encamped round about him—he said to Ahimelech and Abishai, "*Who will go down with me into the camp to Saul?*" Whereupon Abishai declared himself ready to do so; and they both went by night, and found Saul sleeping with all the people. *Ahimelech* the Hittite is never mentioned again; but *Abishai* the son of

Zeruiah, David's sister (1 Chron. ii. 16), and a brother of Joab, was afterwards a celebrated general of David, as was also his brother Joab (2 Sam. xvi. 9, xviii. 2, xxi. 17). Saul's spear was *pressed* (stuck) *into the ground at his head*, as a sign that the king was sleeping there, for the spear served Saul as a sceptre (cf. ch. xviii. 10).—Ver. 8. When Abishai exclaimed, "*God hath delivered thine enemy into thy hand: now will I pierce him with the spear into the ground with a stroke, and will give no second*" (sc. stroke: the Vulgate rendering gives the sense exactly: *et secundo non opus erit*, there will be no necessity for a second), David replied, "*Destroy him not; for who hath stretched out his hand against the anointed of the Lord, and remained unhurt?*" נִקָּה, as in Ex. xxi. 19, Num. v. 31. He then continued (in vers. 10, 11): "*As truly as Jehovah liveth, unless Jehovah smite him* (i.e. carry him off with a stroke; cf. ch. xxv. 38), *or his day cometh that he dies* (i.e. or he dies a natural death; 'his day' denoting the day of death, as in Job xiv. 6, xv. 32), *or he goes into battle and is carried off, far be it from me with Jehovah* (מִיְהוָה, as in ch. xxiv. 7) *to stretch forth my hand against Jehovah's anointed.*" The apodosis to ver. 10 commences with חֲלִילָה, "far be it," or "the Lord forbid," in ver. 11. "*Take now the spear which is at his head, and the pitcher, and let us go.*"—Ver. 12. They departed with these trophies, without any one waking up and seeing them, because they were all asleep, as a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen upon them. מִרֶאשִׁיתוֹ שָׁאֵל stands for 'מִמֶּרְאשִׁיתוֹ ש', "from the head of Saul," with מ dropped. The expression "*a deep sleep of Jehovah*," i.e. a deep sleep sent or inflicted by Jehovah, points to the fact that the Lord favoured David's enterprise.

Vers. 13-20. "*And David went over to the other side, and placed himself upon the top of the mountain afar off* (the space between them was great), *and cried to the people,*" etc. Saul had probably encamped with his fighting men on the slope of the hill Hachilah, so that a valley separated him from the opposite hill, from which David had no doubt reconnoitred the camp and then *gone down* to it (ver. 6), and to which he returned after the deed was accomplished. The statement that this mountain was far off, so that there was a great space between David and Saul, not only favours the accuracy of the historical tradition, but shows that David reckoned far less

now upon any change in the state of Saul's mind than he had done before, when he followed Saul without hesitation from the cave and called after him (ch. xxiv. 9), and that in fact he rather feared lest Saul should endeavour to get him into his power as soon as he woke from his sleep.—Ver. 14. David called out to Abner, whose duty it was as general to defend the life of his king. And Abner replied, "*Who art thou, who criest out to the king?*" i.e. offendest the king by thy shouting, and disturbest his rest.—Vers. 15, 16. David in return taunted Abner with having watched the king carelessly, and made himself chargeable with his death. "*For one of the people came to destroy thy lord the king.*" As a proof of this, he then showed him the spear and pitcher that he had taken away with him. הֲאֵלֶּה is to be repeated in thought before הִנֵּה צֶמֶד: "*look where the king's spear is; and (look) at the pitcher at his head,*" sc. where it is. These reproaches that were cast at Abner were intended to show to Saul, who might at any rate possibly hear, and in fact did hear, that David was the most faithful defender of his life, more faithful than his closest and most zealous servants.—Vers. 17, 18. When Saul heard David's voice (for he could hardly have seen David, as the occurrence took place before daybreak, at the latest when the day began to dawn), and David had made himself known to the king in reply to his inquiry, David said, "*Why doth my lord pursue his servant? for what have I done, and what evil is in my hand?*" He then gave him the well-meant advice, to seek reconciliation for his wrath against him, and not to bring upon himself the guilt of allowing David to find his death in a foreign land. The words, "*and now let my lord the king hear the saying of his servant,*" serve to indicate that what follows is important, and worthy of laying to heart. In his words, David supposes two cases as conceivable causes of Saul's hostility: (1) if Jehovah hath stirred thee up against me; (2) if men have done so. In the first case, he proposes as the best means of overcoming this instigation, that He (Jehovah) should smell an offering. The *Hiphil* רָיַח only means to smell, not to cause to smell. The subject is Jehovah. Smelling a sacrifice is an anthropomorphic term, used to denote the divine satisfaction (cf. Gen. viii. 21). The meaning of the words, "*let Jehovah smell sacrifice,*" is therefore, "let Saul appease the wrath of God by the presentation of acceptable sacrifices." What

sacrifices they are which please God, is shown in Ps. li. 18, 19; and it is certainly not by accident merely that David uses the word *minchah*, the technical expression in the law for the bloodless sacrifice, which sets forth the sanctification of life in good works. The thought to which David gives utterance here, namely, that God instigates a man to evil actions, is met with in other passages of the Old Testament. It not only lies at the foundation of the words of David in Ps. li. 6 (cf. Hengstenberg on *Psalms*), but is also clearly expressed in 2 Sam. xxiv. 1, where Jehovah instigates David to number the people, and where this instigation is described as a manifestation of the anger of God against Israel; and in 2 Sam. xvi. 10 sqq., where David says, with regard to Shimei, that God had bade him curse him. These passages also show that God only instigates those who have sinned against Him to evil deeds; and therefore that the instigation consists in the fact that God impels sinners to manifest the wickedness of their hearts in deeds, or furnishes the opportunity and occasion for the unfolding and practical manifestation of the evil desires of the heart, that the sinner may either be brought to the knowledge of his more evil ways and also to repentance, through the evil deed and its consequences, or, if the heart should be hardened still more by the evil deed, that it may become ripe for the judgment of death. The instigation of a sinner to evil is simply one peculiar way in which God, as a general rule, punishes sins through sinners; for God only instigates to evil actions such as have drawn down the wrath of God upon themselves in consequence of their sin. When David supposes the fact that Jehovah has instigated Saul against him, he acknowledges, implicitly at least, that he himself is a sinner, whom the Lord may be intending to punish, though without lessening Saul's wrong by this indirect confession.

The second supposition is: "*if, however, children of men*" (*sc.* have instigated thee against me); in which case "*let them be cursed before the Lord; for they drive me now (this day) that I dare not attach myself to the inheritance of Jehovah (i.e. the people of God), saying, Go, serve other gods.*" The meaning is this: They have carried it so far now, that I am obliged to separate from the people of God, to fly from the land of the Lord, and, because far away from His sanctuary, to serve other gods. The idea implied in the closing words was, that Jehovah could

only be worshipped in Canaan, at the sanctuary consecrated to Him, because it was only there that He manifested himself to His people, and revealed His face or gracious presence (*vid.* Ps. xlii. 2, 3, lxxxiv. 11, cxliii. 6 sqq.). "We are not to understand that the enemies of David were actually accustomed to use these very words, but David was thinking of deeds rather than words" (Calvin).—Ver. 20. "*And now let not my blood fall to the earth far away from the face of the Lord,*" i.e. do not carry it so far as to compel me to perish in a foreign land. "*For the king of Israel has gone out to seek a single flea* (*vid.* ch. xxiv. 15), *as one hunts a partridge upon the mountains.*" This last comparison does not of course refer to the first, so that "the object of comparison is compared again with something else," as Thenius supposes, but it refers rather to the whole of the previous clause. The king of Israel is pursuing something very trivial, and altogether unworthy of his pursuit, just as if one were hunting a partridge upon the mountains. "No one would think it worth his while to hunt a single partridge that had flown to the mountains, when they may be found in coveys in the fields" (Winer, *Bibl. R. W.* ii. p. 307). This comparison, therefore, does not presuppose that מִן־הַבְּרִיָּה must be a bird living upon the mountains, as Thenius maintains, so as to justify his altering the text according to the Septuagint. These words of David were perfectly well adapted to sharpen Saul's conscience, and induce him to desist from his enmity, if he still had an ear for the voice of truth.

Vers. 21-25. Moreover, Saul could not help confessing, "*I have sinned: return, my son David; I will do thee harm no more, because my life was precious in thine eyes that day.*" A good intention, which he never carried out. "He declared that he would never do any more what he had already so often promised not to do again; and yet he did not fail to do it again and again. He ought rather to have taken refuge with God, and appealed to Him for grace, that he might not fall into such sins again; yea, he should have entreated David himself to pray for him" (*Berleb. Bible*). He adds still further, "*Behold, I have acted foolishly, and have gone sore astray;*" but yet he persists in this folly. "There is no sinner so hardened, but that God gives him now and then some rays of light, which show him all his error. But, alas! when they

are awakened by such divine movings, it is only for a few moments; and such impulses are no sooner past, than they fall back again immediately into their former life, and forget all that they have promised."—Vers. 22, 23. David then bade the king send a servant to fetch back the spear and pitcher, and reminded him again of the recompense of God: "*Jehovah will recompense His righteousness and His faithfulness to the man into whose hand Jehovah hath given thee to-day; and (for) I would not stretch out my hand against the anointed of the Lord.*"—Ver. 24. "*Behold, as thy soul has been greatly esteemed in my eyes to-day, so will my soul be greatly esteemed in the eyes of Jehovah, that He will save me out of all tribulation.*" These words do not contain any "sounding of his own praises" (Thenius), but are merely the testimony of a good conscience before God in the presence of an enemy, who is indeed obliged to confess his wrong-doing, but who no longer feels or acknowledges his need of forgiveness. For even Saul's reply to these words in ver. 25 ("*Blessed art thou, my son David: thou wilt undertake, and also prevail.*" יֵבֶל הַיָּבֹל, *lit.* to vanquish, *i.e.* to carry out what one undertakes) does not express any genuine goodwill towards David, but only an acknowledgment, forced upon him by this fresh experience of David's magnanimity, that God was blessing all his undertakings, so that he would prevail. Saul had no more thoughts of any real reconciliation with David. "*David went his way, and Saul turned to his place*" (cf. Num. xxiv. 25). Thus they parted, and never saw each other again. There is nothing said about Saul returning to his house, as there was when his life was first spared (ch. xxiv. 23). On the contrary, he does not seem to have given up pursuing David; for, according to ch. xxvii., David was obliged to take refuge in a foreign land, and carry out what he had described in ver. 19 as his greatest calamity.

DAVID AT ZIKLAG IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES.—

CHAP. XXVII.

In his despair of being able permanently to escape the plots of Saul in the land of Israel, David betook himself, with his attendants, to the neighbouring land of the Philistines, to king Achish of Gath, and received from him the town of Ziklag,

which was assigned him at his own request as a dwelling-place (vers. 1-7). From this point he made attacks upon certain tribes on the southern frontier of Canaan which were hostile to Israel, but described them to Achish as attacks upon Judah and its dependencies, that he might still retain the protection of the Philistian chief (vers. 8-12). David had fled to Achish at Gath once before; but on that occasion he had been obliged to feign insanity in order to preserve his life, because he was recognised as the conqueror of Goliath. This act of David was not forgotten by the Philistines even now. But as David had been pursued by Saul for many years, Achish did not hesitate to give a place of refuge in his land to the fugitive who had been outlawed by the king of Israel, the arch-enemy of the Philistines, possibly with the hope that if a fresh war with Saul should break out, he should be able to reap some advantage from David's friendship.

Vers. 1-7. The result of the last affair with Saul, after his life had again been spared, could not fail to confirm David in his conviction that Saul would not desist from pursuing him, and that if he stayed any longer in the land, he would fall eventually into the hands of his enemy. With this conviction, he formed the following resolution: "*Now shall I be consumed one day by the hand of Saul: there is no good to me (i.e. it will not be well with me if I remain in the land), but (וְאַחֲרָיִם after a negative) I will flee into the land of the Philistines; so will Saul desist from me to seek me further (i.e. give up seeking me) in the whole of the territory of Israel, and I shall escape his hand.*"—

Ver. 2. Accordingly he went over with the 600 men who were with him to Achish, the king of Gath. *Achish*, the son of *Maach*, is in all probability the same person not only as the king *Achish* mentioned in ch. xxi. 11, but also as *Achish* the son of *Maachah* (1 Kings ii. 39), since *Maach* and *Maachah* are certainly only different forms of the same name; and a fifty years' reign, which we should have in that case to ascribe to Achish, is not impossible.—Vers. 3, 4. Achish allotted dwelling-places in his capital, Gath, for David and his wives, and for all his retinue; and Saul desisted from any further pursuit of David when he was informed of his flight to Gath. The *Chethibh* חֶתִּי is apparently only a copyist's error for חֵתִּי.—Vers. 5 sqq. In the capital of the kingdom, however, David

felt cramped, and therefore entreated Achish to assign him one of the land (or provincial) towns to dwell in; whereupon he gave him *Ziklag* for that purpose. This town was given to the Simeonites in the time of Joshua (Josh. xix. 5), but was afterwards taken by the Philistines, probably not long before the time of David, and appears to have been left without inhabitants in consequence of this conquest. The exact situation, in the western part of the Negeb, has not been clearly ascertained (see at Josh. xv. 31). Achish appears to have given it to David. This is implied in the remark, "*Therefore Ziklag came to the kings of Judah (i.e. became their property) unto this day.*"—Ver. 7. The statement that David remained a year and four months in the land of the Philistines, is a proof of the historical character of the whole narrative. The *יָמֵי* before the "four months" signifies *a year*; strictly speaking, a term of days which amounted to a full year (as in Lev. xxv. 29: see also 1 Sam. i. 3, 20, ii. 19).

Vers. 8–12. From *Ziklag* David made an attack upon the Geshurites, Gerzites, and Amalekites, smote them without leaving a man alive, and returned with much booty. The occasion of this attack is not mentioned, as being a matter of indifference in relation to the chief object of the history; but it is no doubt to be sought for in plundering incursions made by these tribes into the land of Israel. For David would hardly have entered upon such a war in the situation in which he was placed at that time without some such occasion, seeing that it would be almost sure to bring him into suspicion with Achish, and endanger his safety. *וַיֵּצֵא*, "*he advanced*," the verb being used, as it frequently is, to denote the advance of an army against a people or town (see at Josh. viii. 1). At the same time, the tribes which he attacked may have had their seat upon the mountain plateau in the northern portion of the desert of Paran, so that David was obliged to march *up* to reach them. *וַיִּשָּׂא*, *to invade* for the purpose of devastation and plunder. *Geshuri* is a tribe mentioned in Josh. xiii. 2 as living in the south of the territory of the Philistines, and is a different tribe from the Geshurites in the north-east of Gilead (Josh. xii. 5, xiii. 11, 13; Deut. iii. 14). These are the only passages in which they are mentioned. The *Gerzites*, or *Gizrites* according to the *Keri*, are entirely unknown. Bonfrere and Clericus

suppose them to be the *Gerreni* spoken of in 2 Macc. xiii. 24, who inhabited the town of *Gerra*, between Rhinocolura and Pelusium (Strabo, xvi. 760), or *Gerron* (Ptol. iv. 5). This conjecture is a possible one, but is very uncertain nevertheless, as the Gerzites certainly dwelt somewhere in the desert of Arabia. At any rate Grotius and Ewald cannot be correct in their opinion that they were the inhabitants of *Gezer* (Josh. x. 33). The *Amalekites* were the remnant of this old hereditary foe of the Israelites, who had taken to flight on Saul's war of extermination, and had now assembled again (see at ch. xv. 8, 9). "For they inhabit the land, where you go from of old to Shur, even to the land of Egypt." The שָׁר before מִעוֹלָם may be explained from the fact that בִּישָׁר is not adverbial here, but is construed according to its form as an infinitive: literally, "where from of old thy coming is to Shur." שָׁר cannot have crept into the text through a copyist's mistake, as such a mistake would not have found its way into all the MSS. The fact that the early translators did not render the word proves nothing against its genuineness, but merely shows that the translators regarded it as superfluous. Moreover, the Alexandrian text is decidedly faulty here, and אֶלֶּם is confounded with אֶלֶּם , ἀπὸ Γελάμ. Shur is the desert of *Jifar*, which is situated in front of Egypt (as in ch. xv. 7). These tribes were nomads, and had large flocks, which David took with him as booty when he had smitten the tribes themselves. After his return, David betook himself to Achish, to report to the Philistian king concerning his enterprise, and deceive him as to its true character.—Ver. 10. Achish said, "Ye have not made an invasion to-day, have ye?" לֹא , like μὴ , in an interrogative sense; the ו has dropped out: *vid.* Ewald, § 324, b. David replied, "Against the south of Judah, and the south of the *Jerahmeelites*, and into the south of the *Kenites*," *sc.* we have made an incursion. This reply shows that the Geshurites, Gerzites, and Amalekites dwelt close to the southern boundary of Judah, so that David was able to represent the march against these tribes to Achish as a march against the south of Judah, to make him believe that he had been making an attack upon the southern territory of Judah and its dependencies. The *Negeb* of Judah is the land between the mountains of Judah and the desert of Arabia (see at Josh. xv. 21). The *Jerahmeelites* are the descendants of

Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron (1 Chron. ii. 9, 25, 26), and therefore one of the three large families of Judah who sprang from Hezron. They probably dwelt on the southern frontier of the tribe of Judah (*vid.* ch. xxx. 29). The *Kenites* were *protégés* of Judah (see at ch. xv. 6, and Judg. i. 16). In ver. 11 the writer introduces the remark, that in his raid David left neither man nor woman of his enemies alive, to take them to Gath, because he thought "*they might report against us, and say, Thus hath David done.*" There ought to be a major point under *וְיָצָא*, as the following clause does not contain the words of the slaughtered enemies, but is a clause appended by the historian himself, to the effect that David continued to act in that manner as long as he dwelt in the land of the Philistines. *וְיָצָא*, the mode of procedure; *lit.* the right which he exercised (see ch. viii. 9).—Ver. 12 is connected with ver. 10; Achish believed David's words, and said (to himself), "*He hath made himself stinking (i.e. hated) among his own people, among Israel, and will be my servant (i.e. subject to me) for ever.*"

DAVID IN THE ARMY OF THE PHILISTINES. ATTACK UPON ISRAEL. SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR.—CHAP. XXVIII.

Vers. 1, 2. The danger into which David had plunged through his flight into the land of the Philistines, and still more through the artifice with which he had deceived king Achish as to his real feelings, was to be very soon made apparent to him. For example, when the Philistines went to war again with Israel, Achish summoned him to go with his men in the army of the Philistines to the war against his own people and land, and David could not disregard the summons. But even if he had not brought himself into this danger without some fault of his own, he had at any rate only taken refuge with the Philistines in the greatest extremity; and what further he had done, was only done to save his own life. The faithful covenant God helped him therefore out of this trouble, and very soon afterwards put an end to his persecution by the fact that Saul lost his life in the war.—Ver. 1. "*In those days,*" *i.e.* whilst David was living in the land of the Philistines, it came to pass that the Philistines gathered their armies together for a campaign against Israel. And Achish sent word to David that he

was to go with him in his army along with his men; and David answered (ver. 2), "*Thereby (on this occasion) thou shalt learn what thy servant will do.*" This reply was ambiguous. The words "what thy servant will do" contained no distinct promise of faithful assistance in the war with the Israelites, as the expression "*thy servant*" is only the ordinary periphrasis for "*I*" in conversation with a superior. And there is just as little ground for inferring from ch. xxix. 8 that David was disposed to help the Philistines against Saul and the Israelites; for, as Calovius has observed, even there he gives no such promise, but "merely asks for information, that he may discover the king's intentions and feelings concerning him: he simply protests that he has done nothing to prevent his placing confidence in him, or to cause him to shut him out of the battle." Judging from his previous acts, it would necessarily have been against his conscience to fight against his own people. Nevertheless, in the situation in which he was placed he did not venture to give a distinct refusal to the summons of the king. He therefore gave an ambiguous answer, in the hope that God would show him a way out of this conflict between his inmost conviction and his duty to obey the Philistian king. He had no doubt prayed earnestly for this in his heart. And the faithful God helped His servant: first of all by the fact that Achish accepted his indefinite declaration as a promise of unconditional fidelity, as his answer "*so (כן, itaque, i.e. that being the case, if thy conduct answers to thy promise) I will make thee the keeper of my head*" (i.e. of my person) implies; and still more fully by the fact that the princes of the Philistines overturned the decision of their king (ch. xxix. 3 sqq.).

Vers. 3-25. *Saul with the witch at Endor.*—The invasion of Israel by the Philistines, which brought David into so difficult a situation, drove king Saul to despair, so that in utter helplessness he had recourse to ungodly means of inquiring into the future, which he himself had formerly prohibited, and to his horror had to hear the sentence of his own death. This account is introduced with the remark in ver. 3 that Samuel was dead and had been buried at Ramah (cf. ch. xxv. 1; וְשָׁמַיִם, with an explanatory *vav*, and indeed in his own city), and that Saul had expelled "*those that had familiar spirits and the wizards out of the land*" (on the terms employed, *oboth* and *yiddonim*,

see at Lev. xix. 31). He had done this in accordance with the law in Lev. xix. 31, xx. 27, and Deut. xviii. 10 sqq.—Vers. 4, 5. When the Philistines advanced and encamped at *Shunem*, Saul brought all Israel together and encamped at *Gilboa*, i.e. upon the mountain of that name on the north-eastern edge of the plain of Jezreel, which slopes off from a height of about 1250 feet into the valley of the Jordan, and is not far from Beisan. On the north of the western extremity of this mountain was *Shunem*, the present *Sulem* or *Solam* (see at Josh. xix. 18); it was hardly two hours distant, so that the camp of the Philistines might be seen from Gilboa. When Saul saw this, he was thrown into such alarm that his heart greatly trembled. As Saul had been more than once victorious in his conflicts with the Philistines, his great fear at the sight of the Philistian army can hardly be attributed to any other cause than the feeling that God had forsaken him, by which he was suddenly overwhelmed.—Ver. 6. In his anxiety he inquired of the Lord; but the Lord neither answered him by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets, that is to say, not by any of the three media by which He was accustomed to make known His will to Israel. *שאל ביהוה* is the term usually employed to signify inquiring the will and counsel of God through the Urim and Thummim of the high priest (see at Judg. i. 1); and this is the case here, with the simple difference that here the other means of inquiring the counsel of God are also included. On dreams, see at Num. xii. 6. According to Num. xxvii. 21, *Urim* denotes divine revelation through the high priest *by means of the ephod*. But the high priest Abiathar had been with the ephod in David's camp ever since the murder of the priests at Nob (ch. xxii. 20 sqq., xxiii. 6, xxx. 7). How then could Saul inquire of God through the Urim? This question, which was very copiously discussed by the earlier commentators, and handled in different ways, may be decided very simply on the supposition, that after the death of Ahimelech and the flight of his son, another high priest had been appointed at the tabernacle, and another ephod made for him, with the *choshen* or breastplate, and the Urim and Thummim. It is no proof to the contrary that there is nothing said about this. We have no continuous history of the worship at the tabernacle, but only occasional notices. And from these it is perfectly clear that the public worship at the tabernacle was

not suspended on the murder of the priests, but was continued still. For in the first years of David's reign we find the tabernacle at Gibeon, and Zadok the son of Ahitub, of the line of Eleazar, officiating there as high priest (1 Chron. xvi. 39, compared with ch. v. 38 and vi. 38); from which it follows with certainty, that after the destruction of Nob by Saul the tabernacle was removed to Gibeon, and the worship of the congregation continued there. From this we may also explain in a very simple manner the repeated allusions to two high priests in David's time (2 Sam. viii. 17, xv. 24, 29, 35; 1 Chron. xv. 11, xviii. 16). The reason why the Lord did not answer Saul is to be sought for in the wickedness of Saul, which rendered him utterly unworthy to find favour with God.

Vers. 7-14. Instead of recognising this, however, and searching his own heart, Saul attempted to obtain a revelation of the future in ungodly ways. He commanded his servants (ver. 7) to seek for a woman that had a familiar spirit. *Baalath-ob*: the mistress (or possessor) of a conjuring spirit, *i.e.* of a spirit with which the dead were conjured up, for the purpose of making inquiry concerning the future (see at Lev. xix. 31). There was a woman of this kind at *Endor*, which still exists as a village under the old name upon the northern shoulder of the *Duhy* or Little Hermon (see at Josh. xvii. 11), and therefore only two German (ten English) miles from the Israelitish camp at Gilboa.—Ver. 8. Saul went to this person by night and in disguise, that he might not be recognised, accompanied by two men; and said to her, “*Divine to me through necromancy, and bring me up whomsoever I tell thee.*” The words “bring me up,” etc., are an explanation or more precise definition of “divine unto me,” etc. Prophesying by the *Ob* was probably performed by calling up a departed spirit from Sheol, and obtaining prophecies, *i.e.* disclosures concerning one's own fate, through the medium of such a spirit. On the form *חֵתִּיבָה* (*Chethibh*), see at Judg. ix. 8.—Ver. 9. Such a demand placed the woman in difficulty. As Saul had driven the necromantists out of the land, she was afraid that the unknown visitor (for it is evident from ver. 12 that she did not recognise Saul at first) might be laying a snare for her soul with his request, to put her to death, *i.e.* might have come to her merely for the purpose of spying her out as a conjurer of the dead, and then inflicting

capital punishment upon her according to the law (Lev. xx. 27).—Vers. 10, 11. But when Saul swore to her that no punishment should fall upon her on that account (וְלֹא יִפְּלוּ עָלֶיךָ, “*shall assuredly not fall upon thee*”), an oath which showed how utterly hardened Saul was, she asked him, “*Whom shall I bring up to thee?*” and Saul replied, “*Bring me up Samuel,*” *sc.* from the region of the dead, or *Sheol*, which was thought to be under the ground. This idea arose from the fact that the dead were buried in the earth, and was connected with the thought of heaven as being above the earth. Just as heaven, regarded as the abode of God and the holy angels and blessed spirits, is above the earth; so, on the other hand, the region of death and the dead is beneath the ground. And with our modes of thought, which are so bound up with time and space, it is impossible to represent to ourselves in any other way the difference and contrast between blessedness with God and the shade-life in death.—Ver. 12. The woman then commenced her conjuring arts. This must be supplied from the context, as ver. 12 merely states what immediately ensued. “*When the woman saw Samuel, she cried aloud,*” *sc.* at the form which appeared to her so unexpectedly. These words imply most unquestionably that the woman saw an apparition which she did not anticipate, and therefore that she was not really able to conjure up departed spirits or persons who had died, but that she either merely pretended to do so, or if her witchcraft was not mere trickery and delusion, but had a certain demoniacal background, that the appearance of Samuel differed essentially from everything she had experienced and effected before, and therefore filled her with alarm and horror. The very fact, however, that she recognised Saul as soon as Samuel appeared, precludes us from declaring her art to have been nothing more than jugglery and deception; for she said to him, “*Why hast thou cheated me, as thou art certainly Saul?*” *i.e.* why hast thou deceived me as to thy person? why didst thou not tell me that thou wast king Saul? Her recognition of Saul when Samuel appeared may be easily explained, if we assume that the woman had fallen into a state of *clairvoyance*, in which she recognised persons who, like Saul in his disguise, were unknown to her by face.—Ver. 13. The king quieted her fear, and then asked her what she had seen; whereupon she gave him a fuller descrip-

tion of the apparition : "*I saw a celestial being come up from the earth.*" *Elohim* does not signify gods here, nor yet God ; still less an angel or a ghost, or even a person of superior rank, but a celestial (super-terrestrial), heavenly, or spiritual being.—Ver. 14. Upon Saul's further inquiry as to his form, she replied, "*An old man is ascending, and he is wrapped in a mantle.*" *Meil* is the prophet's mantle, such as Samuel was accustomed to wear when he was alive (see ch. xv. 27). Saul recognised from this that the person who had been called up was Samuel, and he fell upon his face to the ground, to give expression to his reverence. Saul does not appear to have seen the apparition itself. But it does not follow from this that there was no such apparition at all, and the whole was an invention on the part of the witch. It needs an opened eye, such as all do not possess, to see a departed spirit or celestial being. The eyes of the body are not enough for this.

Vers. 15-22. Then Samuel said, "*Why hast thou disturbed me (sc. from my rest in Hades ; cf. Isa. xiv. 9), to bring me up ?*" It follows, no doubt, from this that Samuel had been disturbed from his rest by Saul ; but whether this had been effected by the conjuring arts of the witch, or by a miracle of God himself, is left undecided. Saul replied, "*I am sore oppressed, for the Philistines fight against me, and God has departed from me, and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams ; then I had thee called (on the intensified form אֶקְרָאתִי, vid. Ewald, § 228, c), to make known to me what I am to do.*" The omission of any reference to the Urim is probably to be interpreted very simply from the brevity of the account, and not from the fact that Saul shrank from speaking about the oracle of the high priest, on account of the massacre of the priests which had taken place by his command. There is a contradiction, however, in Saul's reply : for if God had forsaken him, he could not expect any answer from Him ; and if God did not reply to his inquiry through the regularly appointed media of His revelation, how could he hope to obtain any divine revelation through the help of a witch ? "When living prophets gave no answer, he thought that a dead one might be called up, as if a dead one were less dependent upon God than the living, or that, even in opposition to the will of God, he might reply through the arts of a conjuring woman. Truly, if he perceived that God was hostile to

him, he ought to have been all the more afraid, lest His enmity should be increased by his breach of His laws. But fear and superstition never reason" (Clericus). Samuel points out this contradiction (ver. 16): "*Why dost thou ask me, since Jehovah hath departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?*" The meaning is: How canst thou expect an answer under these circumstances from me, the prophet of Jehovah? עֹרֵב, from עָרַב, signifies an enemy here (from עָרַב, *ferveur*); and this meaning is confirmed by Ps. cxxxix. 20 and Dan. iv. 16 (Chald.). There is all the less ground for any critical objection to the reading, as the Chaldee and Vulgate give a periphrastic rendering of "enemy," whilst the Sept., Syr., and Arab. have merely paraphrased according to conjectures. Samuel then announced his fate (vers. 17–19): "*Jehovah hath performed for himself, as He spake by me* (אֵלַי, for himself, which the LXX. and Vulg. have arbitrarily altered into לָךְ, σοί, *tibi* (to thee), is correctly explained by Seb. Schmidt, 'according to His grace, or to fulfil and prove His truth'); *and Jehovah hath rent the kingdom out of thy hand, and given it to thy neighbour David.*" The perfects express the purpose of God, which had already been formed, and was now about to be fulfilled.—Ver. 18. The reason for Saul's rejection is then given, as in ch. xv. 23: "*Because* (בְּאִשֶּׁר, according as) *thou . . . hast not executed the fierceness of His anger upon Amalek, therefore hath Jehovah done this thing to thee this day.*" "*This thing*" is the distress of which Saul had complained, with its consequences. וְיָתַן, that Jehovah may give (= for He will give) *Israel also with thee into the hand of the Philistines.* "*To-morrow wilt thou and thy sons be with me* (i.e. in Sheol, with the dead); *also the camp of Israel will Jehovah give into the hand of the Philistines,*" i.e. give up to them to plunder. The overthrow of the people was to heighten Saul's misery, when he saw the people plunged with him into ruin through his sin (O. v. Gerlach). Thus was the last hope taken from Saul. His day of grace was gone, and judgment was now to burst upon him without delay.—Ver. 20. These words so alarmed him, that he fell his whole length upon the ground; for he had been kneeling hitherto (ver. 14). *He "fell straightway* (lit. he hastened and fell) *upon the ground. For he was greatly terrified at the words of Samuel: there was also no strength in him, because he had eaten no food the whole day and the whole night,"* sc. from

mental perturbation or inward excitement. Terror and bodily exhaustion caused him to fall powerless to the ground.—Vers. 21, 22. The woman then came to him and persuaded him to strengthen himself with food for the journey which he had to take. It by no means follows from the expression “*came unto Saul*,” that the woman was in an adjoining room during the presence of the apparition, and whilst Samuel was speaking, but only that she was standing at some distance off, and came up to him to speak to him when he had fallen fainting to the ground. As she had fulfilled his wish at the risk of her own life, she entreated him now to gratify her wish, and let her set a morsel of bread before him and eat. “*That strength may be in thee when thou goest thy way*” (i.e. when thou returnest).

This narrative, when read without prejudice, makes at once and throughout the impression conveyed by the Septuagint at 1 Chron. x. 13: ἐπηρώτησε Σαοὺλ ἐν τῷ ἐγγαστριμύθῳ τοῦ ζητήσαι, καὶ ἀπεκρίνατο αὐτῷ Σαμουὴλ ὁ προφήτης; and still more clearly at Ecclus. xlvi. 20, where it is said of Samuel: “And after his death he prophesied, and showed the king his end, and lifted up his voice from the earth in prophecy, to blot out the wickedness of the people.” Nevertheless the fathers, reformers, and earlier Christian theologians, with very few exceptions, assumed that there was not a real appearance of Samuel, but only an imaginary one. According to the explanation given by Ephraem Syrus, an apparent image of Samuel was presented to the eye of Saul through demoniacal arts. Luther and Calvin adopted the same view, and the earlier Protestant theologians followed them in regarding the apparition as nothing but a diabolical spectre, a phantasm, or diabolical spectre in the form of Samuel, and Samuel’s announcement as nothing but a diabolical revelation made by divine permission, in which truth is mixed with falsehood.¹ It was not till the

¹ Thus Luther says (in his work upon the abuses of the Mass, 1522): “The raising of Samuel by a soothsayer or witch, in 1 Sam. xxviii. 11, 12, was certainly merely a spectre of the devil; not only because the Scriptures state that it was effected by a woman who was full of devils (for who could believe that the souls of believers, who are in the hand of God, Ecclus. iii. 1, and in the bosom of Abraham, Luke xvi. 32, were under the power of the devil, and of simple men?), but also because it was evidently in opposition to the command of God that Saul and the woman inquired of the dead. The Holy Ghost cannot do anything against this himself, nor can He help

seventeenth century that the opinion was expressed, that the apparition of Samuel was merely a delusion produced by the witch, without any real background at all. After Reginald Scotus and Balth. Becker had given expression to this opinion, it was more fully elaborated by Ant. van Dale, in his *dissert. de divinationibus idololatricis sub V. T.*; and in the so-called age of enlightenment this was the prevailing opinion, so that Thenius still regards it as an established fact, not only that the woman was an impostor, but that the historian himself regarded the whole thing as an imposture. There is no necessity to refute this opinion at the present day. Even Fr. Boettcher (*de inferis*, pp. 111 sqq.), who looks upon the thing as an imposture, admits that the first recorder of the occurrence "believed that Samuel appeared and prophesied, *contrary to the expectation* of the witch;" and that the author of the books of Samuel was convinced that the prophet was raised up and prophesied, so that after his death he was proved to be the true prophet of Jehovah, although through the intervention of ungodly arts (cf. Ezek. xiv. 7, 9). But the view held by the early church does not do justice to the scriptural narrative; and hence the more modern orthodox commentators are unanimous in the opinion that the departed prophet did really appear and announce the destruction of Saul, not, however, in consequence of the magical arts of the witch, but through a miracle wrought by the omnipotence of God. This is most decidedly favoured by the fact, that the prophetic historian speaks throughout of the appearance, not of

those who act in opposition to it." Calvin also regards the apparition as only a spectre (Hom. 100 in 1 Sam.): "It is certain," he says, "that it was not really Samuel, for God would never have allowed His prophets to be subjected to such diabolical conjuring. For here is a sorceress calling up the dead from the grave. Does any one imagine that God wished His prophet to be exposed to such ignominy; as if the devil had power over the bodies and souls of the saints which are in His keeping? The souls of the saints are said to rest and live in God, waiting for their happy resurrection. Besides, are we to believe that Samuel took his cloak with him into the grave? For all these reasons, it appears evident that the apparition was nothing more than a spectre, and that the senses of the woman herself were so deceived, that she thought she saw Samuel, whereas it really was not he." The earlier orthodox theologians also disputed the reality of the appearance of the departed Samuel on just the same grounds; e.g. Seb. Schmidt (*Comm.*); Aug. Pfeiffer; Sal. Deyling; and Buddeus, *Hist. Eccl. V. T.* ii p. 243, and many more.

a ghost, but of Samuel himself. He does this not only in ver. 12, "When the woman saw Samuel she cried aloud," but also in vers. 14, 15, 16, and 20. It is also sustained by the circumstance, that not only do the words of Samuel to Saul, in vers. 16-19, create the impression that it is Samuel himself who is speaking; but his announcement contains so distinct a prophecy of the death of Saul and his sons, that it is impossible to imagine that it can have proceeded from the mouth of an impostor, or have been an inspiration of Satan. On the other hand, the remark of Calvin, to the effect that "God sometimes gives to devils the power of revealing secrets to us, which they have learned from the Lord," could only be regarded as a valid objection, provided that the narrative gave us some intimation that the apparition and the speaking were nothing but a diabolical delusion. But it does nothing of the kind. It is true, the opinion that the witch conjured up the prophet Samuel was very properly disputed by the early theologians, and rejected by Theodoret as "unholy, and even impious;" and the text of Scripture indicates clearly enough that the very opposite was the case, by the remark that the witch herself was terrified at the appearance of Samuel (ver. 12). Shöbel is therefore quite correct in saying: "It was not at the call of the idolatrous king, nor at the command of the witch,—neither of whom had the power to bring him up, or even to make him hear their voice in his rest in the grave,—that Samuel came; nor was it merely by divine 'permission,' which is much too little to say. No, rather it was by the special command of God that he left his grave (?), like a faithful servant whom his master arouses at midnight, to let in an inmate of the house who has wilfully stopped out late, and has been knocking at the door. 'Why do you disturb me out of my sleep?' would always be the question put to the unwelcome comer, although it was not by his noise, but really by his master's command, that he had been aroused. Samuel asked the same question." The prohibition of witchcraft and necromancy (Deut. xviii. 11; Isa. viii. 19), which the earlier writers quote against this, does not preclude the possibility of God having, for His own special reasons, caused Samuel to appear. On the contrary, the appearance itself was of such a character, that it could not fail to show to the witch and the king, that God does not allow His prohibitions to be infringed

with impunity. The very same thing occurred here, which God threatened to idolaters through the medium of Ezekiel (ch. xiv. 4, 7, 8): "If they come to the prophet, I will answer them in my own way." Still less is there any force in the appeal to Luke xvi. 27 sqq., where Abraham refuses the request of the rich man in Hades, that he would send Lazarus to his father's house to preach repentance to his brethren who were still living, saying, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." For this does not affirm that the appearance of a dead man is a thing impossible in itself, but only describes it as useless and ineffectual, so far as the conversion of the ungodly is concerned.

The reality of the appearance of Samuel from the kingdom of the dead cannot therefore be called in question, especially as it has an analogon in the appearance of Moses and Elijah at the transfiguration of Christ (Matt. xvii. 3; Luke ix. 30, 31); except that this difference must not be overlooked, namely, that Moses and Elijah appeared "in glory," *i.e.* in a glorified form, whereas Samuel appeared in earthly corporeality with the prophet's mantle which he had worn on earth. Just as the transfiguration of Christ was a phenomenal anticipation of His future heavenly glory, into which He was to enter after His resurrection and ascension, so may we think of the appearance of Moses and Elijah "in glory" upon the mount of transfiguration as an anticipation of their heavenly transfiguration in eternal life with God. It was different with Samuel, whom God brought up from Hades through an act of His omnipotence. This appearance is not to be regarded as the appearance of one who had risen in a glorified body; but though somewhat spirit-like in its external manifestation, so that it was only to the witch that it was visible, and not to Saul, it was merely an appearance of the soul of Samuel, that had been at rest in Hades, in the clothing of the earthly corporeality and dress of the prophet, which were assumed for the purpose of rendering it visible. In this respect the appearance of Samuel rather resembled the appearances of incorporeal angels in human form and dress, such as the three angels who came to Abraham in the grove at Mamre (Gen. xviii.), and the angel who appeared to Manoah (Judg. xiii.); with this exception,

however, that these angels manifested themselves in a human form, which was visible to the ordinary bodily eye, whereas Samuel appeared in the spirit-like form of the inhabitants of Hades. In all these cases the bodily form and clothing were only a dress assumed for the soul or spirit, and intended to facilitate perception, so that such appearances furnish no proof that the souls of departed men possess an immaterial corporeality.¹

Vers. 23-25. On Saul's refusing to take food, his servants (*i.e.* his two attendants) also pressed him, so that he yielded, rose up from the ground, and sat down upon the bed (*mittah* : *i.e.* a bench by the wall of the room provided with pillows) ; whereupon the woman quickly sacrificed (served up) a stalled calf, baked unleavened cakes, and set the food she had prepared before the king and his servants. The woman did all this from natural sympathy for the unhappy king, and not, as Thenius supposes, to remove all suspicion of deception from Saul's mind ; for she had not deceived the king at all.—Ver. 25. When Saul and his servants had eaten, they started upon their way, and went back that night to Gilboa, which was about ten miles distant, where the battle occurred the next day, and Saul and his sons fell. "Saul was too hardened in his sin to express any grief or pain, either on his own account or because of the

¹ Delitzsch (*bibl. Psychol.* pp. 427 sqq.) has very properly rejected, not only the opinion that Samuel and Moses were raised up from the dead for the purpose of a transient appearance, and then died again, but also the idea that they appeared in their material bodies, a notion upon which Calvin rests his argument against the reality of the appearance of Samuel. But when he gives it as his opinion, that the angels who appeared in human form assumed this form by virtue of their own power, inasmuch as they can make themselves visible to whomsoever they please, and infers still further from this, "that the outward form in which Samuel and Moses appeared (which corresponded to their form when on this side the grave) was the immaterial production of their spiritual and psychical nature," he overlooks the fact, that not only Samuel, but the angels also, in the cases referred to, appeared in men's clothing, which cannot possibly be regarded as a production of their spiritual and psychical nature. The earthly dress is not indispensable to a man's existence. Adam and Eve had no clothing before the Fall, and there will be no material clothing in the kingdom of glory ; for the "fine linen, pure and white," with which the bride adorns herself for the marriage supper of the Lamb, is "the righteousness of saints" (Rev. xix. 8).

fate of his sons and his people. In stolid desperation he went to meet his fate. This was the terrible end of a man whom the Spirit of God had once taken possession of and turned into another man, and whom he had endowed with gifts to be the leader of the people of God" (O. v. Gerlach).

REMOVAL OF DAVID FROM THE ARMY OF THE PHILISTINES.—
CHAP. XXIX.

Vers. 1-5. Whilst Saul derived no comfort from his visit to the witch at Endor, but simply heard from the mouth of Samuel the confirmation of his rejection on the part of God, and an announcement of his approaching fate, David was delivered, through the interposition of God, from the danger of having to fight against his own people.—Ver. 1. The account of this is introduced by a fuller description of the position of the hostile army. "*The Philistines gathered all their armies together towards Aphek, but Israel encamped at the fountain in (at) Jezreel.*" This fountain is the present *Ain Jalûd* (or *Ain Jalût*, i.e. Goliath's fountain, probably so called because it was regarded as the scene of the defeat of Goliath), a very large fountain, which issues from a cleft in the rock at the foot of the mountain on the north-eastern border of Gilboa, forming a beautifully limpid pool of about forty or fifty feet in diameter, and then flowing in a brook through the valley (Rob. *Pal.* iii. p. 168). Consequently *Aphek*, which must be carefully distinguished from the towns of the same name in Asher (Josh. xix. 30; Judg. i. 31) and upon the mountains of Judah (Josh. xv. 53) and also at Ebenezer (1 Sam. iv. 1), is to be sought for not very far from *Shunem*, in the plain of Jezreel; according to Van de Velde's *Mem.*, by the side of the present *el Afûleh*, though the situation has not been exactly determined. The statement in the *Onom.*, "near Endor of Jezreel where Saul fought," is merely founded upon the Septuagint, in which עַזְרֵאֵל is erroneously rendered $\epsilon\nu\ \text{'E}\nu\delta\acute{o}\rho$.—Vers. 2, 3. When the princes of the Philistines (*sarne*, as in Josh. xiii. 3) advanced by hundreds and thousands (i.e. arranged in companies of hundreds and thousands), and David and his men came behind with Achish (i.e. forming the rear-guard), the (other) princes pronounced against their allowing David and his men to go with them.

This did not occur at the time of their setting out, but on the road, when they had already gone some distance (compare ver. 11 with ch. xxx. 1), probably when the five princes (Josh. xiii. 3) of the Philistines had effected a junction. To the inquiry, "*What are these Hebrews doing?*" Achish replied, "*Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who has been with me days already, or years already? and I have found nothing in him since his coming over unto this day.*" כִּי־אֵיכָה, anything at all that could render him suspicious, or his fidelity doubtful. נָפַל, to fall away and go over to a person; generally construed with לָ (Jer. xxxvii. 13, xxxviii. 19, etc.) or עַל (Jer. xxi. 9, xxxvii. 14; 1 Chron. xii. 19, 20), but here absolutely, as the more precise meaning can be gathered from the context.—Ver. 4. But the princes, *i.e.* the four other princes of the Philistines, not the courtiers of Achish himself, were angry with Achish, and demanded, "*Send the man back, that he may return to his place, which thou hast assigned him; that he may not go down with us into the war, and may not become an adversary (satan) to us in the war; for wherewith could he show himself acceptable to his lord (viz. Saul), if not with the heads of these men?*" הֲלֵינָא, *nonne*, strictly speaking, introduces a new question to confirm the previous question. "*Go down to the battle:*" this expression is used as in ch. xxvi. 10, xxx. 24, because battles were generally fought in the plains, into which the Hebrews were obliged to come down from their mountainous land. "*These men,*" *i.e.* the soldiers of the Philistines, to whom the princes were pointing.—Ver. 5. To justify their suspicion, the princes reminded him of their song with which the women in Israel had celebrated David's victory over Goliath (ch. xviii. 7).

Vers. 6-11. After this declaration on the part of the princes, Achish was obliged to send David back.—Vers. 6, 7. With a solemn assertion,—swearing by Jehovah to convince David all the more thoroughly of the sincerity of his declaration,—Achish said to him, "*Thou art honourable, and good in my eyes (i.e. quite right in my estimation) are thy going out and coming in (i.e. all thy conduct) with me in the camp, for I have not found anything bad in thee; but in the eyes of the princes thou art not good (i.e. the princes do not think thee honourable, do not trust thee). Turn now, and go in peace, that thou mayest do nothing displeasing to the princes of the Philistines.*"—Ver. 8. Partly for

the sake of vindicating himself against this suspicion, and partly to put the sincerity of Achish's words to the test, David replied, "*What have I done, and what hast thou found in thy servant, since I was with thee till this day, that I am not to come and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?*" These last words are also ambiguous, since the king whom David calls his lord might be understood as meaning either Achish or Saul. Achish, in his goodness of heart, applies them without suspicion to himself; for he assures David still more earnestly (ver. 9), that he is firmly convinced of his uprightness. "*I know that thou art good in my eyes as an angel of God,*" i.e. I have the strongest conviction that thou hast behaved as well towards me as an angel could; but the princes have desired thy removal.—Ver. 10. "*And now get up early in the morning with the servants of thy lord* (i.e. Saul, whose subjects David's men all were), *who have come with thee; get ye up in the morning when it gets light for you* (so that ye can see), *and go.*"—Ver. 11. In accordance with this admonition, David returned the next morning into the land of the Philistines, i.e. to Ziklag; no doubt very light of heart, and praising God for having so graciously rescued him out of the disastrous situation into which he had been brought and not altogether without some fault of his own, rejoicing that "he had not committed either sin, i.e. had neither violated the fidelity which he owed to Achish, nor had to fight against the Israelites" (Seb. Schmidt).

DAVID AVENGES UPON THE AMALEKITES THE PLUNDERING
AND BURNING OF ZIKLAG.—CHAP. XXX.

Vers. 1-10. During David's absence the Amalekites had invaded the south country, smitten Ziklag and burnt it down, and carried off the women and children whom they found there; whereat not only were David and his men plunged into great grief on their return upon the third day, but David especially was involved in very great trouble, inasmuch as the people wanted to stone him. But he strengthened himself in the Lord his God (vers. 1-6).—Vers. 1-4 form one period, which is expanded by the introduction of several circumstantial clauses. The apodosis to "It came to pass, when," etc. (ver. 1), does not follow till ver. 4, "Then David and the people," etc. But this is

formally attached to ver. 3, "so David and his men came," with which the protasis commenced in ver. 1 is resumed in an altered form. "*It came to pass, when David and his men came to Ziklag . . . the Amalekites had invaded . . . and had carried off the wives . . . and had gone their way, and David and his men came into the town* (for 'when David and his men came,' etc.), *and behold it was burned. . . . Then David and the people with him lifted up their voice.*" "On the third day:" after David's dismissal by Achish, not after David's departure from Ziklag. David had at any rate gone with Achish beyond Gath, and had not been sent back till the whole of the princes of the Philistines had united their armies (ch. xxix. 2 sqq.), so that he must have been absent from Ziklag more than two days, or two days and a half. This is placed beyond all doubt by vers. 11 sqq., since the Amalekites are there described as having gone off with their booty three days before David followed them, and therefore they had taken Ziklag and burned it three days before David's return. These foes had therefore taken advantage of the absence of David and his warriors, to avenge themselves for David's invasions and plunderings (ch. xxvii. 8). Of those who were carried off, "*the women*" alone are expressly mentioned in ver. 2, although the female population and all the children had been removed, as we may see from the expression "*small and great*" (vers. 3, 6). The LXX. were therefore correct, so far as the sense is concerned, in introducing the words *καὶ πάντα* before *אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶן*. "*They had killed no one, but (only) carried away.*" *נָהִי*, to carry away captive, as in Isa. xx. 4. Among those who had been carried off were David's two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail (*vid.* ch. xxv. 42, 43, xxvii. 3).—Ver. 6. David was greatly distressed in consequence; "*for the people thought* ('said,' *sc.* in their hearts) *to stone him,*" because they sought the occasion of their calamity in his connection with Achish, with which many of his adherents may very probably have been dissatisfied. "*For the soul of the whole people was embittered* (*i.e.* all the people were embittered in their souls) *because of their sons and daughters,*" who had been carried away into slavery. "*But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God,*" *i.e.* sought consolation and strength in prayer and believing confidence in the Lord (vers. 7 sqq.). This strength he manifested in the resolution to follow the foes and rescue their

booty from them. To this end he had the ephod brought by the high priest Abiathar (cf. ch. xxiii. 9), and inquired by means of the Urim of the Lord, "*Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake it?*" These questions were answered in the affirmative; and the promise was added, "*and thou wilt rescue.*" So David pursued the enemy with his six hundred men as far as the brook *Besor*, where the rest, *i.e.* two hundred, remained standing (stayed behind). The words *וַהֲנוֹתָרִים עִמָּדִי*, which are appended in the form of a circumstantial clause, are to be connected, so far as the facts are concerned, with what follows: whilst the others remained behind, David pursued the enemy still farther with four hundred men. By the word *וַהֲנוֹתָרִים* the historian has somewhat anticipated the matter, and therefore regards it as necessary to define the expression still further in ver. 10*b*. We are precluded from changing the text, as Thenius suggests, by the circumstance that all the early translators read it in this manner, and have endeavoured to make the expression intelligible by paraphrasing it. These two hundred men were too tired to cross the brook and go any farther. (*פָּנִי*, which only occurs here and in ver. 21, signifies, in Syriac, to be weary or exhausted.) As Ziklag was burnt down, of course they found no provisions there, and were consequently obliged to set out in pursuit of the foe without being able to provide themselves with the necessary supplies. The brook *Besor* is supposed to be the Wady *Sheriah*, which enters the sea below Ashkelon (see v. Raumer, *Pal.* p. 52).

Vers. 11–20. On their further march they found an Egyptian lying exhausted upon the field; and having brought him to David, they gave him food and drink, namely "*a slice of fig-cake* (cf. ch. xxv. 18), *and raisin-cakes to eat; whereupon his spirit of life returned* (*i.e.* he came to himself again), *as he had neither eaten bread nor drunk water for three days.*"—Ver. 13. When David asked him whence he had come (*to whom, i.e.* to what people or tribe, *dost thou belong?*), the young man said that he was an Egyptian, and servant of an Amalekite, and that he had been left behind by his master when he fell sick three days before ("*to-day three,*" *sc.* days): he also said, "*We invaded the south of the Crethites, and what belongs to Judah, and the south of Caleb, and burned Ziklag with fire.*" *וַהֲנוֹתָרִים*, identical with *בְּנֵהִים* (Ezek. xxv. 16; Zeph. ii. 5), denotes

those tribes of the Philistines who dwelt in the south-west of Canaan, and is used by Ezekiel and Zephaniah as synonymous with Philistim. The origin of the name is involved in obscurity, as the explanation which prevailed for a time, viz. that it was derived from *Creta*, is without sufficient foundation (*vid.* Stark, *Gaza*, pp. 66 and 99 sqq.). The Negeb "belonging to Judah" is the eastern portion of the Negeb. One part of it belonged to the family of Caleb, and was called Caleb's Negeb (*vid.* ch. xxv. 3).—Vers. 15, 16. This Egyptian then conducted David, at his request, when he had sworn that he would neither kill him nor deliver him up to his master, down to the hostile troops, who were spread over the whole land, eating, drinking, and making merry, on account of all the great booty which they had brought out of the land of the Philistines and Judah.—Ver. 17. David surprised them in the midst of their security, and smote them from the evening twilight till the evening of the next day, so that no one escaped, with the exception of four hundred young men, who fled upon camels. *Nesheph* signifies the evening twilight here, not the dawn,—a meaning which is not even sustained by Job vii. 4. The form מִחֶרֶם appears to be an adverbial formation, like יוֹמָם.—Vers. 18, 19. Through this victory David rescued all that the Amalekites had taken, his two wives, and all the children great and small; also the booty that they had taken with them, so that nothing was missing.—Ver. 20 is obscure: "*And David took all the sheep and the oxen: they drove them before those cattle, and said, This is David's booty.*" In order to obtain any meaning whatever from this literal rendering of the words, we must understand by the sheep and oxen those which belonged to the Amalekites, and the flocks taken from them as booty; and by "*those cattle*," the cattle belonging to David and his men, which the Amalekites had driven away, and the Israelites had now recovered from them: so that David had the sheep and oxen which he had taken from the Amalekites as booty driven in front of the rest of the cattle which the Israelites had recovered; whereupon the drovers exclaimed, "*This (the sheep and oxen) is David's booty.*" It is true that there is nothing said in what goes before about any booty that David had taken from the Amalekites, in addition to what they had taken from the Israelites; but the fact that David had really taken such booty is perfectly obvious

from vers. 26–31, where he is said to have sent portions of the booty of the enemies of Jehovah to different places in the land. If this explanation be not accepted, there is no other course open than to follow the Vulgate, alter לָפָנַי into לְפָנָיו, and render the middle clause thus: “*they drove those cattle* (viz. the sheep and oxen already mentioned) *before him,*” as Luther has done. But even in that case we could hardly understand anything else by the sheep and oxen than the cattle belonging to the Amalekites, and taken from them as booty.

Vers. 21–31. When David came back to the two hundred men whom he had left by the brook Besor (בֶּסֶר), they made them sit, remain), they went to meet him and his warriors, and were heartily greeted by David.—Ver. 22. Then all kinds of evil and worthless men of those who had gone with David to the battle replied: “*Because they have not gone with us* (lit. with me, the person speaking), *we will not give them any of the booty that we have seized, except to every one his wife and his children: they may lead them away, and go.*”—Vers. 23, 24. David opposed this selfish and envious proposal, saying, “*Do not so, my brethren, with that* (אִתָּךְ, the sign of the accusative, not the preposition; see Ewald, § 329, a: lit. with regard to that) *which Jehovah hath done to us, and He hath guarded us* (since He hath guarded us), *and given this troop which came upon us into our hand.* And who will hearken to you in this matter? *But* (כִּי, according to the negation involved in the question) *as the portion of him that went into the battle, so be the portion of him that stayed by the things; they shall share together.*” הוֹרֵד is a copyist’s error for הִירֵד.—Ver. 25. So was it from that day and forward; and he (David) made it (this regulation as to the booty) “*the law and right for Israel unto this day.*”—Vers. 26–31. When David returned to Ziklag, he sent portions of the booty to the elders of Judah, to his friends, with this message: “*Behold, here ye have a blessing of the booty of the enemies of Jehovah*” (which we took from the enemies of Jehovah); and this he did, according to ver. 31, to all the places in which he had wandered with his men, i.e. where he had wandered about during his flight from Saul, and in which he had no doubt received assistance. Sending these gifts could not fail to make the elders of these cities well disposed towards him, and so to facilitate his recognition as king after the death of Saul, which

occurred immediately afterwards. Some of these places may have been plundered by the Amalekites, since they had invaded the *Negeb* of Judah (ver. 14). The cities referred to were *Bethel*,—not the Bethel so often mentioned, the present *Beitin*, in the tribe of Benjamin, but *Bethuel* (1 Chron. iv. 30) or *Bethul*, in the tribe of Simeon (Josh. xix. 4), which Knobel supposes to be *Elusa* or *el Khalasa* (see at Josh. xv. 30). The reading *Βαυθοοῦρ* in the Septuagint is a worthless conjecture. *Ramah* of the south, which was allotted to the tribe of Simeon, has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xix. 8). *Jattir* has been preserved in the ruins of *Attir*, on the southern portion of the mountains of Judah (see at Josh. xv. 48). *Aroër* is still to be seen in ruins, viz. in the foundations of walls built of enormous stones in Wady Arara, where there are many cavities for holding water, about three hours E.S.E. of Bersaba, and twenty miles to the south of Hebron (*vid.* Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 620, and v. de Velde, *Mem.* p. 288). *Siphmoth* (or *Shiphmoth*, according to several MSS.) is altogether unknown. It may probably be referred to again in 1 Chron. xxvii. 27, where Zabdi is called the *Shiphmite*; but it is certainly not to be identified with *Sephram*, on the north-east of the sea of Galilee (Num. xxxiv. 10, 11), as Thenius supposes. *Eshtemoa* has been preserved in the village of *Semua*, with ancient ruins, on the south-western portion of the mountains of Judah (see at Josh. xv. 50). *Racal* is never mentioned again, and is entirely unknown. The LXX. have five different names instead of this, the last being *Carmel*, into which Thenius proposes to alter *Racal*. But this can hardly be done with propriety, as the LXX. also introduced the Philistian *Gath*, which certainly does not belong here; whilst in ver. 30 they have totally different names, some of which are decidedly wrong. The cities of the *Jerahmeelites* and *Kenites* were situated in the *Negeb* of Judah (ch. xxvii. 10), but their names cannot be traced.—Ver. 30. *Hormah* in the *Negeb* (Josh. xv. 30) is *Zephath*, the present *Zepáta*, on the western slope of the *Rakhma* plateau (see at Josh. xii. 14). *Cor-ashan*, probably the same place as *Ashan* in the *Shephelah*, upon the border of the *Negeb*, has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xv. 42). *Athach* is only mentioned here, and quite unknown. According to Thenius, it is probably a mistaken spelling for *Ether* in the tribe of Simeon

(Josh. xix. 7, xv. 43). *Hebron*, the present *el Khulil*, Abraham's city (see at Josh. x. 3; Gen. xxiii. 17).

DEATH AND BURIAL OF SAUL AND HIS SONS.—CHAP. XXXI.

The end of the unhappy king corresponded to his life ever since the day of his rejection as king. When he had lost the battle, and saw his three sons fallen at his side, and the archers of the enemy pressing hard upon him, without either repentance or remorse he put an end to his life by suicide, to escape the disgrace of being wounded and abused by the foe (vers. 1-7). But he did not attain his object; for the next day the enemy found his corpse and those of his sons, and proceeded to plunder, mutilate, and abuse them (vers. 8-10). However, the king of Israel was not to be left to perish in utter disgrace. The citizens of Jabesh remembered the deliverance which Saul had brought to their city after his election as king, and showed their gratitude by giving an honourable burial to Saul and his sons (vers. 11-13). There is a parallel to this chapter in 1 Chron. x., which agrees exactly with the account before us, with very few deviations indeed, and those mostly verbal, and merely introduces a hortatory clause at the end (vers. 13, 14).

Vers. 1-7. The account of the war between the Philistines and Israel, the commencement of which has already been mentioned in ch. xxviii. 1, 4 sqq., and xxix. 1, is resumed in ver. 1 in a circumstantial clause; and to this there is attached a description of the progress and result of the battle, more especially with reference to Saul. Consequently, in 1 Chron. x. 1, where there had been no previous allusion to the war, the participle *לִקְרָא* is changed into the perfect. The following is the way in which we should express the circumstantial clause: "Now when the Philistines were fighting against Israel, the men of Israel fled before the Philistines, and slain men fell in the mountains of Gilboa" (*vid.* ch. xxviii. 4). The principal engagement took place in the plain of Jezreel. But when the Israelites were obliged to yield, they fled up the mountains of Gilboa, and were pursued and slain there.—Vers. 2-4. The Philistines followed Saul, smote (*i.e.* put to death) his three sons (see at ch. xiv. 49), and fought fiercely against Saul himself. *When the archers* *בְּקִשְׁתָּם* is an explanatory apposition

to הַפְּזִירִים *hit him*, i.e. overtook him, *he was greatly alarmed at them* (יָחַל, from חָלַל or חָלַה),¹ and called upon his armour-bearer to pierce him with the sword, "*lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and play with me,*" i.e. cool their courage upon me by maltreating me. But as the armour-bearer would not do this, because he was very much afraid, since he was supposed to be answerable for the king's life, Saul inflicted death upon himself with his sword; whereupon the armour-bearer also fell upon his sword and died with his king, so that on that day Saul and his three sons and his armour-bearer all died; also "*all his men*" (for which we have "*all his house*" in the Chronicles), i.e. not all the warriors who went out with him to battle, but all the king's servants, or all the members of his house, *sc.* who had taken part in the battle. Neither Abner nor his son Ishbosheth was included, for the latter was not in the battle; and although the former was Saul's cousin and commander-in-chief (see ch. xiv. 50, 51), he did not belong to his house or servants.—Ver. 7. When the men of Israel upon the sides that were opposite to the valley (Jezreel) and the Jordan saw that the Israelites (the Israelitish troop) fled, and Saul and his sons were dead, they took to flight out of the cities, whereupon the Philistines took possession of them. עָבַר is used here to signify the side opposite to the place of conflict in the valley of Jezreel, which the writer assumed as his stand-

¹ The LXX. have adopted the rendering *καὶ ἐτραυματίσαν ἐν τοῖς ὑποχόνδρσι*, they wounded him in the abdomen, whilst the Vulgate rendering is *vulneratus est vehementer a sagittariis*. In 1 Chron. x. 3 the Sept. rendering is *καὶ ἐπόνεσαν ἀπὸ τῶν τόξων*, and that of the Vulgate *et vulneraverunt jaculis*. The translators have therefore derived יָחַל from חָלַל = חָלַה, and then given a free rendering to the other words. But this rendering is overthrown by the word כָּאֵד, very, vehemently, to say nothing of the fact that the verb חָלַל or חָלַה cannot be proved to be ever used in the sense of wounding. If Saul had been so severely wounded that he could not kill himself, and therefore asked his armour-bearer to slay him, as Thenius supposes, he would not have had the strength to pierce himself with his sword when the armour-bearer refused. The further conjecture of Thenius, that the Hebrew text should be read thus, in accordance with the LXX., יָחַל אֶל הַפְּזִירִים, "*he was wounded in the region of the gall,*" is opposed by the circumstance that *ὑποχόνδριον* is not the gall or region of the gall, but what is under the *χόνδρος*, or breast cartilage, viz. the abdomen and bowels.

point (cf. ch. xiv. 40); so that *עֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן* is the country to the west of the valley of Jezreel, and *עֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן הַמִּזְרָגִית* the country to the west of the Jordan, *i.e.* between Gilboa and the Jordan. These districts, *i.e.* the whole of the country round about the valley of Jezreel, the Philistines took possession of, so that the whole of the northern part of the land of Israel, in other words the whole land with the exception of Peræa and the tribe-land of Judah, came into their hands when Saul was slain.

Vers. 8-10. On the day following the battle, when the Philistines stripped the slain, they found Saul and his three sons lying upon Gilboa; and having cut off their heads and plundered their weapons, they sent them (the heads and weapons) as trophies into the land of the Philistines, *i.e.* round about to the different towns and hamlets of their land, to announce the joyful news in their idol-temples (the writer of the Chronicles mentions the idols themselves) and to the people, and then deposited their weapons (the weapons of Saul and his sons) in the Astarte-houses. But the corpses they fastened to the town-wall of Beth-shean, *i.e.* Beisan, in the valley of the Jordan (see at Josh. xvii. 11). *Beth-azabbim* and *Beth-ashtaroth* are composite words; the first part is indeclinable, and the plural form is expressed by the second word: *idol-houses* and *Astarte-houses*, like *beth-aboth* (father's-houses: see at Ex. vi. 14). On the *Astartes*, see at Judg. ii. 13. It is not expressly stated indeed in vers. 9, 10, that the Philistines plundered the bodies of Saul's sons as well, and mutilated them by cutting off their heads; but *בָּלְיוֹ* and *רֹאשׁוֹ*, *his (i.e. Saul's) head* and *his weapons*, alone are mentioned. At the same time, it is very evident from ver. 12, where the Jabeshites are said to have taken down from the wall of Beth-shean not Saul's body only, but the bodies of his sons also, that the Philistines had treated the corpses of Saul's sons in just the same manner as that of Saul himself. The writer speaks distinctly of the abuse of Saul's body only, because it was his death that he had chiefly in mind at the time. To the word *בָּלְיוֹ* we must supply in thought the object *רֹאשׁוֹ* and *בָּלְיוֹ* from the preceding clause. *גִּבּוֹת* and *גִּבּוֹת* (vers. 10 and 12) are the corpses without the heads. The fact that the Philistines nailed them to the town-wall of Beth-shean presupposes the capture of that city, from which it is evident that they had occupied the land as far as the Jordan. The definite word


Beth-ashtaroth is changed by the writer of the Chronicles into *Beth-elohim*, temples of the gods; or rather he has interpreted it in this manner without altering the sense, as the Astartes are merely mentioned as the principal deities for the idols generally. The writer of the Chronicles has also omitted to mention the nailing of the corpses to the wall of Beth-shean, but he states instead that "they fastened his skull in the temple of Dagon," a fact which is passed over in the account before us. From this we may see how both writers have restricted themselves to the principal points, or those which appeared to them of the greatest importance (*vid.* Bertheau on 1 Chron. x. 10).

Vers. 11-13. When the inhabitants of Jabesh in Gilead heard this, all the brave men of the town set out to Beth-shean, took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall, brought them to Jabesh, and burned them there. "*But their bones they buried under the tamarisk at Jabesh, and fasted seven days,*" to mourn for the king their former deliverer (see ch. xi.). These statements are given in a very condensed form in the Chronicles (vers. 11, 12). Not only is the fact that "they went the whole night" omitted, as being of no essential importance to the general history; but the removal of the bodies from the town-wall is also passed over, because their being fastened there had not been mentioned, and also the burning of the bodies. The reason for the last omission is not to be sought for in the fact that the author of the Chronicles regarded burning as ignominious, according to Lev. xx. 14, xxi. 9, but because he did not see how to reconcile the burning of the bodies with the burial of the bones. It was not the custom in Israel to burn the corpse, but to bury it in the ground. The former was restricted to the worst criminals (see at Lev. xx. 14). Consequently the Chaldee interpreted the word "burnt" as relating to the burning of spices, a custom which we meet with afterwards as a special honour shown to certain of the kings of Judah on the occasion of their burial (2 Chron. xvi. 14, xxi. 19; Jer. xxxiv. 5). But this is expressed by שָׂרַף לוֹ עֵצָה, "to make a burning for him," whereas here it is stated distinctly that "they burnt them." The reason for the burning of the bodies in the case of Saul and his sons is to be sought for in the peculiarity of the circumstances; viz. partly in the fact that the bodies were mutilated by the removal of the heads, and therefore a regular

burial of the dead was impossible, and partly in their anxiety lest, if the Philistines followed up their victory and came to Jabesh, they should desecrate the bodies still further. But even this was not a complete burning to ashes, but merely a burning of the skin and flesh; so that the bones still remained, and they were buried in the ground under a shady tree. Instead of "under the (well-known) tamarisk" (*eshel*), we have *תחת הָאֵלֶּה* (under the strong tree) in 1 Chron. x. 11. David afterwards had them fetched away and buried in Saul's family grave at Zela, in the land of Benjamin (2 Sam. xxi. 11 sqq.). The seven days' fast kept by the Jabeshites was a sign of public and general mourning on the part of the inhabitants of that town at the death of the king, who had once rescued them from the most abominable slavery.

In this ignominious fate of Saul there was manifested the righteous judgment of God in consequence of the hardening of his heart. But the love which the citizens of Jabesh displayed in their treatment of the corpses of Saul and his sons, had reference not to the king as rejected by God, but to the king as anointed with the Spirit of Jehovah, and was a practical condemnation, not of the divine judgment which had fallen upon Saul, but of the cruelty of the enemies of Israel and its anointed. For although Saul had waged war almost incessantly against the Philistines, it is not known that in any one of his victories he had ever been guilty of such cruelties towards the conquered and slaughtered foe as could justify this barbarous revenge on the part of the uncircumcised upon his lifeless corpse.

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

 HIS book contains the history of *David's* reign, arranged according to its leading features: viz. (1) the commencement of his reign as king of *Judah* at Hebron, whereas the other tribes of Israel adhered to the house of Saul (ch. i.-iv.); (2) his promotion to be king over all Israel, and the victorious extension of his sway (ch. v.-ix.); (3) the decline of his power in consequence of his adultery (ch. x.-xx.); (4) the close of his reign (ch. xxi.-xxiv.). Parallels and supplements to this history, in which the reign of David is described chiefly in its connection with the development of the kingdom of God under the Old Testament, are given in ch. xi.-xxviii. of the first book of Chronicles, where we have an elaborate description of the things done by David, both for the elevation and organization of the public worship of God, and also for the consolidation and establishment of the whole kingdom, and the general administration of government.

I. DAVID KING OVER JUDAH; AND ISHBOSHETH KING OVER ISRAEL.

When David received the tidings at Ziklag of the defeat of Israel and the death of Saul, he mourned deeply and sincerely for the fallen king and his noble son Jonathan (ch. i.). He then returned by the permission of God into the land of Judah, namely to Hebron, and was anointed king of Judah by the elders of that tribe; whereas Abner, the cousin and chief general of Saul, took Ishbosheth, the only remaining son of the fallen monarch, and made him king over the other tribes

of Israel at Mahanaim (ch. ii. 1-11). This occasioned a civil war. Abner marched to Gibeon against David with the forces of Ishbosheth, but was defeated by Joab, David's commander-in-chief, and pursued to Mahanaim, in which pursuit Abner slew Asahel the brother of Joab, who was eagerly following him (ch. ii. 12-32). Nevertheless, the conflict between the house of David and the house of Saul continued for some time longer, but with the former steadily advancing and the latter declining, until at length Abner quarrelled with Ishbosheth, and persuaded the tribes that had hitherto adhered to him to acknowledge David as king over all Israel. After the negotiations with David for effecting this, he was assassinated by Joab on his return from Hebron,—an act at which David not only expressed his abhorrence by a solemn mourning for Abner, but declared it still more openly by cursing Joab's crime (ch. iii.). Shortly afterwards, Ishbosheth was assassinated in his own house by two Benjaminites; but this murder was also avenged by David, who ordered the murderers to be put to death, and the head of Ishbosheth, that had been delivered up to him, to be buried in Abner's tomb (ch. iv.). Thus the civil war and the threatened split in the kingdom were brought to an end, though without any complicity on the part of David, but rather against his will, viz. through the death of Abner, the author of the split, and of Ishbosheth, whom he had placed upon the throne, both of whom fell by treacherous hands, and received the reward of their rebellion against the ordinance of God. David himself, in his long school of affliction under Saul, had learned to put all his hope in the Lord his God; and therefore, when Saul was dead, he took no steps to grasp by force the kingdom which God had promised him, or to remove his rival out of the way by crime.

DAVID'S CONDUCT ON HEARING OF SAUL'S DEATH. HIS
ELEGY UPON SAUL AND JONATHAN.—CHAP. I.

David received the intelligence of the defeat of Israel and the death of Saul in the war with the Philistines from an Amalekite, who boasted of having slain Saul and handed over to David the crown and armlet of the fallen king, but whom David punished with death for the supposed murder of the

anointed of God (vers. 1-16). David mourned for the death of Saul and Jonathan, and poured out his grief in an elegiac ode (vers. 17-27). This account is closely connected with the concluding chapters of the first book of Samuel.

Vers. 1-16. *David receives the news of Saul's death.*—Vers. 1-4. After the death of Saul, and David's return to Ziklag from his campaign against the Amalekites, there came a man to David on the third day, with his clothes torn and earth strewed upon his head (as a sign of deep mourning: see at 1 Sam. iv. 12), who informed him of the flight and overthrow of the Israelitish army, and the death of Saul and Jonathan.—Ver. 1 may be regarded as the protasis to ver. 2, so far as the contents are concerned, although formally it is rounded off, and וַיָּשָׁב forms the apodosis to וַיְהִי: “It came to pass after the death of Saul, David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites (1 Sam. xxx. 1-26), that David remained at Ziklag two days. And it came to pass on the third day,” etc. Both of these notices of the time refer to the day, on which David returned to Ziklag from the pursuit and defeat of the Amalekites. Whether the battle at Gilboa, in which Saul fell, occurred before or after the return of David, it is impossible to determine. All that follows from the juxtaposition of the two events in ver. 1, is that they were nearly contemporaneous. The man “came from the army from with Saul,” and therefore appears to have kept near to Saul during the battle.—Ver. 4. David's inquiry, “How did the thing happen?” refers to the statement made by the messenger, that he had escaped from the army of Israel. In the answer, וַיֹּאמֶר serves, like כִּי in other passages, merely to introduce the words that follow, like our *namely* (*vid.* Ewald, § 338, b). “The people fled from the fight; and not only have many of the people fallen, but Saul and Jonathan his son are also dead.” וַיָּמָּוּ . . . וַיָּמָּוּ: not only . . . but also.—Vers. 5 sqq. To David's further inquiry how he knew this, the young man replied (vers. 6-10), “I happened to come (וַיָּקֵרָא = וַיָּקֵרָא) up to the mountains of Gilboa, and saw Saul leaning upon his spear; then the chariots (the war-chariots for the charioteers) and riders were pressing upon him, and he turned round and saw me, . . . and asked me, Who art thou? and I said, An Amalekite; and he said to me, Come hither to me, and slay me, for the cramp (שָׁבִיץ according to the Rabbins) hath seized me (sc. so that I cannot defend myself,

and must fall into the hands of the Philistines); *for my soul (my life) is still whole in me. Then I went to him, and slew him, because I knew that after his fall he would not live; and took the crown upon his head, and the bracelet upon his arm, and brought them to my lord*" (David). "After his fall" does not mean "after he had fallen upon his sword or spear" (Clericus), for this is neither implied in נָפַל nor in נִשְׁעָן עַל־הַנִּיחַ ("*supported, i.e. leaning upon his spear*"), nor are we at liberty to transfer it from 1 Sam. xxxi. 4 into this passage; but "*after his defeat,*" i.e. so that he would not survive this calamity. This statement is at variance with the account of the death of Saul in 1 Sam. xxxi. 3 sqq.; and even apart from this it has an air of improbability, or rather of untruth in it, particularly in the assertion that Saul was leaning upon his spear when the chariots and horsemen of the enemy came upon him, without having either an armour-bearer or any other Israelitish soldier by his side, so that he had to turn to an Amalekite who accidentally came by, and to ask him to inflict the fatal wound. The Amalekite invented this, in the hope of thereby obtaining the better recompense from David. The only part of his statement which is certainly true, is that he found the king lying dead upon the field of battle, and took off the crown and armlet; since he brought these to David. But it is by no means certain whether he was present when Saul expired, or merely found him after he was dead.—Vers. 11, 12. This information, the substance of which was placed beyond all doubt by the king's jewels that were brought, filled David with the deepest sorrow. As a sign of his pain he rent his clothes; and all the men with him did the same, and mourned with weeping and fasting until the evening "*for Saul and for Jonathan his son, for the people of Jehovah, and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword*" (i.e. in battle). "*The people of Jehovah*" and the "*house or people of Israel*" are distinguished from one another, according to the twofold attitude of Israel, which furnished a double ground for mourning. Those who had fallen were first of all members of the people of Jehovah, and secondly, fellow-countrymen. "They were therefore associated with them, both according to the flesh and according to the spirit, and for that reason they mourned the more" (Seb. Schmidt). "The only deep mourning for Saul, with the

exception of that of the Jabeshites (1 Sam. xxxi. 11), proceeded from the man whom he had hated and persecuted for so many years even to the time of his death; just as David's successor wept over the fall of Jerusalem, even when it was about to destroy Himself" (O. v. Gerlach).—Ver. 13. David then asked the bringer of the news for further information concerning his own descent, and received the reply that he was the son of an Amalekite stranger, *i.e.* of an Amalekite who had emigrated to Israel.—Ver. 14. David then reproached him for what he had done: "*How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?*" and commanded one of his attendants to slay him (vers. 15 sqq.), passing sentence of death in these words: "*Thy blood come upon thy head (cf. Lev. xx. 9, Josh. ii. 19); for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the Lord's anointed.*"¹ David regarded the statement of the Amalekite as a sufficient ground for condemnation, without investigating the truth any further; though it was most probably untrue, as he could see through his design of securing a great reward as due to him for performing such a deed (*vid.* ch. iv. 10), and looked upon a man who could attribute such an act to himself from mere avarice as perfectly capable of committing it. Moreover, the king's jewels, which he had brought, furnished a practical proof that Saul had really been put to death. This punishment was by no means so severe as to render it necessary to "estimate its morality according to the times," or to defend it merely from the standpoint of political prudence, on the ground that as David was the successor of Saul, and had been pursued by him as his rival with constant suspicion and hatred, he ought not to leave the murder of the king unpunished, if only because the people, or at any rate his own opponents among the people, would accuse him of complicity in the murder of the king, if not of

¹ "*Thy mouth hath testified against thee, and out of it thou art judged (Luke xix. 22), whether thou hast done it or not. If thou hast done it, thou receivest the just reward of thy deeds. If thou hast not done it, then throw the blame upon thine own lying testimony, and be content with the wages of a wicked flatterer; for, according to thine own confession, thou art the murderer of a king, and that is quite enough to betray thine evil heart. David could see plainly enough that the man was no murderer: he would show by his example that flatterers who boast of such sins as these should get no hearing from their superiors.*"—*Berleb. Bible.*

actually instigating the murderer. David would never have allowed such considerations as these to lead him into unjust severity. And his conduct requires no such half vindication. Even on the supposition that Saul had asked the Amalekite to give him his death-thrust, as he said he had, it was a crime deserving of punishment to fulfil this request, the more especially as nothing is said about any such mortal wounding of Saul as rendered his escape or recovery impossible, so that it could be said that it would have been cruel under such circumstances to refuse his request to be put to death. If Saul's life was still "full in him," as the Amalekite stated, his position was not so desperate as to render it inevitable that he should fall into the hands of the Philistines. Moreover, the supposition was a very natural one, that he had slain the king for the sake of a reward. But slaying the king, the anointed of the Lord, was in itself a crime that deserved to be punished with death. What David might more than once have done, but had refrained from doing from holy reverence for the sanctified person of the king, this foreigner, a man belonging to the nation of the Amalekites, Israel's greatest foes, had actually done for the sake of gain, or at any rate pretended to have done. Such a crime must be punished with death, and that by David who had been chosen by God and anointed as Saul's successor, and whom the Amalekite himself acknowledged in that capacity, since otherwise he would not have brought him the news together with the royal diadem.

Vers. 17-27. *David's elegy upon Saul and Jonathan.*—An eloquent testimony to the depth and sincerity of David's grief for the death of Saul is handed down to us in the elegy which he composed upon Saul and his noble son Jonathan, and which he had taught to the children of Israel. It is one of the finest odes of the Old Testament; full of lofty sentiment, and springing from deep and sanctified emotion, in which, without the slightest allusion to his own relation to the fallen king, David celebrates without envy the bravery and virtues of Saul and his son Jonathan, and bitterly laments their loss. "*He said to teach,*" i.e. he commanded the children of Judah to practise or learn it. *תִּשְׁבַּח*, bow; i.e. a song to which the title *Kesheth* or bow was given, not only because the bow is referred to (ver. 22), but because it is a martial ode, and the bow was one of the

principal weapons used by the warriors of that age, and one in the use of which the Benjaminites, the tribe-mates of Saul, were particularly skilful: cf. 1 Chron. viii. 40, xii. 2; 2 Chron. xiv. 7, xvii. 17. Other explanations are by no means so natural; such, for example, as that it related to the melody to which the ode was sung; whilst some are founded upon false renderings, or arbitrary alterations of the text, *e.g.* that of Ewald (*Gesch.* i. p. 41), Thenius, etc. This elegy was inserted in "*the book of the righteous*" (see at Josh. x. 13), from which the author of the books of Samuel has taken it.

The ode is arranged in three strophes, which gradually diminish in force and sweep (*viz.* vers. 19-24, 25-26, 27), and in which the vehemence of the sorrow is gradually modified, and finally dies away. Each strophe opens with the exclamation, "*How are the mighty fallen!*" The *first* contains all that had to be said in praise of the fallen heroes; the deepest mourning for their death; and praise of their bravery, of their inseparable love, and of the virtues of Saul as king. The *second* commemorates the friendship between David and Jonathan. The *third* simply utters the last sigh, with which the elegy becomes silent. The *first* strophe runs thus:

Ver. 19. The ornament, O Israel, is slain upon thy heights!

Oh how are the mighty fallen!

20. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon;

Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,

Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph!

21. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let not dew or rain be upon you, or fields
of first-fruit offerings:

For there is the shield of the mighty defiled,

The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

22. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,

The bow of Jonathan turned not back,

And the sword of Saul returned not empty.

23. Saul and Jonathan, beloved and kind, in life

And in death they are not divided.

Lighter than eagles were they; stronger than lions.

24. Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,

Who clothed you in purple with delight;

Who put a golden ornament upon your apparel!

The first clause of ver. 19 contains the theme of the entire ode. צִיִּית does not mean the gazelle here (as the Syriac and Clericus and others render it), the only plausible support of

which is the expression "upon thy heights," whereas the parallel **וְנִבְרִים** shows that by **הַצִּבְרִים** we are to understand the two heroes Saul and Jonathan, and that the word is used in the appellative sense of *ornament*. The king and his noble son were the ornament of Israel. They were slain upon the heights of Israel. Luther has given a correct rendering, so far as the sense is concerned (*die Edelsten*, the noblest), after the *inclyti* of the Vulgate. The pronoun "*thy high places*" refers to Israel. The reference is to the heights of the mountains of Gilboa (see ver. 21). This event threw Israel into deep mourning, which commences in the second clause.—Ver. 20. The tidings of this mourning were not to be carried out among the enemies of Israel, lest they should rejoice thereat. Such rejoicing would only increase the pain of Israel at the loss it had sustained. Only two of the cities of Philistia are mentioned by name, viz. Gath, which was near, and Askelon, which was farther off by the sea. The rejoicing of the daughters of the Philistines refers to the custom of employing women to celebrate the victories of their nation by singing and dancing (cf. 1 Sam. xviii. 6).—Ver. 21. Even nature is to join in the mourning. May God withdraw His blessing from the mountains upon which the heroes have fallen, that they may not be moistened by the dew and rain of heaven, but, remaining in eternal barrenness, be memorials of the horrible occurrence that has taken place upon them. **הָרֵי בְּנִלְבָּע** is an address to them; and the preposition **בְּ** with the construct state is poetical: "*mountains in Gilboa*" (*vid.* Ewald, § 289, b). In **אֵל . . . עֲלֵיכֶם** the verb **יָהִי** is wanting. The following words, **וְשָׂדֵי תְרוֹמֹת**, are in apposition to the foregoing: "*and let not fields of first-fruit offerings be upon you,*" i.e. fields producing fruit, from which offerings of first-fruits were presented. This is the simplest and most appropriate explanation of the words, which have been very differently, and in some respects very marvellously rendered. The reason for this cursing of the mountains of Gilboa was, that there the shield of the heroes, particularly of Saul, had been defiled with blood, namely the blood of those whom the shield ought to defend. **וְנָעַל** does not mean to throw away (Dietrich.), but to soil or defile (as in the Chaldee), then to abhor. "*Not anointed with oil,*" i.e. not cleansed and polished with oil, so that the marks of Saul's blood still adhered to it. **בְּלִי** poetical for **לֹא**. The interpolation

of the words "*as though*" (*quasi non esset unctus oleo*, Vulgate) cannot be sustained.—Ver. 22. Such was the ignominy experienced upon Gilboa by those who had always fought so bravely, that their bow and sword did not turn back until it was satisfied with the blood and fat of the slain. The figure upon which the passage is founded is, that arrows drink the blood of the enemy, and a sword devours their flesh (*vid.* Deut. xxxii. 42; Isa. xxxiv. 5, 6; Jer. xvi. 10). The two principal weapons are divided between Saul and Jonathan, so that the bow is assigned to the latter and the sword to the former.—Ver. 23. In death as in life, the two heroes were not divided, for they were alike in bravery and courage. Notwithstanding their difference of character, and the very opposite attitude which they assumed towards David, the noble Jonathan did not forsake his father, although his fierce hatred towards the friend whom Jonathan loved as his own soul might have undermined his attachment to his father. The two predicates, נָאֻךְ, loved and amiable, and נָעִים, affectionate or kind, apply chiefly to Jonathan; but they were also suitable to Saul in the earliest years of his reign, when he manifested the virtues of an able ruler, which secured for him the lasting affection and attachment of the people. In his mourning over the death of the fallen hero, David forgets all the injury that Saul has inflicted upon him, so that he only brings out and celebrates the more amiable aspects of his character. The light motion or swiftness of an eagle (*cf.* Hab. i. 8), and the strength of a lion (*vid.* ch. xvii. 10), were the leading characteristics of the great heroes of antiquity.—Lastly, in ver. 24, David commemorates the rich booty which Saul had brought to the nation, for the purpose of celebrating his heroic greatness in this respect as well. שָׁנִי was the scarlet purple (*see at* Ex. xxv. 4). "With delights," or with lovelinesses, *i.e.* in a lovely manner.

The *second* strophe (vers. 25 and '26) only applies to the friendship of Jonathan :

- Ver. 25. Oh how are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle !
Jonathan (is) slain upon thy heights !
26. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan :
Thou wast very kind to me :
Stranger than the love of woman was thy love to me !

Ver. 25 is almost a verbal repetition of ver. 19. נָא (ver.

26) denotes the pinching or pressure of the heart consequent upon pain and mourning. נִסְּאָה, *third pers. fem.*, like a verb נִסָּה with the termination lengthened (*vid.* Ewald, § 194, *b*), to be wonderful or distinguished. אֶהְבֶּבְךָ, thy love to me. Comparison to the love of woman is expressive of the deepest earnestness of devoted love.

The *third* strophe (ver. 27) contains simply a brief after-tone of sorrow, in which the ode dies away :

Oh how are the mighty fallen,
The instruments of war perished !

“*The instruments of war*” are not the weapons ; but the expression is a figurative one, referring to the heroes by whom war was carried on (*vid.* Isa. xiii. 5). Luther has adopted this rendering (*die Streitbaren*).

DAVID KING OVER JUDAH, AND ISHBOSHETH KING OVER
ISRAEL. BATTLE AT GIBEON.—CHAP. II.

After David had mourned for the fallen king, he went, in accordance with the will of the Lord as sought through the Urim, to Hebron, and was there anointed king by the tribe of Judah. He then sent his thanks to the inhabitants of Jabesh, for the love which they had shown to Saul in burying his bones (vers. 1–7), and reigned seven years and a half at Hebron over Judah alone (vers. 10 and 11). Abner, on the other hand, put forward Ishbosheth the son of Saul, who still remained alive, as king over Israel (vers. 8 and 9) ; so that a war broke out between the adherents of Ishbosheth and those of David, in which Abner and his army were beaten, but the brave Asahel, the son-in-law of David, was slain by Abner (vers. 12–32). The promotion of Ishbosheth as king was not only a continuation of the hostility of Saul towards David, but also an open act of rebellion against Jehovah, who had rejected Saul and chosen David prince over Israel, and who had given such distinct proofs of this election in the eyes of the whole nation, that even Saul had been convinced of the appointment of David to be his successor upon the throne. But David attested his unqualified submission to the guidance of God, in contrast with this rebellion against His clearly revealed will, not only by not returning to Judah till he had received per-

mission from the Lord, but also by the fact that after the tribe of Judah had acknowledged him as king, he did not go to war with Ishbosheth, but contented himself with resisting the attack made upon him by the supporters of the house of Saul, because he was fully confident that the Lord would secure to him in due time the whole of the kingdom of Israel.

Vers. 1-4a. *David's return to Hebron, and anointing as king over Judah.*—Ver. 1. "After this," i.e. after the facts related in ch. i., David inquired of the Lord, namely through the Urim, whether he should go up to one of the towns of Judah, and if so, to which. He received the reply, "*to Hebron*," a place peculiarly well adapted for a capital, not only from its situation upon the mountains, and in the centre of the tribe, but also from the sacred reminiscences connected with it from the olden time. David could have no doubt that, now that Saul was dead, he would have to give up his existing connection with the Philistines and return to his own land. But as the Philistines had taken the greater part of the Israelitish territory through their victory at Gilboa, and there was good reason to fear that the adherents of Saul, more especially the army with Abner, Saul's cousin, at its head, would refuse to acknowledge David as king, and consequently a civil war might break out, David would not return to his own land without the express permission of the Lord. Vers. 2-4a. When he went with his wives and all his retinue (*vid.* 1 Sam. xxvii. 2) to Hebron and the "*cities of Hebron*," i.e. the places belonging to the territory of Hebron, the men of Judah came (in the persons of their elders) and anointed him king *over the house*, i.e. the tribe, of Judah. Just as Saul was made king by the tribes after his anointing by Samuel (1 Sam. xi. 15), so David was first of all anointed by Judah here, and afterwards by the rest of the tribes (ch. v. 3).

Vers. 4b-7. A new section commences with יָבֵשׁ. The first act of David as king was to send messengers to Jabesh, to thank the inhabitants of this city for burying Saul, and to announce to them his own anointing as king. As this expression of thanks involved a solemn recognition of the departed king, by which David divested himself of even the appearance of a rebellion, the announcement of the anointing he had received contained an indirect summons to the Jabeshites to recognise

him as their king now.—Ver. 6. “*And now,*” *sc.* that ye have shown this love to Saul your lord, “*may Jehovah show you grace and truth.*” “*Grace and truth*” are connected together, as in Ex. xxxiv. 6, as the two sides by which the goodness of God is manifested to men, namely in His forgiving grace, and in His trustworthiness, or the fulfilment of His promises (*vid.* Ps. xxv. 10). “*And I also show you this good,*” namely the prayer for the blessing of God (ver. 5), because ye have done this (to Saul). In ver. 7 there is attached to this the demand, that now that Saul their lord was dead, and the Judæans had anointed him (David) king, they would show themselves valiant, namely valiant in their reverence and fidelity towards David, who had become their king since the death of Saul. יְהוָה יְדַבֵּר, *i.e.* be comforted, spirited (cf. Judg. vii. 11). It needed some resolution and courage to recognise David as king, because Saul’s army had fled to Gilead, and there was good ground for apprehending opposition to David on the part of Abner. Ishbosheth, however, does not appear to have been proclaimed king yet; or at any rate the fact was not yet known to David. וְיָנֵם does not belong to אֲתִי, but to the whole clause, as אֲתִי is placed first merely for the sake of emphasis.

Vers. 8–11. *Promotion of Ishbosheth to be king over Israel.*—The account of this is attached to the foregoing in the form of an antithesis: “*But Abner, the chief captain of Saul* (see at 1 Sam. xiv. 50), *had taken Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and led him over to Mahanaim.*” Ishbosheth had probably been in the battle at Gilboa, and fled with Abner across the Jordan after the battle had been lost. *Ishbosheth* (*i.e.* man of shame) was the fourth son of Saul (according to 1 Chron. viii. 33, ix. 39): his proper name was *Esh-baal* (*i.e.* fire of Baal, probably equivalent to destroyer of Baal). This name was afterwards changed into Ishbosheth, just as the name of the god Baal was also translated into *Bosheth* (“shame,” Hos. ix 10, Jer. iii. 24, etc.), and Jerubbaal changed into Jerubbosheth (see at Judg. viii. 35). Ewald’s supposition, that *bosheth* was originally employed in a good sense as well, like *αἰδώς* and פֶּחַי (Gen. xxxi. 53), cannot be sustained. *Mahanaim* was on the eastern side of the Jordan, not far from the ford of Jabbok, and was an important place for the execution of Abner’s plans, partly from its historical associations (Gen. xxxii. 2, 3), and partly also from

its situation. There he made Ishbosheth king "*for Gilead*," i.e. the whole of the land to the east of the Jordan (as in Num. xxxii. 29, Josh. xxii. 9, etc.). "*For the Ashurites*:" this reading is decidedly faulty, since we can no more suppose it to refer to Assyria (Asshur) than to the Arabian tribe of the Assurim (Gen. xxv. 3); but the true name cannot be discovered.¹ "*And for Jezreel*," i.e. not merely the city of that name, but the plain that was named after it (as in 1 Sam. xxix. 1). "*And for Ephraim, and Benjamin, and all (the rest of) Israel*," of course not including Judah, where David had already been acknowledged as king.—Vers. 10, 11. *Length of the reigns of Ishbosheth over Israel, and David at Hebron.* The age of Ishbosheth is given, as is generally the case at the commencement of a reign. He was forty years old when he began to reign, and reigned *two years*; whereas David was king at Hebron over the house of Judah *seven years and a half*. We are struck with this difference in the length of the two reigns; and it cannot be explained, as Seb. Schmidt, Clericus, and others suppose, on the simple assumption that David reigned two years at Hebron over Judah, namely up to the time of the murder of Ishbosheth, and then five years and a half over Israel, namely up to the time of the conquest

¹ In the Septuagint we find *Θασιπ* or *Θασιρ*, an equally mistaken form. The Chaldee has "over the tribe of Asher," which is also unsuitable, unless we include the whole of the northern portion of Canaan, including the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali. But there is no proof that the name *Asher* was ever extended to the territory of the three northern tribes. We should be rather disposed to agree with Bachienne, who supposes it to refer to the city of Asher (Josh. xvii. 7) and its territory, as this city was in the south-east of Jezreel, and Abner may possibly have conquered this district for Ishbosheth with Gilead as a base, before he ventured to dispute the government of Israel with the Philistines, if only we could discover any reason why the inhabitants ("*the Ashurites*") should be mentioned instead of the city *Asher*, or if it were at all likely that one city should be introduced in the midst of a number of large districts. The Syriac and Vulgate have *Geshuri*, and therefore seem to have read or conjectured *גֶּשׁוּרִי*; and Thenius decides in favour of this, understanding the name *Geshur* to refer to the most northerly portion of the land on both sides of the Jordan, from Mount Hermon to the Lake of Gennesareth (as in Deut. iii. 14, Josh. xii. 5, xiii. 13, 1 Chron. ii. 23). But no such usage of speech can be deduced from any of these passages, as *Geshuri* is used there to denote the land of the Geshurites, on the north-east of Bashan, which had a king of its own in the time of David (see at ch. iii. 3), and which Abner would certainly never have thought of conquering.

of Jerusalem: for this is at variance with the plain statement in the text, that "David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah seven years and a half." The opinion that the two years of Ishbosheth's reign are to be reckoned up to the time of the war with David, because Abner played the principal part during the other five years and a half that David continued to reign at Hebron, is equally untenable. We may see very clearly from ch. iii.-v. not only that Ishbosheth was king to the time of his death, which took place after that of Abner, but also that after both these events David was anointed king over Israel in Hebron by all the tribes, and that he then went directly to attack Jerusalem, and after conquering the citadel of Zion, chose that city as his own capital. The short duration of Ishbosheth's reign can only be explained, therefore, on the supposition that he was not made king, as David was, immediately after the death of Saul, but after the recovery by Abner of the land which the Philistines had taken on this side the Jordan, which may have occupied five years.¹

Vers. 12-32. *War between the supporters of Ishbosheth and those of David.*—Vers. 12, 13. When Abner had brought all Israel under the dominion of Ishbosheth, he also sought to make Judah subject to him, and went with this intention from Mahanaim to *Gibeon*, the present Jib, in the western portion of the tribe of Benjamin, two good hours to the north of Jerusalem (see at Josh. ix. 3), taking with him the servants, *i.e.* the fighting men, of Ishbosheth. There Joab, a son of Zeruah, David's sister (1 Chron. ii. 16), advanced to meet him with the servants, *i.e.* the warriors of David; and the two armies met at

¹ From the fact that in vers. 10, 11, Ishbosheth's ascending the throne is mentioned before that of David, and is also accompanied with a statement of his age, whereas the age of David is not given till ch. v. 4, 5, when he became king over all Israel, Ewald draws the erroneous conclusion that the earlier (?) historian regarded Ishbosheth as the true king, and David as a pretender. But the very opposite of this is stated as distinctly as possible in vers. 4 sqq. (compared with ver. 8). The fact that Ishbosheth is mentioned before David in ver. 10 may be explained simply enough from the custom so constantly observed in the book of Genesis, of mentioning subordinate lines or subordinate persons first, and stating whatever seemed worth recording with regard to them, in order that the ground might be perfectly clear for relating the history of the principal characters without any interruption.

the pool of Gibeon, *i.e.* probably one of the large reservoirs that are still to be found there (see Rob. *Pal.* ii. pp. 135-6; Tobler, *Topogr. v. Jerusalem*, ii. pp. 515-6), the one encamping upon the one side of the pool and the other upon the other.—Vers. 14 sqq. Abner then proposed to Joab that the contest should be decided by single combat, probably for the purpose of avoiding an actual civil war. “*Let the young men arise and wrestle before us.*” פָּשַׁע, to joke or play, is used here to denote the war-play of single combat. As Joab accepted this proposal, twelve young warriors for Benjamin and Ishbosheth, and twelve from David’s men, went over, *i.e.* went out of the two camps to the appointed scene of conflict; “*and one seized the other’s head, and his sword was (immediately) in the side of the other (his antagonist), so that they fell together.*” The clause וְיָרְבּוּ בְּצֶדֶר רֵעֵיוֹ is a circumstantial clause: and his sword (every one’s sword) was in the side of the other, *i.e.* thrust into it. Sending the sword into the opponent’s side is thus described as simultaneous with the seizure of his head. The ancient translators expressed the meaning by supplying a verb (ἐπέπηξαν, *defixit*: LXX., Vulg.). This was a sign that the young men on both sides fought with great ferocity, and also with great courage. The place itself received the name of *Helkath-hazzurim*, “*field of the sharp edges*,” in consequence (for this use of *zur*, see Ps. lxxxix. 44).—Ver. 17. As this single combat decided nothing, there followed a general and very sore or fierce battle, in which Abner and his troops were put to flight by the soldiers of David. The only thing connected with this, of which we have any further account, is the slaughter of Asahel by Abner, which is mentioned here (vers. 18-23) on account of the important results which followed. Of the three sons of Zeruiah, viz. Joab, Abishai, and Asahel, Asahel was peculiarly light of foot, like one of the gazelles; and he pursued Abner most eagerly, without turning aside to the right or to the left.—Vers. 20, 21. Then Abner turned round, asked him whether he was Asahel, and said to him, “*Turn to thy right hand or to thy left, and seize one of the young men and take his armour for thyself;*” *i.e.* slay one of the common soldiers, and take his accoutrements as booty, if thou art seeking for that kind of fame. But Asahel would not turn back from Abner. Then he repeated his command that he would depart, and added, “*Why should I smite thee to the ground, and how could I then lift*

up my face to Joab thy brother?" from which we may see that Abner did not want to put the young hero to death, out of regard for Joab and their former friendship.—Ver. 23. But when he still refused to depart in spite of this warning, Abner wounded him in the abdomen with the hinder part, *i.e.* the lower end of the spear, so that the spear came out behind, and Asahel fell dead upon the spot. The lower end of the spear appears to have been pointed, that it might be stuck into the ground (*vid.* 1 Sam. xxvi. 7); and this will explain the fact that the spear passed through the body. The fate of the young hero excited such sympathy, that all who came to the place where he had fallen stood still to mourn his loss (*cf.* ch. xx. 12).—Ver. 24. But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner till the sun set, and until they had arrived at the hill *Ammah*, in front of *Giah*, on the way to the desert of *Gibeon*. Nothing further is known of the places mentioned here.—Vers. 25, 26. The Benjaminites then gathered in a crowd behind Abner, and halted upon the top of a hill to beat back their pursuers; and Abner cried out to Joab, "*Shall the sword then devour for ever (shall there be no end to the slaughter)? dost thou not know that bitterness arises at last? and how long wilt thou not say to the people, to return from pursuing their brethren?*" Thus Abner warns Joab of the consequences of a desperate struggle, and calls upon him to put an end to all further bloodshed by suspending the pursuit.—Ver. 27. Joab replied, "*If thou hadst not spoken (i.e. challenged to single combat, ver. 14), the people would have gone away in the morning, every one from his brother,*" *i.e.* there would have been no such fratricidal conflict at all. The first *וְ* introduces the substance of the oath, as in 1 Sam. xxv. 34; the second gives greater force to it (*vid.* Ewald, § 330, *b*). Thus Joab threw all the blame of the fight upon Abner, because he had been the instigator of the single combat; and as that was not decisive, and was so bloody in its character, the two armies had felt obliged to fight it out. But he then commanded the trumpet to be blown for a halt, and the pursuit to be closed—Ver. 29. Abner proceeded with his troops through the *Arabah*, *i.e.* the valley of the Jordan, marching the whole night; and then crossing the river, went through the whole of *Bithron* back to Mahanaim. *Bithron* is a district upon the eastern side of the Jordan, which is only mentioned here. Aquila and the Vulgate identify it with *Bethhoron*;

but there is no more foundation for this than for the suggestion of Thenius, that it is the same place as *Bethharam*, the later *Libias*, at the mouth of the Nahr Hesbân (see at Num. xxxii. 36). It is very evident that *Bithron* is not the name of a city, but of a district, from the fact that it is preceded by the word *all*, which would be perfectly unmeaning in the case of a city. The meaning of the word is a cutting; and it was no doubt the name given to some ravine in the neighbourhood of the Jabbok, between the Jordan and Mahanaim, which was on the north side of the Jabbok.—Vers. 30, 31. Joab also assembled his men for a retreat. Nineteen of his soldiers were missing besides Asahel, all of whom had fallen in the battle. But they had slain as many as three hundred and sixty of Benjamin and of Abner's men. This striking disproportion in the numbers may be accounted for from the fact that in Joab's army there were none but brave and well-tried men, who had gathered round David a long time before; whereas in Abner's army there were only the remnants of the Israelites who had been beaten upon Gilboa, and who had been still further weakened and depressed by their attempts to recover the land which was occupied by the Philistines.—Ver. 32. On the way back, David's men took up the body of Asahel, and buried it in his father's grave at Bethlehem. They proceeded thence towards Hebron, marching the whole night, so that they reached Hebron itself at daybreak. "*It got light to them (i.e. the day dawned) at Hebron.*"

DAVID ADVANCES AND ISHBOSHETH DECLINES. ABNER GOES OVER TO DAVID, AND IS MURDERED BY JOAB.—CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. "*And the war became long (was protracted) between the house of Saul and the house of David; but David became stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul weaker and weaker.*" וַיִּהְיֶה, when connected with another verb or with an adjective, expresses the idea of the gradual progress of an affair (*vid.* Ges. § 131, 3, Anm. 3). The historian sums up in these words the historical course of the two royal houses, as they stood opposed to one another. "*The war*" does not mean continual fighting, but the state of hostility or war in which they continued to stand towards one another. They concluded no peace,

so that David was not recognised by Ishbosheth as king, any more than Ishbosheth by David. Not only is there nothing said about any continuance of actual warfare by Abner or Ishbosheth after the loss of the battle at Gibeon, but such a thing was very improbable in itself, as Ishbosheth was too weak to be able to carry on the war, whilst David waited with firm reliance upon the promise of the Lord, until all Israel should come over to him.

Vers. 2-5. GROWTH OF THE HOUSE OF DAVID.—Proof of the advance of the house of David is furnished by the multiplication of his family at Hebron. The account of *the sons who were born to David at Hebron* does not break* the thread, as Clericus, Thenius, and others suppose, but is very appropriately introduced here, as a practical proof of the strengthening of the house of David, in harmony with the custom of beginning the history of the reign of every king with certain notices concerning his family (*vid.* ch. v. 13 sqq.; 1 Kings iii. 1, xiv. 21, xv. 2, 9, etc.). We have a similar list of the sons of David in 1 Chron. iii. 1-4. The first two sons were born to him from the two wives whom he had brought with him to Hebron (1 Sam. xxv. 42, 43). The *Chethibh* יִלְרִי is probably only a copyist's error for יִלְרִי, which is the reading in many Codices. From *Ahinoam*—the first-born, *Amnon* (called *Aminon* in ch. xiii. 20); from *Abigail*—the second, *Chileab*. The latter is also called *Daniel* in 1 Chron. iii. 1, and therefore had probably two names. The *lamed* before *Ahinoam* and the following names serves as a periphrasis for the genitive, like the German *von*, in consequence of the word *son* being omitted (*vid.* Ewald, § 292, a). The other four were by wives whom he had married in Hebron: *Absalom* by *Maachah*, the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur, a small kingdom in the north-east of Bashan (see at Deut. iii. 14); *Adonijah* by *Haggith*; *Shephatiah* by *Abital*; and *Ithream* by *Eglah*. The origin of the last three wives is unknown. The clause appended to *Eglah's* name, viz. "*David's wife*," merely serves as a fitting conclusion to the whole list (Bertheau on 1 Chron. iii. 3), and is not added to show that *Eglah* was David's principal wife, which would necessitate the conclusion drawn by the Rabbins, that *Michal* was the wife intended.

Vers. 6-39. **DECLINE OF THE HOUSE OF SAUL.**—Vers. 6-11. *Abner's quarrel with Ishbosheth.*—During the war between the house of Saul and the house of David, Abner adhered firmly to the house of Saul, but he appropriated one of Saul's concubines to himself. When Ishbosheth charged him with this, he fell into so violent a rage, that he at once announced to Ishbosheth his intention to hand over the kingdom to David. Abner had certainly perceived the utter incapacity of Ishbosheth for a very long time, if not from the very outset, and had probably made him king after the death of Saul, merely that he might save himself from the necessity of submitting to David, and might be able to rule in Ishbosheth's name, and possibly succeed in paving his own way to the throne. His appropriation of the concubine of the deceased monarch was at any rate a proof, according to Israelitish notions, and in fact those generally prevalent in the East, that he was aiming at the throne (*vid.* ch. xvi. 21; 1 Kings ii. 21). But it may gradually have become obvious to him, that the house of Saul could not possibly retain the government in opposition to David; and this may have led to his determination to persuade all the Israelites to acknowledge David, and thereby to secure for himself an influential post under his government. This will explain in a very simple manner Abner's falling away from Ishbosheth and going over to David.—Vers. 6 and 7 constitute one period, expanded by the introduction of circumstantial clauses, the *וַיָּהִי* (it came to pass) of the protasis being continued in the *וַיֹּאמֶר* (he said) of ver. 7b. “*It came to pass, when there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, and Abner showed himself strong for the house of Saul, and Saul had a concubine named Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, that he (Ishbosheth) said to Abner, Why hast thou gone to my father's concubine?*” The subject to “*said*” is omitted in the apodosis; but it is evident from ver. 8, and the expression “*my father,*” that *Ishbosheth* is to be supplied. Even in the second circumstantial clause, “*and Saul had a concubine,*” the reason why this is mentioned is only to be gathered from Ishbosheth's words. *וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ*: to prove one's self strong for, or with, a person, *i.e.* to render him powerful help. *וַיִּשְׁכַּב אִתָּהּ* means “*to cohabit with.*” It was the exclusive right of the successor to the throne to cohabit with the concubines of the deceased king,

who came down to him as part of the property which he inherited.—Ver. 8. Abner was so enraged at Ishbosheth's complaint, that he replied, "*Am I a dog's head, holding with Judah? To-day (i.e. at present) I show affection to the house of Saul thy father, towards his brethren and his friends, and did not let thee fall into the hand of David, and thou reproachest me to-day with the fault with the woman?*" "*Dog's head*" is something thoroughly contemptible. אֶשֶׂר לַיהוּדָה, *lit.* which (belongs) to Judah, i.e. holds with Judah.—Ver. 9. "*God do so to Abner, . . . as Jehovah hath sworn to David, so will I do to him.*" The repetition of יְיָ serves to introduce the oath, as in ch. ii. 27. "*To take away the kingdom from the house of Saul, and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beersheba.*" We do not know of any oath with which God had promised the kingdom to David; but the promise of God in itself is equivalent to an oath, as God is the true God, who can neither lie nor deceive (1 Sam. xv. 29; Num. xxiii. 19). This promise was generally known in Israel. "*From Dan to Beersheba*" (as in Judg. xx. 1).—Ver. 11. Ishbosheth could make no reply to these words of Abner, "*because he was afraid of him.*"

Vers. 12–21. *Abner goes over to David.*—Ver. 12. Abner soon carried out his threat to Ishbosheth. He sent messengers to David in his stead (not "on the spot," or immediately, a rendering adopted by the Chaldee and Symmachus, but for which no support can be found) with this message: "*Whose is the land?*" i.e. to whom does it belong except to thee? and, "*Make a covenant with me; behold, so is my hand with thee (i.e. so will I stand by thee), to turn all Israel to thee.*"—Ver. 13. David assented to the proposal on this condition: "*Only one thing do I require of thee, namely, Thou shalt not see my face, unless thou first of all bringest me Michal, the daughter of Saul, when thou comest to see my face.*" בִּי אִם־לִפְנֵי הַבִּיאָהּ, "*except before thy bringing,*" i.e. unless when thou hast first of all brought or delivered "*Michal to me.*" This condition was imposed by David, not only because Michal had been unjustly taken away from him by Saul, after he had rightfully acquired her for his wife by paying the dowry demanded, and in spite of her love to him (1 Sam. xviii. 27, xix. 11, 12), and given to another man (1 Sam. xxv. 44), so that he could demand her back again with perfect

justice, and Ishbosheth could not refuse to give her up to him, but probably on political grounds also, namely, because the renewal of his marriage to the king's daughter would show to all Israel that he cherished no hatred in his heart towards the fallen king.—Ver. 14. Thereupon, namely when Abner had assented to this condition, David sent messengers to Ishbosheth with this demand: “Give (me) my wife Michal, whom I espoused to me for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines” (see 1 Sam. xviii. 25, 27). David sent to Ishbosheth to demand the restoration of Michal, that her return might take place in a duly legal form, “that it might be apparent that he had dealt justly with Paltiel in the presence of his king, and that he had received his wife back again, and had not taken her by force from her husband” (Seb. Schmidt).—Ver. 15. Ishbosheth probably sent Abner to Gallim (1 Sam. xxv. 44) to fetch Michal from her husband Paltiel (see at 1 Sam. xxv. 44), and take her back to David. The husband was obliged to consent to this separation.—Ver. 16. When he went with his wife, weeping behind her, to Bahurim, Abner commanded him to turn back; “and he returned.” Bahurim, Shimei's home (ch. xix. 17; 1 Kings ii. 8), was situated, according to ch. xvi. 1, 5, and xvii. 18, upon the road from Jerusalem to Gilgal, in the valley of the Jordan, not far from the Mount of Olives, and is supposed by v. Schubert (*R.* iii. p. 70) to have stood upon the site of the present *Abu Dis*, though in all probability it is to be sought for farther north (see *Rob. Pal.* ii. p. 103). Paltiel had therefore followed his wife to the border of the tribe of Judah, or of the kingdom of David.—Vers. 17, 18. But before Abner set out to go to David, he had spoken to the elders of Israel (the tribes generally, with the exception of Benjamin (see ver. 19) and Judah): “Both yesterday and the day before yesterday (i.e. a long time ago), ye desired to have David as king over you. Now carry out your wish: for Jehovah hath spoken concerning David, Through my servant David will I save my people Israel out of the power of the Philistines and all their enemies.” יְהוָה is an evident mistake in writing for יְהוָה, which is found in many mss., and rendered in all the ancient versions.—Ver. 19. Abner had spoken in the same way in the ears of Benjamin. He spoke to the Benjaminites more especially, because the existing royal family belonged to that tribe, and they had reaped many advantages in consequence

(*vil.* 1 Sam. xxii. 7). The verb *הָיָה* in the circumstantial clause (ver. 17), and the verb *וַיִּדְבֹּר* in ver. 19, which serves as a continuation of the circumstantial clause, must be translated as pluperfects, since Abner's interview with the elders of Israel and with Benjamin preceded his interview with David at Hebron. We may see from Abner's address to the elders, that even among the northern tribes the popular voice had long since decided for David. In 1 Chron. xii. we have historical proofs of this. The word of Jehovah concerning David, which is mentioned in ver. 18, is not met with anywhere in this precise form in the history of David as it has come down to us. Ahner therefore had either some expression used by one of the prophets (Samuel or Gad) in his mind, which he described as the word of Jehovah, or else he regarded the anointing of David by Samuel in accordance with the command of the Lord, and the marvellous success of all that David attempted against the enemies of Israel, as a practical declaration on the part of God, that David, as the appointed successor of Saul, would perform what the Lord had spoken to Samuel concerning Saul (1 Sam. ix. 16), but what Saul had not fulfilled on account of his rebellion against the commandments of the Lord.—Ver. 19*b*. When Ahner had gained over the elders of Israel and Benjamin to recognise David as king, he went to Hebron to speak in the ears of David "*all that had pleased Israel and the whole house of Benjamin,*" *i.e.* to make known to him their determination to acknowledge him as king. There went with him twenty men as representatives of all Israel, to confirm Ahner's statements by their presence; and David prepared a meal for them all.—Ver. 21. After the meal, Ahner said to David, "*I will rise and go and gather together all Israel to my lord the king, that they may make a covenant with thee (i.e. do homage to thee before God as king), and thou mayest become king over all that thy soul desireth,*" *i.e.* over all the nation of God; whereupon David took leave of him, and Ahner went away in peace. The expression "*in peace*" serves to prepare the way for what follows. It is not stated, however, that David sent him away in peace (without avenging himself upon him), but that "David sent him away, and he went in peace." Apart altogether from the mildness of David's own character, he had no reason whatever for treating Ahner as an enemy, now that he had given up all opposition to his reigning, and had brought

all the Israelites over to him. What Abner had done for Ishbosheth, including his fighting against David, was indeed a sinful act of resistance to the will of Jehovah, which was not unknown to him, and according to which Samuel had both called and anointed David king over the nation; but for all that, it was not an ordinary act of rebellion against the person of David and his rightful claim to the throne, because Jehovah had not yet caused David to be set before the nation as its king by Samuel or any other prophet, and David had not yet asserted the right to reign over all Israel, which had been secured to him by the Lord and guaranteed by his anointing, as one which the nation was bound to recognise; but, like a true servant of God, he waited patiently till the Lord should give him the dominion over all His people.

Vers. 22-30. *Abner assassinated by Joab.*—Ver. 22. After Abner's departure, the servants of David returned with much booty from a marauding expedition, and Joab at their head. The singular מַרְדִּיךְ may be explained from the fact that Joab was the principal person in the estimation of the writer. מַרְדִּיךְ, *lit.* from the marauding host, *i.e.* from the work of a marauding host, or from a raid, which they had been making upon one of the tribes bordering upon Judah.—Ver. 23. When Joab learned (*lit.* *they told him*) that Abner had been with David, and he had sent him away again, he went to David to reproach him for having done so. “*What hast thou done? Behold, Abner came to thee; why then hast thou sent him away, and he is gone quite away?*” *i.e.* so that he could go away again without being detained (for this meaning of the *inf. abs.*, see Ewald, § 280, b). “*Thou knowest* (or more correctly as a question, *Dost thou know?*) *Abner, the son of Ner, that he came to persuade thee* (*i.e.* to make thee certain of his intentions), *and to learn thy going out and in* (*i.e.* all thine undertakings), *and to learn all that thou wilt do*” (*i.e.* all thy plans). Joab hoped in this way to prejudice David against Abner, to make him suspected as a traitor, that he might then be able to gratify his own private revenge with perfect impunity.—Ver. 26. For Abner had only just gone away from David, when Joab sent messengers after him, no doubt in David's name, though without his knowledge, and had him fetched back “from *Bor-hasirah*, *i.e.* the cistern of *Sirah*.” *Sirah* is a place which is quite unknown to us. According to

Josephus (*Ant.* vii. 1, 5), it was twenty stadia from Hebron, and called *Βησιπά*.—Ver. 27. When he came back, Joab “took him aside into the middle of the gate, to talk with him in the stillness,” i.e. in private, and there thrust him through the body, so that he died “for the blood of Asahel his brother,” i.e. for having put Asahel to death (ch. ii. 23).—Vers. 28, 29. When David heard this, he said, “I and my kingdom are innocent before Jehovah for ever of the blood of Abner. Let it turn (חָלַה, to twist one’s self, to turn or fall, irruit) upon the head of Joab and all his father’s house (or so-called family)! Never shall there be wanting (אֵל יִכָּרֵת, let there not be cut off, so that there shall not be, as in Josh. ix. 23) in the house of Joab one that hath an issue (vid. Lev. xv. 2), and a leper, and one who leans upon a stick (i.e. a lame person or cripple; מַגָּן, according to the LXX. σκυτάλη, a thick round staff), and who falls by the sword, and who is in want of bread.” The meaning is: May God avenge the murder of Abner upon Joab and his family, by punishing them continually with terrible diseases, violent death, and poverty. To make the reason for this fearful curse perfectly clear, the historian observes in ver. 30, that Joab and his brother Abishai had murdered Abner, “because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle” (ch. ii. 23). This act of Joab, in which Abishai must have been in some way concerned, was a treacherous act of assassination, which could not even be defended as blood-revenge, since Abner had slain Asahel in battle after repeated warnings, and only for the purpose of saving his own life. The principal motive for Joab’s act was the most contemptible jealousy, or the fear lest Abner’s reconciliation to David should diminish his own influence with the king, as was the case again at a later period with the murder of Amasa (ch. xx. 10).

Vers. 31–39. *David’s mourning for Abner’s death.*—Vers. 31, 32. To give a public proof of his grief at this murder, and his displeasure at the crime in the sight of all the nation, David commanded Joab, and all the people with him (David), i.e. all his courtiers, and the warriors who returned with Joab, to institute a public mourning for the deceased, by tearing their clothes, putting on sackcloth, i.e. coarse hairy mourning and penitential clothes, and by a funeral dirge for Abner; i.e. he commanded them to walk in front of Abner’s bier mourning

and in funeral costume, and to accompany the deceased to his resting-place, whilst David as king followed the bier.—Ver. 32. Thus they buried Abner at Hebron; and David wept aloud at his grave, and all the people with him.—Vers. 33, 34. Although the appointment of such a funeral by David, and his tears at Abner's grave, could not fail to divest the minds of his opponents of all suspicion that Joab had committed the murder with his cognizance (see at ver. 37), he gave a still stronger proof of his innocence, and of the sincerity of his grief, by the ode which he composed for Abner's death:

Ver. 33. Like an ungodly man must Abner die!

34. Thy hands were not bound, and thy feet were not placed in fetters.

As one falls before sinners, so hast thou fallen!

The first strophe (ver. 33) is an expression of painful lamentation at the fact that Abner had died a death which he did not deserve. "*The fool*" (*nabal*) is "the ungodly," according to Israelitish ideas (*vid.* Ps. xiv. 1). The meaning of ver. 34 is: Thou hadst not made thyself guilty of any crime, so as to have to die like a malefactor, in chains and bonds; but thou hast been treacherously murdered. This dirge made such an impression upon all the people (present), that they wept still more for the dead.—Ver. 35. But David mourned so bitterly, that when all the people called upon him to take some food during the day, he declared with an oath that he would not taste bread or anything else before the setting of the sun. לָחֵם הַבִּרּוֹת does not mean, as in ch. xiii. 5, to give to eat, on account of the expression "*all the people*," as it can hardly be imagined that all the people, *i.e.* all who were present, could have come to bring David food, but it signifies to make him eat, *i.e.* call upon him to eat; whilst it is left uncertain whether David was to eat with the people (*cf.* ch. xii. 17), *i.e.* to take part in the funeral meal that was held after the burial, or whether the people simply urged him to take some food, for the purpose of soothing his own sorrow. אִם כִּי are to be taken separately; כִּי, *introducing* the oath, and אִם being the particle used in an oath: "*if*," *i.e.* assuredly not.—Ver. 36. "*And all the people perceived it (i.e. his trouble), and it pleased them, as everything that the king did pleased all the people.*"—Ver. 37. All the people (*sc.* who were with the king) and all

Israel discerned on that day (from David's deep and heartfelt trouble), that the death of Abner had not happened (proceeded) from the king, as many may probably at first have supposed, since Joab had no doubt fetched Abner back in David's name.—Vers. 38, 39. Finally, David said to his (confidential) servants: "*Know ye not (i.e. ye surely perceive) that a prince and great man has this day fallen in Israel?*" This sentence shows how thoroughly David could recognise the virtues possessed by his opponents, and how very far he was from looking upon Abner as a traitor, because of his falling away from Ishbosheth and coming over to him, that on the contrary he hoped to find in him an able general and a faithful servant. He would at once have punished the murderer of such a man, if he had only possessed the power. "*But,*" he adds, "*I am this day (still) weak, and only anointed king; and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too strong for me. The Lord reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.*" The expression "to-day" not only applies to the word "*weak,*" or tender, but also to "*anointed*" (*to-day, i.e. only just anointed*). As David was still but a young sovereign, and felt himself unable to punish a man like Joab according to his deserts, he was obliged to restrict himself at first to the utterance of a curse upon the deed (ver. 29), and to leave the retribution to God. He could not and durst not forgive; and consequently, before he died, he charged Solomon, his son and successor, to punish Joab for the murder of Abner and Amasa (1 Kings ii. 5).

MURDER OF ISHBOSHETH, AND PUNISHMENT OF THE
MURDERERS.—CHAP. IV.

Vers. 1-6. *Murder of Ishbosheth.*—Ver. 1. When the son of Saul heard of the death of Abner, "*his hands slackened,*" i.e. he lost the power and courage to act as king, since Abner had been the only support of his throne. "*And all Israel was confounded;*" i.e. not merely alarmed on account of Abner's death, but utterly at a loss what to do to escape the vengeance of David, to which Abner had apparently fallen a victim.—Vers. 2, 3. Saul's son had two leaders of military companies (for בְּרִשָּׁאֵל *we must read* בְּרִי לָבָן *ש*): the one was named Baanah, the other Rechab, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "*of*

the sons of Benjamin," i.e. belonging to them; "*for Beeroth is also reckoned to Benjamin*" (לְ, over, above, added to). *Beeroth*, the present *Bireh* (see at Josh. ix. 17), was close to the western frontier of the tribe of Benjamin, to which it is also reckoned as belonging in Josh. xviii. 25. This remark concerning Beeroth in the verse before us, serves to confirm the statement that the Beerothites mentioned were Benjaminites; but that statement also shows the horrible character of the crime attributed to them in the following verses. Two men of the tribe of Benjamin murdered the son of Saul, the king belonging to their own tribe.—Ver. 3. "*The Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and were strangers there unto this day.*" *Gittaim* is mentioned again in Neh. xi. 33, among the places in which Benjaminites were dwelling after the captivity, though it by no means follows from this that the place belonged to the tribe of Benjamin before the captivity. It may have been situated outside the territory of that tribe. It is never mentioned again, and has not yet been discovered. The reason why the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and remained there as strangers until the time when this history was written, is also unknown; it may perhaps have been that the Philistines had conquered Gittaim.—Ver. 4. Before the historian proceeds to describe what the two Beerothites did, he inserts a remark concerning Saul's family, to show at the outset, that with the death of Ishbosheth the government of this family necessarily became extinct, as the only remaining descendant was a perfectly helpless cripple. He was a son of Jonathan, *smitten* (i.e. lamed) *in his feet*. He was five years old when the tidings came from Jezreel of Saul and Jonathan, i.e. of their death. His nurse immediately took him and fled, and on their hasty flight he fell and became lame. His name was *Mephibosheth* (according to Simonis, for מִפְּאֵה בִשֶׁת, destroying the idol); but in 1 Chron. viii. 34 and ix. 40 he is called *Meribbaal* (Baal's fighter), just as Ishbosheth is also called *Eshbaal* (see at ch. ii. 8). On his future history, see ch. ix., xvi. 1 sqq., and xix. 25 sqq.—Ver. 5. The two sons of Rimmon went to Mahanaim, where Ishbosheth resided (ch. ii. 8, 12), and came in the heat of the day (at noon) into Ishbosheth's house, when he was taking his mid-day rest.—Ver. 6. "*And here they had come into the midst of the house, fetching wheat* (i.e. under the pretext of fetching wheat, probably for the soldiers in

their companies), and smote him in the abdomen; and Rechab and his brother escaped." The first clause in this verse is a circumstantial clause, which furnishes the explanation of the way in which it was possible for the murderers to find their way to the king. The second clause continues the narrative, and יִצְחָק is attached to יָבֵאוּ (ver. 5).¹

Vers. 7-12. *Punishment of the murderers by David.*—Ver. 7. As the thread of the narrative was broken by the explanatory remarks in ver. 6, it is resumed here by the repetition of the words יָבֵאוּ וְנִי: "They came into the house, as he lay upon his bed in his bed-chamber, and smote him, and slew him," for the purpose of attaching the account of the further progress of the affair, viz. that they cut off his head, took it and went by the way of the Arabah (the valley of the Jordan: see ch. ii. 29) the whole night, and brought the head of Ishbosheth unto David to Hebron with these words: "Behold (= there thou hast) the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul thine enemy,

¹ The LXX. thought it desirable to explain the possibility of Rechab and Baanah getting into the king's house, and therefore paraphrased the sixth verse as follows: καὶ ἰδοὺ ἡ θυραγωγὸς τοῦ οἴκου ἐκάθαιρε πυρροὺς καὶ ἐνύσταξε καὶ ἐκάθευθε, καὶ Ῥηχαβ καὶ Βαανὰ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ διέλαθον ("and behold the doorkeeper of the house was cleaning wheat, and nodded and slept. And Rahab and Baana the brothers escaped, or went in secretly"). The first part of this paraphrase has been retained in the Vulgate, in the interpolation between vers. 5 and 6: *et ostiaria domus purgans triticum obdormivit*; whether it was copied by Jerome from the Itala, or was afterwards introduced as a gloss into his translation. It is very evident that this clause in the Vulgate is only a gloss, from the fact that, in all the rest of ver. 6, Jerome has closely followed the Masoretic text, and that none of the other ancient translators found anything about a doorkeeper in his text. When Thenius, therefore, attempts to prove the "evident corruption of the Masoretic text," by appealing to the "nonsense (*Unsinn*) of relating the murder of Ishbosheth and the flight of the murderers twice over, and in two successive verses (see ver. 7)," he is altogether wrong in speaking of the repetition as "nonsense" whereas it is simply tautology, and has measured the peculiarities of Hebrew historians by the standard adopted by our own. J. P. F. Königsfeldt has given the true explanation when he says: "The Hebrews often repeat in this way, for the purpose of adding something fresh, as for example, in this instance, their carrying off the head." Comp. with this ch. iii. 22, 23, where the arrival of Joab is mentioned twice, viz. in two successive verses; or ch. v. 1-3, where the assembling of the tribes of Israel at Hebron is also referred to a second time,—a repetition at which Thenius himself has taken no offence,—and many other passages of the same kind.

who sought thy life; and thus hath Jehovah avenged my lord the king this day upon Saul and his seed." No motive is assigned for this action. But there can be little doubt that it was no other than the hope of obtaining a great reward from David. Thus they presumed "to spread the name of God and His providence as a cloak and covering over their villany, as the wicked are accustomed to do" (*Berleb. Bible*).—Vers. 9 sqq. But David rewarded them very differently from what they had expected. He replied, "*As Jehovah liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, the man who told me, Behold, Saul is dead, and thought he was a messenger of good to me, I seized and slew at Ziklag (vid. i. 14, 15), to give him a reward for his news: how much more when wicked men have murdered a righteous man in his house upon his bed, should I not require his blood at your hand, and destroy you from the earth?*" The several parts of this reply are not closely linked together so as to form one period, but answer to the excited manner in which they were spoken. There is first of all the oath, "*As truly as Jehovah liveth,*" and the clause appended, "*who redeemed my soul,*" in which the thought is implied that David did not feel it necessary to get rid of his enemies by the commission of crimes. After this (ver. 10) we have an allusion to his treatment of the messenger who announced Saul's death to him, and pretended to have slain him in order that he might obtain a good reward for his tidings. כִּי, like ὅτι, simply introduces the address. בְּעֵינַי . . . הַפִּיזִיד is placed at the head absolutely, and made subordinate to the verb by בו after נִתְּנָהוּ. לְתַתִּילֹ, "*namely, to give him.*" אֲשֶׁר is employed to introduce the explanation, like our "*namely*" (vid. Ewald, § 338, b). בְּשֵׁרָה, good news, here "*the reward of news.*" The main point follows in ver. 11, beginning with כִּי, "*how much more*" (vid. Ewald, § 354, c), and is introduced in the form of a climax. The words מִשְׁבָּבוּ . . . אֲנָשִׁים are also written absolutely, and placed at the head: "men have slain," for "how much more in this instance, when wicked men have slain." "*Righteous*" (*zaddik*), i.e. not guilty of any wicked deed or crime. The assumption of the regal power, which Abner had forced upon Ishbosheth, was not a capital crime in the existing state of things, and after the death of Saul; and even if it had been, the sons of Rimmon had no right to assassinate him. David's sentence then follows: "*And now that this is*

the fact, that ye have murdered a righteous man, should I not," etc. בָּעֵר, to destroy by capital punishment, as in Deut. xiii. 6, etc. בָּקֵשׁ דָּם (= בָּרַשׁ דָּם, Gen. ix. 5), to require the blood of a person, i.e. to take blood-revenge.—Ver. 12. David then commanded his servant to slay the murderers, and also to make the punishment more severe than usual. "*They cut off their hands and feet,*"—the hands with which they had committed the murder, and the feet which had run for the reward,—"*and hanged the bodies by the pool at Hebron*" for a spectacle and warning, that others might be deterred from committing similar crimes (cf. Deut. xxi. 22 ; J. H. Michaelis). In illustration of the fact itself, we may compare the similar course pursued by Alexander towards the murderer of king Darius, as described in Justin's history (xii. 6) and Curtius (vii. 5). They buried Ishbosheth's head in Abner's grave at Hebron. Thus David acted with strict justice in this case also, not only to prove to the people that he had neither commanded nor approved of the murder, but from heartfelt abhorrence of such crimes, and to keep his conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.

II. THE GOVERNMENT OF DAVID OVER ALL ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF ITS STRENGTH AND GLORY.

CHAP. V.—IX.

After the death of Ishbosheth, David was anointed in Hebron by all the tribes as king over the whole of Israel (ch. v. 1–5). He then proceeded to attack the Jebusites in Jerusalem, conquered their fortress Zion, and made Jerusalem the capital of his kingdom ; fortifying it still further, and building a palace in it (ch. v. 6–16), after he had twice inflicted a defeat upon the Philistines (ch. v. 17–25). But in order that the chief city of his kingdom and the seat of his own palace might also be made the religious centre of the whole nation as a congregation of Jehovah, he first of all brought the ark of the covenant out of its place of concealment, and had it conveyed in a festal procession to Zion, and deposited there in a tent which had been specially prepared for it, as a place of worship for

the whole congregation (ch. vi.). He then resolved to erect for the Lord in Jerusalem a temple fitted for His name; and the Lord gave him in return the promise of the eternal perpetuity of his throne (ch. vii.). To this there is appended a cursory account of David's wars with the neighbouring nations, by which not only his own sovereignty, but the Israelitish kingdom of God, was raised into a commanding power among the nations and kingdoms of the world. In connection with all this, David still maintained his affection and fidelity towards the fallen royal family of Saul, and showed compassion towards the last remaining descendant of that family (ch. ix.).

This account of the unfolding of the power and glory of the kingdom of Israel, through the instrumentality of David and during his reign, is so far arranged chronologically, that all the events and all the enterprises of David mentioned in this section occurred in the first half of his reign over the whole of the covenant nation. The chronological arrangement, however, is not strictly adhered to, so far as the details are concerned; but the standpoint of material resemblance is so far connected with it, that all the greater wars of David are grouped together in ch. viii. (see the introduction to ch. viii.). It is obvious from this, that the plan which the historian adopted was first of all to describe the internal improvement of the Israelitish kingdom of God by David, and then to proceed to the external development of his power in conflict with the opposing nations of the world.

DAVID ANOINTED KING OVER ALL ISRAEL. JERUSALEM
TAKEN, AND MADE THE CAPITAL OF THE KINGDOM.
VICTORIES OVER THE PHILISTINES.—CHAP. V.

Vers. 1-5. DAVID ANOINTED KING OVER ALL ISRAEL.—
Vers. 1-3 (compare with this the parallel passages in 1 Chron. xi. 1-3). After the death of Ishbosheth, all the tribes of Israel (except Judah) came to Hebron in the persons of their representatives the elders (*vid.* ver. 3), in response to the summons of Abner (ch. iii. 17-19), to do homage to David as their king. They assigned three reasons for their coming: (1.) "*Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh,*" *i.e.* thy blood-relations, inasmuch as all the tribes of Israel were lineal descendants of Jacob (*vid.*

Gen. xxix. 14; Judg. ix. 2). (2.) "*In time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast the leader of Israel (thou leddest out and broughtest in Israel),*" i.e. thou didst superintend the affairs of Israel (see at Num. xxvii. 17; and for the fact itself, 1 Sam. xviii. 5). הָיִיתָ מְנַצֵּחַ is an error in writing for הַמְנַצֵּחַ, and מְנִי for מְנִי, with the ם dropped, as in 1 Kings xxi. 21, etc. (*vid.* Olshausen, *Gr.* p. 69). (3.) They ended by asserting that Jehovah had called him to be the shepherd and prince over His people. The remarks which we have already made at ch. iii. 18 respecting Abner's appeal to a similar utterance on the part of Jehovah, are equally applicable to the words of Jehovah to David which are quoted here: "Thou shalt feed my people Israel," etc. On the *Piska*, see the note to Josh. iv. 1.—Ver. 3. "*All the elders of Israel came*" is a repetition of ver. 1a, except that the expression "all the tribes of Israel" is more distinctly defined as meaning "all the elders of Israel." "*So all the elders came; . . . and king David made a covenant with them in Hebron before the Lord* (see at ch. iii. 21): *and they anointed David king over (all) Israel.*" The writer of the Chronicles adds, "according to the word of the Lord through Samuel," i.e. so that the command of the Lord to Samuel, to anoint David king over Israel (1 Sam. xvi. 1, 12), found its complete fulfilment in this.—Vers. 4, 5. The age of David when he began to reign is given here, viz. thirty years old; also the length of his reign, viz. seven years and a half at Hebron over Judah, and thirty-three years at Jerusalem over Israel and Judah. In the books of Chronicles these statements occur at the close of David's reign (1 Chron. xxix. 27).

Vers. 6–10. CONQUEST OF THE STRONGHOLD OF ZION, AND CHOICE OF JERUSALEM AS THE CAPITAL OF THE KINGDOM (cf. 1 Chron. xi. 4, 9).—These parallel accounts agree in all the main points; but they are both of them merely brief extracts from a more elaborate history, so that certain things, which appeared of comparatively less importance, are passed over either in the one or the other, and the full account is obtained by combining the two. The conquest of the citadel Zion took place immediately after the anointing of David as king over all the tribes of Israel. This is apparent, not only from the fact that the account follows

directly afterwards, but also from the circumstance that, according to ver. 5, David reigned in Jerusalem just as many years as he was king over all Israel.—Ver. 6. The king went with his men (*i.e.* his fighting men: the Chronicles have “all Israel,” *i.e.* the fighting men of Israel) to Jerusalem to the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, *i.e.* the natives or Canaanites; “*and they said* (the singular *אָמַר* is used because *הָיָה* is a singular form) *to David, Thou wilt not come hither* (*i.e.* come in), *but the blind and lame will drive thee away: to say* (*i.e.* by which they meant to say), *David will not come in.*” *הָיָה* is not used for the infinitive, but has been rightly understood by the LXX., Aben Ezra, and others, as a perfect. The perfect expresses a thing accomplished, and open to no dispute; and the use of the singular in the place of the plural, as in Isa. xiv. 32, is to be explained from the fact that the verb precedes, and is only defined precisely by the subject which follows (*vid.* Ewald, § 319, *a*). The Jebusites relied upon the unusual natural advantages of their citadel, which stood upon Mount Zion, a mountain shut in by deep valleys on three different sides; so that in their haughty self-security they imagined that they did not even need to employ healthy and powerful warriors to resist the attack made by David, but that the blind and lame would suffice.—Ver. 7. However, David took the citadel Zion, *i.e.* “the city of David.” This explanatory remark anticipates the course of events, as David did not give this name to the conquered citadel, until he had chosen it as his residence and capital (*vid.* ver. 9). *צִיּוֹן* (*Sion*), from *צָיָה*, to be dry: the dry or arid mountain or hill. This was the name of the southern and loftiest mountain of Jerusalem. Upon this stood the fortress or citadel of the town, which had hitherto remained in the possession of the Jebusites; whereas the northern portion of the city of Jerusalem, which was upon lower ground, had been conquered by the Judæans and Benjaminites very shortly after the death of Joshua (see at Judg. i. 8).—In ver. 8 we have one circumstance mentioned which occurred in connection with this conquest. On that day, *i.e.* when he had advanced to the attack of the citadel Zion, David said, “Every one who smites the Jebusites, let him hurl into the waterfall (*i.e.* down the precipice) both the lame and blind, who are hateful to David’s soul.” This is most probably the proper interpretation

of these obscure words of David, which have been very differently explained. Taking up the words of the Jebusites, David called all the defenders of the citadel of Zion "lame and blind," and ordered them to be cast down the precipice without quarter. צִנּוֹר signifies a waterfall (*catarracta*) in Ps. xlii. 8, the only other passage in which it occurs, probably from צָנַר, to roar. This meaning may also be preserved here, if we assume that at the foot of the steep precipice of Zion there was a waterfall probably connected with the water of Siloah. It is true we cannot determine anything with certainty concerning it, as, notwithstanding the many recent researches in Jerusalem, the situation of the Jebusite fortress and the character of the mountain of Zion in ancient times are quite unknown to us. This explanation of the word *zinnor* is simpler than Ewald's assumption that the word signifies the steep side of a rock, which merely rests upon the fact that the Greek word *καταρράκτης* originally signified a plunge.¹ צָנַר should be pointed as a *Hiphil* צָנַר. The Masoretic pointing צִנּוֹר arises from their mistaken interpretation of the whole sentence. The *Chethibh* צָנַר might be the *third pers. perf.*, "who hate David's soul;" only in that case the omission of צָנַר would be surprising, and consequently the *Keri* צָנַר is to be preferred. "From this," adds the writer, "the proverb arose, 'The blind and lame shall not enter the house;'" in which proverb the epithet "blind and lame," which David applied to the Jebusites who were hated by him, has the general signification of "repulsive persons," with whom one does not wish to have anything to do. In the Chronicles not only is the whole of ver. 7 omitted, with the proverb to which the occurrence gave rise, but also the allusion

¹ The earliest translators have only resorted to guesses. The Seventy, with their ἀπείθεω ἐν παραξίφιδι, have combined צָנַר with צָנַר, which they render now and then μάχαιρα or βομφαία. This is also done by the Syriac and Arabic. The Chaldee paraphrases in this manner: "who begins to subjugate the citadel." Jerome, who probably followed the Rabbins, has *et tetigisset domatum fistulas* (and touched the *water-pipes*); and Luther, "und erlanget die Dachrinnen" (like the English version, "whosoever getteth up to the gutter:" Tr.). Hitzig's notion, that *zinnor* signifies ear ("whosoever boxes the ears of the blind and lame") needs no refutation; nor does that of Fr. Böttcher, who proposes to follow the Alexandrian rendering, and refer *zinnor* to a "sword of honour or marshal's staff," which David promised to the victor.

to the blind and lame in the words spoken by the Jebusites (ver. 6) ; and another word of David's is substituted instead, namely, that David would make the man who first smote the Jebusites, *i.e.* who stormed their citadel, *head and chief*;¹ and also the statement that Joab obtained the prize. The historical credibility of the statement cannot be disputed, as Thenius assumes, on the ground that Joab had already been chief (*sar*) for a long time, according to ch. ii. 13 : for the passage referred to says nothing of the kind ; and there is a very great difference between the commander of an army in the time of war, and a "head and chief," *i.e.* a commander-in-chief. The statement in ver. 8 with regard to Joab's part, the fortification of Jerusalem, shows very clearly that the author of the Chronicles had other and more elaborate sources in his possession, which contained fuller accounts than the author of our books has communicated.—Ver. 9. "*David dwelt in the fort,*" *i.e.* he selected the fort or citadel as his palace, "*and called it David's city.*" David may have been induced to select the citadel of Zion as his palace, and by so doing to make Jerusalem the capital of the whole kingdom, partly by the natural strength of Zion, and partly by the situation of Jerusalem, *viz.* on the border of the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, and tolerably near to the centre of the land. "*And David built,* *i.e.* fortified (the city of Zion), *round about from Millo and inwards.*" In the Chronicles we have וְעַד־הַפְּתִיחַ, "and to the environs or surroundings," *i.e.* to the encircling wall which was opposite to the Millo. The fortification "inwards" must have consisted in the enclosure of Mount Zion with a strong wall upon the north side, where Jerusalem joined it as a lower town, so as to defend the palace against hostile attacks on the north or town side, which had hitherto been left without fortifications. The "Millo" was at any rate some kind of fortification, probably a large tower or castle at one particular part of the surrounding wall (comp. Judg. ix. 6 with vers. 46 and 49, where *Millo* is used interchangeably with *Migdal*). The name ("the filling") probably originated in the fact that through this tower or castle the fortification of the city, or the surrounding wall, was *filled* or completed. The definite article before *Millo* indicates that

¹ This is also inserted in the passage before us by the translators of the English version : "he shall be chief and captain."—Tr.

it was a well-known fortress, probably one that had been erected by the Jebusites. With regard to the situation of *Millo*, we may infer from this passage, and 1 Chron. xi. 8, that the tower in question stood at one corner of the wall, either on the north-east or north-west, "where the hill of Zion has the least elevation and therefore needed the greatest strengthening from without" (Thenius on 1 Kings ix. 15). This is fully sustained both by 1 Kings xi. 27, where Solomon is said to have closed the breach of the city of David by building (fortifying) *Millo*, and by 2 Chron. xxxii. 5, where Hezekiah is said to have built up all the wall of Jerusalem, and made *Millo* strong, *i.e.* to have fortified it still further (*vid.* 1 Kings ix. 15 and 24). —Ver. 10. And David increased in greatness, *i.e.* in power and fame, for Jehovah the God of hosts was with him.

Vers. 11–16.—**DAVID'S PALACE, WIVES AND CHILDREN** (comp. 1 Chron. xiv. 1–7).—King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, and afterwards, by the express desire of the latter, cedar-wood and builders, carpenters and stone-masons, who built him a house, *i.e.* a palace. *Hiram* (*Hirom* in 1 Kings v. 32; *Huram* in the Chronicles; LXX. *Χειράμ*; *Josephus*, *Εἰραμος* and *Εἰρωμος*), king of Tyre, was not only an ally of David, but of his son Solomon also. He sent to the latter cedar-wood and builders for the erection of the temple and of his own palace (1 Kings v. 21 sqq.; 2 Chron. ii. 2 sqq.), and fitted out a mercantile fleet in conjunction with him (1 Kings ix. 27, 28; 2 Chron. ix. 10); in return for which, Solomon not only sent him an annual supply of corn, oil, and wine (1 Kings v. 24; 2 Chron. ii. 9), but when all the buildings were finished, twenty years after the erection of the temple, he made over to him twenty of the towns of Galilee (1 Kings ix. 10 sqq.). It is evident from these facts that Hiram was still reigning in the twenty-fourth, or at any rate the twentieth, year of Solomon's reign, and consequently, as he had assisted David with contributions of wood for the erection of his palace, that he must have reigned at least forty-five or fifty years; and therefore that, even in the latter case, he cannot have begun to reign earlier than the eighth year of David's reign over all Israel, or from six to ten years after the conquest of the Jebusite citadel upon Mount Zion. This is quite in harmony with the account given

here ; for it by no means follows, that because the arrival of an embassy from Hiram, and the erection of David's palace, are mentioned immediately after the conquest of the citadel of Zion, they must have occurred directly afterwards. The arrangement of the different events in the chapter before us is topical rather than strictly chronological. Of the two battles fought by David with the Philistines (vers. 17-25), the first at any rate took place before the erection of David's palace, as it is distinctly stated in ver. 17 that the Philistines made war upon David when they heard that he had been anointed king over Israel, and therefore in all probability even before the conquest of the fortress of the Jebusites, or at any rate immediately afterwards, and before David had commenced the fortification of Jerusalem and the erection of a palace. The historian, on the contrary, has not only followed up the account of the capture of the fortress of Zion, and the selection of it as David's palace, by a description of what David gradually did to fortify and adorn the new capital, but has also added a notice as to David's wives and the children that were born to him in Jerusalem. Now, if this be correct, the object of Hiram's embassy cannot have been "to congratulate David upon his ascent of the throne," as Thenius maintains ; but after he had ascended the throne, Hiram sent ambassadors to form an alliance with this powerful monarch ; and David availed himself of the opportunity to establish an intimate friendship with Hiram, and ask him for cedar-wood and builders for his palace.¹—Ver. 12. "And David

¹ The statements of Menander of Ephesus in Josephus (c. *Ap.* i. 18), that after the death of *Abibai* his son *Hirom* (*Εἰραμος*) succeeded him in the government, and reigned thirty-four years, and died at the age of fifty-three, are at variance with the biblical history. For, according to these statements, as Hiram was still reigning "at the end of twenty years" (according to 1 Kings ix. 10, 11), when Solomon had built his palaces and the house of the Lord, i.e. twenty-four years after Solomon began to reign, he cannot have ascended the throne before the sixty-first year of David's life, and the thirty-first of his reign. But in that case the erection of David's palace would fall somewhere within the last eight years of his life. And to this we have to add the repeated statements made by Josephus (*l.c.* and *Ant.* viii. 3, 1), to the effect that Solomon commenced the building of the temple in Hiram's twelfth year, or after he had reigned eleven years ; so that Hiram could only have begun to reign seven years before the death of David (in the sixty-third year of his life), and the erection of the palace by David must have fallen later still, and his determination to build the

perceived (*sc.* from the success of his enterprises) that Jehovah had firmly established him king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for His people Israel's sake," *i.e.* because

temple, which he did not form till he had taken possession of his house of cedar, *i.e.* the newly erected palace (ch. vii. 2), would fall in the very last years of his life, but a very short time before his death. As this seems hardly credible, it has been assumed by some that Hiram's father, Abibal, also bore the name of Hiram, or that Hiram is confounded with Abibal in the account before us (Thenius), or that Ahibal's father was named Hiram, and it was he who formed the alliance with David (Ewald, *Gesch.* iv. 287). But all these assumptions are overthrown by the fact that the identity of the Hiram who was Solomon's friend with the contemporary and friend of David is expressly affirmed not only in 2 Chron. ii. 2 (as Ewald supposes), but also in 1 Kings v. 15. For whilst Solomon writes to Hiram in 2 Chron. ii. 3, "as thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him an house to dwell therein," it is also stated 1 Kings v. 1 that "Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon; for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: for Hiram was a lover of David all days (all his life)." Movers (*Phönizier* ii. 1, p. 147 sqq.) has therefore attempted to remove the discrepancy between the statements made in Josephus and the biblical account of Hiram's friendship with David and Solomon, by assuming that in the narrative contained in the books of Samuel we have a topical and not a chronological arrangement, and that according to this arrangement the conquest of Jerusalem by David is followed immediately by the building of the city and palace, and this again by the removal of the holy ark to Jerusalem, and lastly by David's resolution to build a temple, which really belonged to the close of his reign, and indeed, according to 2 Sam. vii. 2, to the period directly following the completion of the cedar palace. There is a certain amount of truth at the foundation of this, but it does not remove the discrepancy; for even if David's resolution to build a temple did not fall within the earlier years of his reign at Jerusalem, as some have inferred from the position in which it stands in the account given in this book, it cannot be pushed forward to the very last years of his life and reign. This is decidedly precluded by the fact, that in the promise given to David by God, his son and successor upon the throne is spoken of in such terms as to necessitate the conclusion that he was not yet born. This difficulty cannot be removed by the solution suggested by Movers (p. 149), "that the historian necessarily adhered to the topical arrangement which he had adopted for this section, because he had not said anything yet about Solomon and his mother Bathsheba:" for the expression "which shall proceed out of thy bowels" (ch. vii. 12) is not the only one of the kind; but in 1 Chron. xxii. 9, David says to his son Solomon, "The word of the Lord came to me, saying, A son *shall* be born to thee—Solomon—he shall build an house for my name;" from which it is very obvious, that Solomon was not born at the time when David determined to build the temple and received this promise from God in conse-

He had chosen Israel as His people, and had promised to make it great and glorious.

To the building of David's palace, there is appended in

quence of his intention. To this we have also to add 2 Sam. xi. 2, where David sees Bathsheba, who gave birth to Solomon a few years later, from the roof of his palace. Now, even though the palace is simply called "the king's house" in this passage, and not the "house of cedar," as in ch. vii. 2, and therefore the house intended might possibly be the house in which David lived before the house of cedar was built, this is a very improbable supposition, and there cannot be much doubt that the "king's house" is the palace (ch. v. 11, vii. 1) which he had erected for himself. Lastly, not only is there not the slightest intimation in the whole of the account given in ch. vii. that David was an old man when he resolved to build the temple, but, on the contrary, the impression which it makes throughout is, that it was the culminating point of his reign, and that he was at an age when he might hope not only to commence this magnificent building, but in all human probability to live to complete it. The only other solution left, is the assumption that there are errors in the chronological date of Josephus, and that Hiram lived longer than Menander affirms. The assertion that Solomon commenced the erection of the temple in the eleventh or twelfth year of Hiram's reign was not derived by Josephus from Phœnician sources; for the fragments which he gives from the works of Menander and Dios in the *Antiquities* (viii. 5, 3) and *c. Apion* (i. 17, 18), contain nothing at all about the building of the temple (*vid.* Movers, p. 141), but he has made it as the result of certain chronological combinations of his own, just as in *Ant.* viii. 3, 1, he calculates the year of the building of the temple in relation both to the exodus and also to the departure of Abraham out of Haran, but miscalculates, inasmuch as he places it in the 592d year after the exodus instead of the 480th, and the 1020th year from Abraham's emigration to Canaan instead of the 1125th. And in the present instance his calculation of the exact position of the same event in relation to Hiram's reign may be just as erroneous. His statement concerning the length of Hiram's reign was no doubt taken from Menander; but even in this the numbers may be faulty, since the statements respecting *Balezorus* and *Myttonus* in the very same extract from Menander, as to the length of the reigns of the succeeding kings of Tyre, can be proved to be erroneous, and have been corrected by Movers from Eusebius and Syncellus; and, moreover, the seven years of Hiram's successor, *Balezar*, do not tally with Eusebius and Syncellus, who both give seventeen years. Thus the proof which Movers adduces from the synchronism of the Tyrian chronology with the biblical, the Egyptian, and the Assyrian, to establish the correctness of Menander's statements concerning Hiram's reign, is rendered very uncertain, to say nothing of the fact that Movers has only succeeded in bringing out the synchronism with the biblical chronology by a very arbitrary and demonstrably false calculation of the years that the kings of Judah and Israel reigned.

vers. 13-15 the account of the increase of his house by the multiplication of his wives and concubines, and of the sons who were born to him at Jerusalem (as in 1 Chron. xiv. 3 sqq.). Taking many wives was indeed prohibited in the law of the king in Deut. xvii. 17; but as a large harem was considered from time immemorial as part of the court of an oriental monarch, David suffered himself to be seduced by that custom to disregard this prohibition, and suffered many a heartburn afterwards in consequence, not to mention his fearful fall in consequence of his passion for Bathsheba. The concubines are mentioned before the wives, probably because David had taken many of them to Jerusalem, and earlier than the wives. In the Chronicles the concubines are omitted, though not "intentionally," as they are mentioned in 1 Chron. iii. 9; but as being of no essential importance in relation to the list of sons which follows, because no difference was made between those born of concubines and those born of wives. "Out of Jerusalem," i.e. away from Jerusalem: not that the wives were all born in Jerusalem, as the words which follow, "after he was come from Hebron," clearly show. In the Chronicles, therefore, it is explained as meaning "in Jerusalem." The sons are mentioned again both in 1 Chron. xiv. 5-7 and in the genealogy in 1 Chron. iii. 5-8. *Shammua* is called *Shimea* in 1 Chron. iii. 5, according to a different pronunciation. *Shammua*, *Shobab*, *Nathan*, and *Solomon* were sons of Bathsheba according to 1 Chron. iii. 5.—Ver. 15. *Elishua* is written incorrectly in 1 Chron. iii. 6 as *Elishama*, because *Elishama* follows afterwards. There are two names after *Elishua* in 1 Chron. iii. 6, 7, and xiv. 6, 7, viz. *Eliphalet* and *Nogah*, which have not crept into the text from oversight or from a wrong spelling of other names, because the number of the names is given as nine in 1 Chron. iii. 8, and the two names must be included in order to bring out that number. And, on the other hand, it is not by the mistake of a copyist that they have been omitted from the text before us, but it has evidently been done deliberately on account of their having died in infancy, or at a very early age. This also furnishes a very simple explanation of the fact, that the name *Eliphalet* occurs again at the end of the list, namely, because a son who was born later received the name of his brother who had died young. *Eliada*, the last but one, is

called *Beeliada* in 1 Chron. xiv. 7, another form of the name, compounded with *Baal* instead of *El*. David had therefore nineteen sons, six of whom were born in Hebron (ch. iii. 2 sqq.), and thirteen at Jerusalem. Daughters are not mentioned in the genealogical accounts, because as a rule only heiresses or women who acquired renown from special causes were included in them. There is a daughter named *Thamar* mentioned afterwards in ch. xiii. 1.

Vers. 17-25. DAVID GAINS TWO VICTORIES OVER THE PHILISTINES (compare 1 Chron. xiv. 8-17).—Both these victories belong in all probability to the interval between the anointing of David at Hebron over all Israel and the conquest of the citadel of Zion. This is very evident, so far as the first is concerned, from the words, "When the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel" (ver. 17), not when David had conquered the citadel of Zion. Moreover, when the Philistines approached, David "went down to the hold," or mountain fortress, by which we cannot possibly understand the citadel upon Zion, on account of the expression "went down." If David had been living upon Zion at the time, he would hardly have left this fortification when the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim on the west of Jerusalem, but would rather have attacked and routed the enemy from the citadel itself. The second victory followed very soon after the first, and must therefore be assigned to the same period. The Philistines evidently resolved, as soon as the tidings reached them of the union of all the tribes under the sovereignty of David, that they would at once resist the growing power of Israel, and smite David before he had consolidated his government.—Ver. 17. "*The Philistines went up to seek David,*" i.e. to seek him out and smite him. The expression לָבַקֵּשׁ presupposes that David had not yet taken up his abode upon Zion. He had probably already left Hebron to make preparations for his attack upon the Jebusites. When he heard of the approach of the Philistines, he went down into the mountain fortress. "The hold" cannot be the citadel of Zion (as in vers. 7 and 9), because this was so high that they had to go *up* to it on every side; and it is impossible to sustain the opinion advanced by Bertheau, that the verb יָרַד (to go

down) is used for falling back into a fortification. הַמְצֻדָה (*the hold*), with the definite article, is probably the mountain stronghold in the desert of Judah, into which David withdrew for a long time to defend himself from Saul (*vid.* ch. xxiii. 14 and 1 Chron. xii. 8). In ver. 18 the position of the Philistines is more minutely defined. The verse contains a circumstantial clause: "*The Philistines had come and spread themselves out in the valley of Rephaim*," a valley on the west of Jerusalem, and only separated from the valley of Ben-hinnom by a narrow ridge of land (see at Josh. xv. 8). Instead of יִנְטְשׁוּ the Chronicles have יִפְשְׁטוּ, they had invaded, which is perfectly equivalent so far as the sense is concerned.—Vers. 19, 20. David inquired of the Lord by the Urim whether he should go out against the foe, and whether God would give them into his hand;¹ and when he had received an answer in the affirmative to both these questions, he went to *Baal-perazim* (*lit.* into Baal-perazim), and smote them there, and said (ver. 20), "Jehovah hath broken mine enemies before me like a water-breach," *i.e.* has smitten them before me, and broken their power as a flood breaks through and carries away whatever opposes it. From these words of David, the place where the battle was fought received the name of *Baal-perazim*, *i.e.* "possessor of breaches" (equivalent to *Bruch-hausen* or *Brechendorf*, *Breach-ham* or *Break-thorpe*). The only other passage in which the place is mentioned is Isa. xxviii. 21, where this event is alluded to, but it cannot have been far from the valley of Rephaim.—Ver. 21. The Philistines left their idols behind them there. They had probably brought them to the war, as the Israelites once did their ark, as an auxiliary force. "*And David took them away*." The Chronicles have "their gods" instead of "their idols," and "they were burned with fire" instead of בָּרְפוּ, "he took them

¹ Through the express statement that David inquired of Jehovah (*viz.* by the Urim) in both these conflicts with the Philistines (vers. 19 and 23), Diestel's assertion, that after the death of Saul we do not read any more about the use of the holy lot, is completely overthrown, as well as the conclusion which he draws from it, namely, that "David probably employed it for the purpose of giving a certain definiteness to his command over his followers, over whom he had naturally but little authority (1 Sam. xxii. 2?), rather than because he looked upon it himself with any peculiar reverence."

away,"¹ took them as booty. The reading in the Chronicles gives the true explanation of the fact, as David would certainly dispose of the idols in the manner prescribed in the law (Deut. vii. 5, 25). The same reading was also most probably to be found in the sources employed by our author, who omitted it merely as being self-evident. In this way David fully avenged the disgrace brought upon Israel by the Philistines, when they carried away the ark in the time of Eli.—Vers. 22-25. Although thoroughly beaten, the Philistines soon appeared again to repair the defeat which they had suffered. As David had not followed up the victory, possibly because he was not sufficiently prepared, the Philistines assembled again in the valley of Rephaim.—Ver. 23. David inquired once more of the Lord what he was to do, and received this answer: "*Thou shalt not go up (i.e. advance to meet the foe, and attack them in front); turn round behind them, and come upon them (attack them) opposite to the Baca-shrubs.*" בַּכָּאִים, a word which only occurs here and in the parallel passage in 1 Chron. xiv. 14, is rendered ἀπίους, pear-trees, by the LXX., and mulberry-trees by the Rabbins. But these are both of them uncertain conjectures. *Baca*, according to Abulfadl, is the name given in Arabic to a shrub which grows at Mecca and resembles the balsam, except that it has longer leaves and larger and rounder fruit, and from which, if a leaf be broken off, there flows a white pungent sap, like a white tear, which in all probability gave rise to the name בַּכָּאִים = בָּכָה, to weep (*vid.* Celsii, *Hierob.* i. pp. 338 sqq., and Gesenius, *Thes.* p. 205).—Ver. 24. "*And when thou hearest the rush of a going in the tops of the baca-shrubs, then bestir thyself,*" or hasten; "*for Jehovah has gone out before thee, to smite the army of the Philistines.*" "The sound of a going," i.e. of the advance of an army, was a significant sign of the approach of an army of God, which would smite the enemies of Jehovah and of His servant David; like the visions of Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 2, 3) and Elisha (2 Kings vi. 17). "Then thou shalt bestir thyself," *lit.* be sharp, i.e. active, quick: this is paraphrased in the Chronicles by "then thou shalt go out to battle."—Ver. 25. David did this, and smote the Philistines from *Geba* to the neighbourhood of *Gezer*. In the Chronicles

¹ This is the marginal reading in the English version, though the text has "he burned them."—Tr.

we find "from *Gibeon*" instead of from *Geba*. The former is unquestionably the true reading, and *Geba* an error of the pen: for *Geba*, the present *Jeba*, was to the north of Jerusalem, and on the east of *Ramah* (see at Josh. xviii. 24); so that it is quite unsuitable here. But that is not the case with *Gibeon*, the present *el Jib*, on the north-west of Jerusalem (see at Josh. ix. 3); for this was on the way to *Gezer*, which was four Roman miles to the north of *Amos*, and is probably to be sought for on the site of the present *el Kubab* (see at Josh. x. 33).¹

REMOVAL OF THE ARK TO JERUSALEM.—CHAP. VI.

After David had selected the citadel of Zion, or rather Jerusalem, as the capital of the kingdom, he directed his attention to the organization and improvement of the legally established worship of the congregation, which had fallen grievously into decay since the death of Eli, in consequence of the separation of the ark from the tabernacle. He therefore resolved first of all to fetch out the ark of the covenant, as the true centre of the Mosaic sanctuary, from its obscurity and bring it up to Zion; and having deposited it in a tent previously prepared to receive it, to make this a place of worship where the regular worship of God might be carried on in accordance with the instructions of the law. That he should make the capital of his kingdom the central point of the worship of the whole congregation of Israel, followed so naturally from the nature of the kingdom of God, and the relation in which David stood, as the earthly

¹ There is no force in the objection brought by Bertheau against this view, viz. that "it is *a priori* improbable that the Philistines who were fighting against David and his forces, whose base of operations was Jerusalem, should have taken possession of the whole line from Gibeon to Gezer," as the improbability is by no means apparent, and has not been pointed out by Bertheau, whilst the assumption that Jerusalem was David's base of operations has no foundation whatever. Moreover, Bertheau's opinion, that *Geba* was the same as *Gibeah* in the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv. 57), is decidedly erroneous: for this *Gibeah* is not to be identified with the present village of *Jeba* on the south side of the Wady *Musurr*, half-way between Shocoh and Jerusalem, but was situated towards the desert of Judah (see at Josh. xv. 57); and besides, it is impossible to see how the Philistines, who had invaded the plain of Rephaim, could have been beaten from this *Gibeah* as far as to Gezer.

monarch of that kingdom, towards Jehovah the God-king, that there is no necessity whatever to seek for even a partial explanation in the fact that David felt it desirable to have the high priest with the Urim and Thummim always close at hand. But why did not David remove the Mosaic tabernacle to Mount Zion at Jerusalem at the same time as the ark of the covenant, and so restore the divinely established sanctuary in its integrity? This question can only be answered by conjectures. One of the principal motives for allowing the existing separation of the ark from the tabernacle to continue, may have been that, during the time the two sanctuaries had been separated, two high priests had arisen, one of whom officiated at the tabernacle at Gibeon, whilst the other, namely Abiathar, who escaped the massacre of the priests at Nob and fled at once to David, had been the channel of all divine communications to David during the time of his persecution by Saul, and had also officiated as high priest in his camp; so that he could no more think of deposing him from the office which he had hitherto filled, in consequence of the reorganization of the legal worship, than he could of deposing Zadok, of the line of Eleazar, the officiating high priest at Gibeon. Moreover, David may from the very first have regarded the service which he instituted in connection with the ark upon Zion as merely a provisional arrangement, which was to continue till his kingdom was more thoroughly consolidated, and the way had been thereby prepared for erecting a fixed house of God, and so establishing the worship of the nation of Jehovah upon a more durable foundation. David may also have cherished the firm belief that in the meantime the Lord would put an end to the double priesthood which had grown out of the necessities of the times, or at any rate give him some direct revelation as to the arrangements which he ought to make.

We have a parallel account of the removal of the ark of the covenant to Zion in 1 Chron. xiii. 15 and 16, which agrees for the most part *verbatim*, at all events in all essential points, with the account before us; but the liturgical side of this solemn act is very elaborately described, especially the part taken by the Levites, whereas the account given here is very condensed, and is restricted in fact to an account of the work of removing the ark from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem as carried out by

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David. David composed the 24th Psalm for the religious ceremonies connected with the removal of the ark to Mount Zion.

Vers. 1-10. *The ark fetched from Kirjath-jearim.*—Ver. 1. “*David assembled together again all the chosen men in Israel, thirty thousand.*” לְאַסְפוֹתָם for לְאַסְפָּם is the *Kal* of אָסַף , as in 1 Sam. xv. 6, Ps. civ. 29. וַיַּעַן , again, once more, points back to ch. v. 1 and 3, where all Israel is said to have assembled for the first time in Hebron to anoint David king. It is true that that assembly was not convened directly by David himself; but this was not the point in question, but merely their assembling a second time (see Bertheau on 1 Chron. xiii. 5). בָּחֳרֵי does not mean “the young men” here (*νεάνια*, LXX.), or “the fighting men,” but, according to the etymology of the word, “the picked men.” Instead of thirty thousand, the LXX. have seventy chiliads, probably with an intentional exaggeration, because the number of men in Israel who were capable of bearing arms amounted to more than thirty thousand. The whole nation, through a very considerable body of representatives, was to take part in the removal of the ark. The writer of the Chronicles gives a more elaborate account of the preparations for these festivities (1 Chron. xiii. 1-5); namely, that David took counsel with the heads of thousands and hundreds, and all the leaders, i.e. all the heads of families and households, and then with their consent collected together the whole nation from the brook of Egypt to Hamath, of course not every individual, but a large number of heads of households as representatives of the whole. This account in the Chronicles is not an expansion of the brief notice given here; but the account before us is a condensation of the fuller description given in the sources that were employed by both authors.—Ver. 2. “*David went with all the people that were with him to Baale-Jehuda, to fetch up the ark of God from thence.*” The words מִבְּעֵל יְהוּדָה cause some difficulty on account of the ב , which is used instead of the accusative with ל loc., like בְּעֵלְתָּהּ in the Chronicles; yet the translators of the Septuagint, Chaldee, Vulgate, and other versions, all had the reading ב in their text, and בְּעֵל has therefore been taken as an appellative and rendered *ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχόντων Ἰουδᾶ* (“from the rulers of Judah”), or as Luther renders it, “from the citizens of Judah.” This is decidedly incorrect, as the word “thence” which follows is perfectly unintelligible on

any other supposition than that *Baale-Jehudah* is the name of a place. *Baale-Jehudah* is another name of the city of *Kirjath-jearim* (Josh. xv. 60, xviii. 14), which is called *Baalath* in Josh. xv. 9 and 1 Chron. xiii. 6, according to its Canaanitish name, instead of which the name *Kirjath-jearim* (city of the woods) was adopted by the Israelites, though without entirely supplanting the old name. The epithet "of Judah" is a contraction of the fuller expression "city of the children of Judah" in Josh. xviii. 14, and is added to distinguish this Baal city, which was situated upon the border of the tribe of Judah, from other cities that were also named after Baal, such as *Baal* or *Baalath-beer* in the tribe of Simeon (1 Chron. iv. 33, Josh. xix. 8), *Baalath* in the tribe of Dan (Josh. xix. 44), the present *Kuryet el Enab* (see at Josh. ix. 17). The מן (from) is either a very ancient error of the pen that crept by accident into the text, or, if genuine and original, it is to be explained on the supposition that the historian dropped the construction with which he started, and instead of mentioning *Baale-Jehudah* as the place to which David went, gave it at once as the place from which he fetched the ark; so that the passage is to be understood in this way: "And David went, and all the people who were with him, out of Baale-Jehudah, to which they had gone up to fetch the ark of God" (Kimchi). In the sentence which follows, a difficulty is also occasioned by the repetition of the word שם in the clause עָלָיו . . . אֲשֶׁר נִקְרָא, "*upon which the name is called, the name of Jehovah of hosts, who is enthroned above the cherubim.*" The difficulty cannot be solved by altering the first שם into שָׁם, as Clericus, Thenius, and Bertheau suggest: for if this alteration were adopted, we should have to render the passage "where the name of Jehovah of hosts is invoked, who is enthroned above the cherubim (which are) upon it (*i.e.* upon the ark);" and this would not only introduce an unscriptural thought into the passage, but it would be impossible to find any suitable meaning for the word עָלָיו, except by making very arbitrary interpolations. Throughout the whole of the Old Testament we never meet with the idea that the name of Jehovah was invoked at the ark of the covenant, because no one was allowed to approach the ark for the purpose of invoking the name of the Lord there; and upon the great day of atonement the high priest was only allowed to enter the most holy place with the

cloud of incense, to sprinkle the blood of the atoning sacrifice upon the ark. Moreover, the standing expression for "call upon the name of the Lord" is *קָרָא בְּשֵׁם י'*; whereas *קָרָא שֵׁם י' עַל מ'* signifies "the name of Jehovah is called above a person or thing." Lastly, even if *עָלֵי* belonged to *יֵשֶׁב הַכְּרִבִּים*, it would not only be a superfluous addition, occurring nowhere else in connection with *יֵשֶׁב הַכ'*, not even in 1 Chron. xiii. 6 (*vid.* 1 Sam. iv. 4; 2 Kings xix. 15; Isa. xxxvii. 16; Ps. xcix. 1), but such an addition if made at all would necessarily require *אֲשֶׁר עָלֵי* (*vid.* Ex. xxv. 22). The only way in which we can obtain a biblical thought and grammatical sense is by connecting *עָלֵי* with the *אֲשֶׁר* before *קָרָא*: "above which (ark) the name of Jehovah-Zebaoth is named," *i.e.* above which Jehovah reveals His glory or His divine nature to His people, or manifests His gracious presence in Israel. "The name of God denotes all the operations of God through which He attests His personal presence in that relation into which He has entered to man, *i.e.* the whole of the divine self-manifestation, or of that side of the divine nature which is turned towards men" (Oehler, *Herzog's Real-Encycl.* x. p. 197). From this deeper meaning of "the name of God" we may probably explain the repetition of the word *שֵׁם*, which is first of all written absolutely (as at the close of Lev. xxiv. 16), and then more fully defined as "the name of the Lord of hosts."—Vers. 3, 4. "*They set the ark of God upon a new cart, and took it away from the house of Abinadab.*" *הִרְכִּיב* means here "to put (load) upon a cart," and *נָשָׂא* to take away, *i.e.* drive off: for there are grammatical (or syntactical) reasons which make it impossible to render *וַיִּטְאוּהָ* as a pluperfect ("they had taken"), on account of the previous *וירכבו*.

The ark of the covenant had been standing in the house of Abinadab from the time when the Philistines had sent it back into the land of Israel, *i.e.* about seventy years (*viz.* twenty years to the victory at Ebenezer mentioned in 1 Sam. vii. 1 sqq., forty years under Samuel and Saul, and about ten years under David: see the chronological table in vol. iv. p. 289). The further statement, that "Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, drove the cart," may easily be reconciled with this. These two sons were either born about the time when the ark was first taken to Abinadab's house, or at a subsequent period; or else the term *sons* is used, as is frequently the case, in the sense of

grandsons. The words from הָרָשָׁה (the last word in ver. 3) to *Gibeah* in ver. 4 are wanting in the Septuagint, and can only have been introduced through the error of a copyist, whose eye wandered back to the first עֲנִלָּה in ver. 3, so that he copied a whole line twice over; for they not only contain a pure tautology, a merely verbal and altogether superfluous and purposeless repetition, but they are altogether unsuitable to the connection in which they stand. Not only is there something very strange in the repetition of the הָרָשָׁה without an article after הָעֲנִלָּה; but the words which follow, עִם אֲרוֹן ה' (with the ark of God), cannot be made to fit on to the repeated clause, for there is no sense whatever in such a sentence as this: "They brought it (the ark) out of the house of Abinadab, which is upon the hill, *with the ark of God.*" The only way in which the words "with the ark" can be made to acquire any meaning at all, is by omitting the repetition referred to, and connecting them with the new cart in ver. 3: "Uzzah and Ahio . . . drove the cart with the ark of God, and Ahio went before the ark." נָהַג, to drive (a carriage), is construed here with an accusative, in 1 Chron. xiii. 7 with בָּ, as in Isa. xi. 6.—Ver. 5. And David and all the house (people) of Israel were מְשַׁחֲקִים, sporting, *i.e.* they danced and played, before Jehovah. בְּכָל עֵצֵי בְרֹשִׁים, "with all kinds of woods of cypresses." This could only mean, with all kinds of instruments made of cypress wood; but this mode of expression would be a very strange one even if the reading were correct. In the Chronicles, however (ver. 8), instead of this strange expression, we find בְּכָל־עוֹ וּבְשִׁירִים, "with all their might and with songs." This is evidently the correct reading, from which our text has sprung, although the latter is found in all the old versions, and even in the Septuagint, which really combines the two readings thus: ἐν ὀργάνοις ἡρμουςμένοις ἐν ἰσχυρί και ἐν ᾠδαῖς, where ἐν ὀργάνοις ἡρμουςμένοις is evidently the interpretation of בְּכָל עֵצֵי בְרֹשִׁים; for the text of the Chronicles cannot be regarded as an explanation of Samuel. Moreover, songs would not be omitted on such a festive occasion; and two of the instruments mentioned, viz. the *kinnor* and *nebel* (see at 1 Sam. x. 5), were generally played as accompaniments to singing. The *vav* before בְּשִׁירִים, and before the different instruments, corresponds to the Latin *et* . . . *et*, both . . . and. תִּהַךְ, the timbrel. בְּמַנְעֻנִים וּבַצִּלְלִים, *sistris et cymbalis*

(Vulg., Syr.), "with bells and cymbals" (Luther). מְנַעֲנְעִים, from נָעַן, are instruments that are shaken, the *σεῖστρος*, *sistra*, of the ancients, which consisted of two iron rods fastened together at one end, either in a semicircle or at right angles, upon which rings were hung loosely, so as to make a tinkling sound when they were shaken. צִלְצִלִּים = מְנַעֲנְעִים are cymbals or castanets. Instead of מְנַעֲנְעִים, we find חֲצֹצְרוֹת, trumpets, mentioned in the Chronicles in the last rank after the cymbals. It is possible that *sistra* were played and trumpets blown, so that the two accounts complete each other.—Vers. 6, 7. When the procession had reached the threshing-floor of *Nachon*, Uzzah stretched out his hand to lay hold of the ark, *i.e.* to keep it from falling over with the cart, because the oxen slipped. And the wrath of the Lord was kindled, and God slew Uzzah upon the spot. *Goren nachon* means "the threshing-floor of the stroke" (*nachon* from נָכָה, not from כָּפָה); in the Chronicles we have *goren chidon*, *i.e.* the threshing-floor of destruction or disaster (כִּידוֹן = בִּידוֹן, Job xxi. 20). *Chidon* is probably only an explanation of *nachon*, so that the name may have been given to the threshing-floor, not from its owner, but from the incident connected with the ark which took place there. Eventually, however, this name was supplanted by the name *Perez-uzzah* (ver. 8). The situation of the threshing-floor cannot be determined, as all that we can gather from this account is that the house of Obed-edom the Gathite was somewhere near it; but no village, hamlet, or town is mentioned.¹ Jerome paraphrases פִּי שִׁטְמוֹ הִפְקֵר thus: "Because the oxen kicked and turned it (the ark) over." But שִׁטְמוֹ does not mean to kick; its true meaning is to let go, or let lie (Ex. xxiii. 11; Deut. xv. 2, 3), hence to slip or stumble. The stumbling of the animals might easily have turned the cart over, and this was what Uzzah tried to prevent by laying hold of the ark. God smote him there "on account of the offence" (שָׁלָה, ἀπ. λεγ. from שָׁלָה, in the sense of erring, or committing a fault). The writer of the Chronicles gives it thus: "Because

¹ If it were possible to discover the situation of Gath-rimmon, the home of Obed-edom (see at ver. 10), we might probably decide the question whether Obed-edom was still living in the town where he was born or not. But according to the *Onom.*, Kirjath-jearim was ten miles from Jerusalem, and Gath-rimmon twelve, that is to say, farther off. Now, if these statements are correct, Obed-edom's house cannot have been in Gath-rimmon.

he had stretched out his hand to the ark," though of course the text before us is not to be altered to this, as Thenius and Bertheau suggest.—Ver. 8. "And David was angry, because Jehovah had made a rent on Uzzah, and called the place *Perez-uzzah*" (rent of Uzzah). פָּרַץ פָּרַץ, to tear a rent, is here applied to a sudden tearing away from life. יָחַר is understood by many in the sense of "he troubled himself;" but this meaning cannot be grammatically sustained, whilst it is quite possible to become angry, or fall into a state of violent excitement, at an unexpected calamity. The burning of David's anger was not directed against God, but referred to the calamity which had befallen Uzzah, or speaking more correctly, to the cause of this calamity, which David attributed to himself or to his undertaking. As he had not only resolved upon the removal of the ark, but had also planned the way in which it should be taken to Jerusalem, he could not trace the occasion of Uzzah's death to any other cause than his own plans. He was therefore angry that such misfortune had attended his undertaking. In his first excitement and dismay, David may not have perceived the real and deeper ground of this divine judgment. Uzzah's offence consisted in the fact that he had touched the ark with profane feelings, although with good intentions, namely to prevent its rolling over and falling from the cart. Touching the ark, the throne of the divine glory and visible pledge of the invisible presence of the Lord, was a violation of the majesty of the holy God. "Uzzah was therefore a type of all who with good intentions, humanly speaking, yet with unsanctified minds, interfere in the affairs of the kingdom of God, from the notion that they are in danger, and with the hope of saving them" (O. v. Gerlach). On further reflection, David could not fail to discover where the cause of Uzzah's offence, which he had atoned for with his life, really had lain, and that it had actually arisen from the fact that he (David) and those about him had decided to disregard the distinct instructions of the law with regard to the handling of the ark. According to Num. iv. the ark was not only to be moved by none but Levites, but it was to be carried on the shoulders, not in a carriage; and in ver. 15, even the Levites were expressly forbidden to touch it on pain of death. But instead of taking these instructions as their rule, they had followed the example of the Philistines

when they sent back the ark (1 Sam. vi. 7 sqq.), and had placed it upon a new cart, and directed Uzzah to drive it, whilst, as his conduct on the occasion clearly shows, he had no idea of the unapproachable holiness of the ark of God, and had to expiate his offence with his life, as a warning to all the Israelites.—Vers. 9, 10. David's excitement at what had occurred was soon changed into fear of the Lord, so that he said, "How shall the ark of Jehovah come to me?" If merely touching the ark of God is punished in this way, how can I have it brought near me, up to the citadel of Zion? He therefore relinquished his intention of bringing it into the city of David, and placed it in the house of Obed-edom the Gathite. *Obed-edom* was a Levite of the family of the Korahites, who sprang from Kohath (compare Ex. vi. 21, xviii. 16, with 1 Chron. xxvi. 4), and belonged to the class of Levitical doorkeepers, whose duty it was, in connection with other Levites, to watch over the ark in the sacred tent (1 Chron. xv. 18, 24). He is called the *Gittite* or *Gathite* from his birthplace, the Levitical city of *Gath-rimmon* in the tribe of Dan (Josh. xxi. 24, xix. 45).

Vers. 11-19. *Removal of the ark of God to the city of David* (cf. 1 Chron. xv.).—Vers. 11, 12. When the ark had been in the house of Obed-edom for three months, and David heard that the Lord had blessed his house for the sake of the ark of God, he went thither and brought it up to the city of David with gladness, *i.e.* with festal rejoicing, or a solemn procession. (For שמחה, in the sense of festal rejoicing, or a joyous fête, see Gen. xxxi. 27, Neh. xii. 43, etc.) On this occasion, however, David adhered strictly to the instructions of the law, as the more elaborate account given in the Chronicles clearly shows. He not only gathered together all Israel at Jerusalem to join in this solemn act, but summoned the priests and Levites, and commanded them to sanctify themselves, and carry the ark "according to the right," *i.e.* as the Lord had commanded in the law of Moses, and to offer sacrifices during the procession, and sing songs, *i.e.* psalms, with musical accompaniment. In the very condensed account before us, all that is mentioned is the carrying of the ark, the sacrificing during the march, and the festivities of the king and people. But even from these few facts we see that David had discovered his former mistake, and had given up the idea of removing the ark upon a carriage

as a transgression of the law.—Ver. 13. The bearers of the ark are not particularly mentioned in this account; but it is very evident that they were Levites, as the Chronicles affirm, from the fact that the ark was carried this time, and not driven, as before. “*And it came to pass, when the bearers of the ark of Jehovah had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatted calf*” (i.e. had them sacrificed). These words are generally understood as meaning, that sacrifices of this kind were offered along the whole way, at the distance of six paces apart. This would certainly have been a possible thing, and there would be no necessity to assume that the procession halted every six paces, until the sacrificial ceremony was completed, but the ark might have continued in progress, whilst sacrifices were being offered at the distances mentioned. And even the immense number of sacrificial animals that would have been required is no valid objection to such an assumption. We do not know what the distance really was: all that we know is, that it was not so much as ten miles, as Kirjath-jearim was only about twelve miles from Jerusalem, so that a few thousand oxen, and the same number of fatted calves, would have been quite sufficient. But the words of the text do not distinctly affirm that sacrifices were offered whenever the bearers advanced six paces, but only that this was done as soon as the bearers had taken the first six steps. So that, strictly speaking, all that is stated is, that when the procession had started and gone six paces, the sacrifice was offered, namely, for the purpose of inaugurating or consecrating the solemn procession. In 1 Chron. xv. this fact is omitted; and it is stated instead (ver. 26), that “when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, they offered seven bullocks and seven rams,” i.e. at the close of the procession, when the journey was ended, to praise God for the fact that the Levites had been enabled to carry the ark of God to the place appointed for it, without suffering the slightest harm.¹—Ver. 14. “*And David danced with all his might before*

¹ There is no discrepancy, therefore, between the two different accounts; but the one supplements the other in a manner perfectly in harmony with the whole affair,—at the outset, a sacrifice consisting of one ox and one fatted calf; and at the close, one of seven oxen and seven rams. Consequently there is no reason for altering the text of the verse before us, as Thenius proposes, according to the senseless rendering of the LXX., καὶ

the Lord (*i.e.* before the ark), and was girded with a white ephod (shoulder-dress)." Dancing, as an expression of holy enthusiasm, was a customary thing from time immemorial: we meet with it as early as at the festival of thanksgiving at the Red Sea (Ex. xv. 20); but there, and also at subsequent celebrations of the different victories gained by the Israelites, none but women are described as taking part in it (Judg. xi. 34, xxi. 19; 1 Sam. xviii. 6). The white ephod was, strictly speaking, a priestly costume, although in the law it is not prescribed as the dress to be worn by them when performing their official duties, but rather as the dress which denoted the priestly character of the wearer (see at 1 Sam. xxii. 18); and for this reason it was worn by David in connection with these festivities in honour of the Lord, as the head of the priestly nation of Israel (see at 1 Sam. ii. 18). In ver. 15 it is still further related, that David and all the house (nation) of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with jubilee and trumpet-blast. הִרְדָּמָה is used here to signify the song of jubilee and the joyous shouting of the people. In the Chronicles (ver. 28) the musical instruments played on the occasion are also severally mentioned.—Ver. 16. When the ark came (*i.e.* was carried) into the city of David, Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and there she saw king David leaping and dancing before Jehovah, and despised him in her heart. וַיִּהְיֶה, "and it came to pass," for וַיִּהְיֶה, because there is no progress made, but only another element introduced. וַיִּהְיֶה is a perfect: "the ark had come, . . . and Michal looked through the window, . . . there she saw," etc. Michal is intentionally designated the daughter of Saul here, instead of the wife of David, because on this occasion she manifested her father's disposition rather than her husband's. In Saul's time people did not trouble themselves about the ark of the covenant (1 Chron. xiii. 3); public worship was neglected, and the soul for vital religion had died out in the family of the king. Michal possessed teraphim, and in

ἔσαν μετ' αὐτοῦ αἰρούντες τὴν κιβωτὸν ἑπτὰ χοροὶ, καὶ θύμα μόσχου καὶ ἀρνέων ("with David there were bearers of the ark, seven choirs, and sacrifices of a calf and lambs"), which has also found its way into the Vulgate, though Jerome has rendered our Hebrew text faithfully afterwards (*i.e.* after the gloss, which was probably taken from the Itala, and inserted in his translation).

David she only loved the brave hero and exalted king: she therefore took offence at the humility with which the king, in his pious enthusiasm, placed himself on an equality with all the rest of the nation before the Lord.—Ver. 17. When the ark was brought to the place appointed for it upon Mount Zion, and was deposited in the tent which David had prepared for it, he offered burnt-offerings and thank-offerings before the Lord. “In its place” is still further defined as “in the midst of the tent which David,” etc., *i.e.* in the Most Holy Place; for the tent would certainly be constructed according to the type of the Mosaic tabernacle. The burnt-offerings and peace-offerings were offered to consecrate the newly erected house of God.—Vers. 18, 19. When the offering of sacrifice was over, David blessed the people in the name of the Lord, as Solomon did afterwards at the dedication of the temple (1 Kings viii. 55), and gave to all the (assembled) people, both men and women, to every one a slice of bread, a measure (of wine), and a cake for a festal meal, *i.e.* for the sacrificial meal, which was celebrated with the *shelamim* after the offering of the sacrifices, and after the king had concluded the liturgical festival with a benediction. חֶלֶת לֶחֶם is a round cake of bread, baked for sacrificial meals, and synonymous with כֶּבֶד לֶחֶם (1 Chron. xvi. 3), as we may see from a comparison of Ex. xxix. 23 with Lev. viii. 26 (see the commentary on Lev. viii. 2). But the meaning of the *ἀπ' αὐτοῦ* is uncertain, and has been much disputed. Most of the Rabbins understand it as signifying a piece of flesh or roast meat, deriving the word from עֵשׂ and פֶּרֶךְ; but this is certainly false. There is more to be said in favour of the derivation proposed by L. de Dieu, viz. from the Ethiopic נֶטִירִי, *netiri*, from which Gesenius and Roediger (Ges. *Thes.* p. 1470) have drawn their explanation of the word as signifying a measure of wine or other beverage. For נֶטֶשׂ, the meaning grape-cake or raisin-cake is established by Song of Sol. ii. 5 and Hos. iii. 1 (*vid.* Hengstenberg, *Christol.* on Hos. iii. 1). The people returned home after the festal meal.

Vers. 20-23. When David returned home to bless his house, as he had previously blessed the people, Michal came to meet him with scornful words, saying, “*How has the king of Israel glorified himself to-day, when he stripped himself before the eyes of the maids of his servants, as only one of the loose people strips him-*

self!" The unusual combination *נָלֹחַ בְּהַלֹּחַ* is explained by Ewald (§ 240, e, p. 607) in this manner, that whilst, so far as the sense of the clause is concerned, the second verb ought to be in the infinitive absolute, they were both written with a very slight change of form in the infinitive construct; whereas others regard *נָלֹחַ* as an unusual form of the infinitive absolute (Ges. *Lehrgeb.* p. 430), or a copyist's error for *נָלַחַ* (Thenius, Olsh. *Gr.* p. 600). The proud daughter of Saul was offended at the fact, that the king had let himself down on this occasion to the level of the people. She availed herself of the shortness of the priests' shoulder-dress, to make a contemptuous remark concerning David's dancing, as an impropriety that was unbecoming in a king. "Who knows whether the proud woman did not intend to sneer at the rank of the Levites, as one that was contemptible in her eyes, since their humble service may have looked very trivial to her?" (*Berleb. Bible.*)—Vers. 21, 22. David replied, "Before Jehovah, who chose me before thy father and all his house, to appoint me prince over the people of Jehovah, over Israel, before Jehovah have I played (*lit.* joked, given utterance to my joy). And I will be still more despised, and become base in my eyes: and with the maidens of whom thou hast spoken, with them will I be honoured." The copula *vav* before *שָׁחַקְתִּי* serves to introduce the apodosis, and may be explained in this way, that the relative clause appended to "before Jehovah" acquired the power of a protasis on account of its length; so that, strictly speaking, there is an anakolouthon, as if the protasis read thus: "Before Jehovah, as He hath chosen me over Israel, I have humbled myself before Jehovah" (for "before him"). With the words "who chose me before *thy father and all his house*," David humbles the pride of the king's daughter. His playing and dancing referred to the Lord, who had chosen him, and had rejected Saul on account of his pride. He would therefore let himself be still further despised before the Lord, *i.e.* would bear still greater contempt from men than that which he had just received, and be humbled in his own eyes (*vid.* Ps. cxxxi. 1): then would he also with the maidens attain to honour before the Lord. For whoso humbleth himself, him will God exalt (Matt. xxiii. 12). *בְּעֵינַי* is not to be altered into *בְּעֵינֶיךָ*, as in the Septuagint. This alteration has arisen from a total miscon-

ception of the nature of true humility, which is of no worth in its own eyes. The rendering given by De Wette is at variance with both the grammar and the sense ("with the maidens, . . . with them will I magnify myself"); and so also is that of Thenius ("with them will I be honoured, *i.e.* indemnify myself for thy foolish contempt!").—Ver. 23. Michal was humbled by God for her pride, and remained childless to the time of her death.

DAVID'S RESOLUTION TO BUILD A TEMPLE. THE PROMISED PERPETUITY OF HIS THRONE.—CHAP. VII.

To the erection of a sanctuary for the ark upon Mount Zion there is appended an account of David's desire to build a temple for the Lord. We find this not only in the text before us, but also in the parallel history in 1 Chron. xvii. When David had acquired rest from his enemies round about, he formed the resolution to build a house for the Lord, and this resolution was sanctioned by the prophet Nathan (vers. 1-3). But the Lord revealed to the prophet, and through him to David, that He had not required the building of a temple from any of the tribes of Israel, and that He would first of all build a house himself for His servant David, and confirm the throne to his seed for ever, and then he should build Him a temple (vers. 4-17). David then gave utterance to his thanksgiving for this glorious promise in a prayer, in which he praised the unmeasurable grace of God, and prayed for the fulfilment of this renewed promise of divine grace (vers. 18-29).¹

¹ With regard to the historical authenticity of this promise, Tholuck observes, in his *Prophets and their Prophecies* (pp. 165-6), that "it can be proved, with all the evidence which is ever to be obtained in support of historical testimony, that David actually received a prophetic promise that his family should sit upon the throne for ever, and consequently an intimation of a royal descendant whose government should be eternal. Anything like a merely subjective promise arising from human combinations is precluded here by the fact that Nathan, acting according to the best of his knowledge, gave his consent to David's plan of building a temple; and that it was not till afterwards, when he had been instructed by a divine vision, that he did the very opposite, and assured him on the contrary that God would build *him* a house." Thenius also affirms that "there is no reason for assuming, as De Wette has done, that Nathan's prophecies were not composed till after the time of Solomon;" that "their historical credibility

Vers. 1-3. When David was dwelling in his house, *i.e.* the palace of cedar (ch. v. 11), and Jehovah had given him rest from all his enemies round about, he said to Nathan the prophet: "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, and the ark of God dwelleth within the curtains." הִירֵעָה in the singular is used, in Ex. xxvi. 2 sqq., to denote the inner covering, com-

is attested by Ps. lxxxix. (vers. 4, 5, 20-38, and especially ver. 20), Ps. cxxxii. 11, 12, and Isa. lv. 3; and that, properly interpreted, they are also Messianic." The principal evidence of this is to be found in the prophetic utterance of David in ch. xxiii., where, as is generally admitted, he takes a retrospective glance at the promise, and thereby attests the historical credibility of Nathan's prophecy (Thenius, p. 245). Nevertheless, Gust. Baur maintains that "a closer comparison of this more elaborate and simple description (ch. vii.) with the brief and altogether unexampled *last words of David*, more especially with 2 Sam. xxiii. 5, can hardly leave the slightest doubt, that the relation in which the chapter before us stands to these words, is that of a later expansion to an authentic prophetic utterance of the king himself." For example, the distinct allusion to the birth of Solomon, and the building of the temple, which was to be completed by him, is said to have evidently sprung from a later development of the original promise after the time of Solomon, on account of the incongruity apparent in Nathan's prediction between the ideal picture of the Israelitish monarchy and the definite allusion to Solomon's building of the temple. But there is no such "incongruity" in Nathan's prediction; it is only to be found in the naturalistic assumptions of Baur himself, that the utterances of the prophets contained nothing more than subjective and *ideal* hopes of the future, and not supernatural predictions. This also applies to Diestel's opinion, that the section vers. 4-16 does not harmonize with the substance of David's glorious prayer in vers. 18-29, nor the latter again with itself, because the advice given him to relinquish the idea of building the temple is not supported by any reasons that answer either to the character of David or to his peculiar circumstances, with which the allusion to his son would have been in perfect keeping; but the prophet's dissuasion merely alludes to the fact that Jehovah did not stand in need of a stately house at all, and had never given utterance to any such desire. On account of this "obvious" fact, Diestel regards it as credible that the original dissuasion came from God, because it was founded upon an earlier view, but that the promise of the son of David which followed proceeded from Nathan, who no doubt looked with more favourable eyes upon the building of the temple. This discrepancy is also arbitrarily foisted upon the text. There is not a syllable about any "original dissuasion" in all that Nathan says; for he simply tells the king that Jehovah had hitherto dwelt in a tent, and had not asked any of the tribes of Israel to build a stately temple, but not that Jehovah did not need a stately house at all.

Of the different exegetical treatises upon this passage, see *Christ. Aug. Crusii Hypomnemata*, ii. 190-219, and Hengstenberg's *Christol.* i. 123 sqq.

posed of a number of lengths of tapestry sewn together, which was spread over the planks of the tabernacle, and made it into a dwelling, whereas the separate pieces of tapestry are called יריעות in the plural; and hence, in the later writers, יריעות alternates sometimes with אהל (Isa. liv. 2), and at other times with אהלים (Song of Sol. i. 5; Jer. iv. 20, xlix. 29). Consequently היריעה refers here to the tent-cloth or tent formed of pieces of tapestry. "*Within (i.e. surrounded by) the tent-cloth:*" in the Chronicles we find "under curtains." From the words "when the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies round about," it is evident that David did not form the resolution to build the temple in the first years of his reign upon Zion, nor immediately after the completion of his palace, but at a later period (see the remarks on ch. v. 11, note). It is true that the giving of rest from all his enemies round about does not definitely presuppose the termination of *all* the greater wars of David, since it is not affirmed that this rest was a definitive one; but the words cannot possibly be restricted to the two victories over the Philistines (ch. v. 17-25), as Hengstenberg supposes, inasmuch as, however important the second may have been, their foes were not even permanently quieted by them, to say nothing of their being entirely subdued. Moreover, in the promise mentioned in ver. 9, God distinctly says, "I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off *all* thine enemies before thee." These words also show that at that time David had already fought against all the enemies round about, and humbled them. Now, as all David's principal wars are grouped together for the first time in ch. viii. and x., there can be no doubt that the history is not arranged in a strictly chronological order. And the expression "after this" in ch. viii. 1 is by no means at variance with this, since this formula does not at all express a strictly chronological sequence. From the words of the prophet, "Go, do all that is in thy heart, for the Lord is with thee," it is very evident that David had expressed the intention to build a splendid palatial temple. The word הֵן, *go* (equivalent to "quite right"), is omitted in the Chronicles as superfluous. Nathan sanctioned the king's resolution "from his own feelings, and not by divine revelation" (J. H. Michaelis); but he did not "afterwards perceive that the time for carrying out this intention had not yet come," as Thenius and Bertheau

maintain; on the contrary, the Lord God revealed to the prophet that David was not to carry out his intention at all.

Vers. 4-17. *The revelation and promise of God.*—Ver. 4. “*That night*,” i.e. the night succeeding the day on which Nathan had talked with the king concerning the building of the temple, the Lord made known His decree to the prophet, with instructions to communicate it to the king. הֲאֵתָהּ וְנִי, “Shouldst thou build me a house for me to dwell in?” The question involves a negative reply, and consequently in the Chronicles we find “thou shalt not.”—Vers. 6, 7. The reason assigned for this answer: “I have not dwelt in a house from the day of the bringing up of Israel out of Egypt even to this day, but I was wandering about in a tent and in a dwelling.” “*And in a dwelling*” (*mishcan*) is to be taken as explanatory, viz. in a tent which was my dwelling. As a tent is a traveller’s dwelling, so, as long as God’s dwelling was a tent, He himself appeared as if travelling or going from place to place. “In the whole of the time that I walked among all the children of Israel, . . . have I spoken a word to one of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Wherefore have ye not built me a cedar house?” A “cedar house” is equivalent to a palace built of costly materials. The expression אֶחָד שְׁבֵטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (“one of the tribes of Israel”) is a striking one, as the feeding of the nation does not appear to be a duty belonging to the “tribes,” and in the Chronicles we have שְׁפָטִי (judges) instead of שְׁבֵטֵי (tribes). But if שְׁפָטִי had been the original expression used in the text, it would be impossible to explain the origin and general acceptance of the word שְׁבֵטֵי. For this very reason, therefore, we must regard שְׁבֵטֵי as the original word, and understand it as referring to the *tribes*, which had supplied the nation with judges and leaders before the time of David, since the feeding, i.e. the government of Israel, which was in the hands of the judges, was transferred to the tribes to which the judges belonged. This view is confirmed by Ps. lxxviii, 67, 68, where the election of David as prince, and of Zion as the site of the sanctuary, is described as the election of the *tribe* of Judah and the rejection of the tribe of Ephraim. On the other hand, the assumption of Thenius, that שְׁבֵטֵי, “shepherd-staffs,” is used poetically for shepherds, cannot be established on the ground of Lev. xxvii. 32 and Micah vii. 14.

Jehovah gave two reasons why David's proposal to build Him a temple should not be carried out: (1) He had hitherto lived in a tent in the midst of His people; (2) He had not commanded any former prince or tribe to build a temple. This did not involve any blame, as though there had been something presumptuous in David's proposal, or in the fact that he had thought of undertaking such a work without an express command from God, but simply showed that it was not because of any negligence on the part of the former leaders of the people that they had not thought of erecting a temple, and that even now the time for carrying out such a work as that had not yet come.—Ver. 8. After thus declining his proposal, the Lord made known His gracious purpose to David: "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts" (not only *Jehovah*, as in ver. 5, but *Jehovah Sebaoth*, because He manifests himself in the following revelation as the God of the universe): "I have taken thee from the pasturage (grass-plot), behind the flock, to be prince over my people Israel; and was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and exterminated all thine enemies before thee, and so made thee, *וַעֲשִׂיתִי* (perfect with *vav* consec.), a great name, . . . and created a place for my people Israel, and planted them, so that they dwell in their place, and do not tremble any more (before their oppressors); and the sons of wickedness do not oppress them any further, as at the beginning, and from the day when I appointed judges over my people Israel: and I create thee rest from all thine enemies. And Jehovah proclaims to thee, that Jehovah will make thee a house." The words *לְמַן הַיּוֹם . . . עָמִי יֵשׁ* are to be joined to *בְּרֵאשִׁיתָהּ*, "as in the beginning," i.e. in Egypt, and from the time of the judges; that is to say, during the rule of the judges, when the surrounding nations constantly oppressed and subjugated Israel. The plan usually adopted, of connecting the words with *וַהֲיִיתִי*, does not yield any suitable thought at all, as God had not given David rest from the very beginning of the times of the judges; but the period of the judges was long antecedent to the time of David, and was not a period of rest for the Israelites. Again, *וַהֲיִיתִי* does not resume what is stated in ver. 9, and is not to be rendered as a preterite in the sense of "I have procured thee rest," but as a perfect with *vav* consec., "and I procure thee rest" from what is now about to come to pass. And *וַהֲיִינִי* is to be taken in the

same way: the Lord shows thee, first of all through His promise (which follows), and then through the fact itself, the realization of His word. וְהַנִּיחֹתִי refers to the future, as well as the building of David's house, and therefore not to the rest from all his enemies, which God had already secured for David, but to that which He would still further secure for him, that is to say, to the maintenance and establishment of that rest. The commentary upon this is to be found in Ps. lxxxix. 22-24. In the Chronicles (ver. 10) there is a somewhat different turn given to the last clauses: "and I bend down all thine enemies, and make it (the bending-down) known to thee (by the fact), and a house will Jehovah build for thee." The thought is not essentially changed by this; consequently there is no ground for any emendation of the text, which is not even apparently necessary, unless, like Bertheau, we misinterpret the words, and connect וְהַנִּיחֹתִי erroneously with the previous clause.

The connection between vers. 5-7 and 8-16 has been correctly indicated by Thenius as follows: Thou shalt not build a house for ME; but I, who have from the very beginning glorified myself in thee and my people (vers. 8-11), will build a house for thee; and thy son shall erect a house for me (ver. 13). This thought is not merely "a play upon words entirely in the spirit of prophecy," but contains the deep general truth that God must first of all build a man's house, before the man can build God's house, and applies it especially to the kingdom of God in Israel. As long as the quiet and full possession of the land of Canaan, which had been promised by the Lord to the people of God for their inheritance, was disputed by their enemies round about, even the dwelling-place of their God could not assume any other form than that of a wanderer's tent. The kingdom of God in Israel first acquired its rest and consolation through the efforts of David, when God had made all his foes subject to him and established his throne firmly, *i.e.* had assured to his descendants the possession of the kingdom for all future time. And it was this which ushered in the time for the building of a stationary house as a dwelling for the name of the Lord, *i.e.* for the visible manifestation of the presence of God in the midst of His people. The conquest of the citadel of Zion and the elevation of this fortress into the palace of the king, whom the Lord had

given to His people, formed the commencement of the establishment of the kingdom of God. But this commencement received its first pledge of perpetuity from the divine assurance that the throne of David should be established for all future time. And this the Lord was about to accomplish: He would build David a house, and then his seed should build the house of the Lord. No definite reason is assigned why David himself was not to build the temple. We learn this first of all from David's last words (1 Chron. xxviii. 3), in which he says to the assembled heads of the nation, "God said to me, Thou shalt not build a house for my name, because thou art a man of wars, and hast shed blood." Compare with this the similar words of David to Solomon in 1 Chron. xxii. 8, and Solomon's statement in his message to Hiram, that David had been prevented from building the temple in consequence of his many wars. It was probably not till afterwards that David was informed by Nathan what the true reason was. As Hengstenberg has correctly observed, the fact that David was not permitted to build the temple on account of his own personal unworthiness, did not involve any blame for what he had done; for David stood in a closer relation to the Lord than Solomon did, and the wars which he waged were wars of the Lord (1 Sam. xxv. 28) for the maintenance and defence of the kingdom of God. But inasmuch as these wars were necessary and inevitable, they were practical proofs that David's kingdom and government were not yet established, and therefore that the time for the building of the temple had not yet come, and the rest of peace was not yet secured. The temple, as the symbolical representation of the kingdom of God, was also to correspond to the nature of that kingdom, and shadow forth the peace of the kingdom of God. For this reason, David, the man of war, was not to build the temple; but that was to be reserved for Solomon, the man of peace, the type of the Prince of Peace (Isa. ix. 5).

In vers. 12-16 there follows a more precise definition of the way in which the Lord would build a house for His servant David: "When thy days shall become full, and thou shalt lie with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, who shall come from thy body, and establish his kingdom. He will build a house for my name, and I shall establish the throne of his

kingdom for ever." מִן הַיּוֹם, to set up, *i.e.* to promote to royal dignity. מִן הַיּוֹם is not to be altered into מִן הַיּוֹם, as Thenius and others maintain. The assumption that Solomon had already been born, is an unfounded one (see the note to ch. v. 11, p. 319); and it by no means follows from the statement in ver. 1, to the effect that God had given David rest from all his enemies, that his resolution to build a temple was not formed till the closing years of his reign.—Vers. 14 sqq. *"I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to me; so that if he go astray, I shall chastise him with rods of men, and with strokes of the children of men (i.e. not 'with moderate punishment, such as parents are accustomed to inflict,' as Clericus explains it, but with such punishments as are inflicted upon all men who go astray, and from which even the seed of David is not to be excepted). But my mercy shall not depart from him, as I caused it to depart from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever."* It is very obvious, from all the separate details of this promise, that it related primarily to Solomon, and had a certain fulfilment in him and his reign. On the death of David, his son Solomon ascended the throne, and God defended his kingdom against the machinations of Adonijah (1 Kings ii. 12); so that Solomon was able to say, "The Lord hath fulfilled His word that He spoke; for I have risen up in the stead of my father David," etc. (1 Kings viii. 20). Solomon built the temple, as the Lord said to David (1 Kings v. 19, viii. 15 sqq.). But in his old age Solomon sinned against the Lord by falling into idolatry; and as a punishment for this, after his death his kingdom was rent from his son, not indeed entirely, as one portion was still preserved to the family for David's sake (1 Kings xi. 9 sqq.). Thus the Lord punished him with rods of men, but did not withdraw from him His grace. At the same time, however unmistakeable the allusions to Solomon are, the substance of the promise is not fully exhausted in him. The threefold repetition of the expression "for ever," the establishment of the kingdom and throne of David *for ever*, points incontrovertibly beyond the time of Solomon, and to the eternal continuance of the seed of David. The word *seed* denotes the posterity of a person, which may consist either in one son or in several children, or in a long

line of successive generations. The idea of a number of persons living at the same time, is here precluded by the context of the promise, as only one of David's successors could sit upon the throne at a time. On the other hand, the idea of a number of descendants following one another, is evidently contained in the promise, that God would not withdraw His favour from the seed, even if it went astray, as He had done from Saul, since this implies that even in that case the throne should be transmitted from father to son. There is still more, however, involved in the expression "for ever." When the promise was given that the throne of the kingdom of David should continue "to eternity," an eternal duration was also promised to the seed that should occupy this throne, just as in ver. 16 the house and kingdom of David are spoken of as existing for ever, side by side. We must not reduce the idea of eternity to the popular notion of a long incalculable period, but must take it in an absolute sense, as the promise is evidently understood in Ps. lxxxix. 30: "I set his seed for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." No earthly kingdom, and no posterity of any single man, has eternal duration like the heaven and the earth; but the different families of men become extinct, as the different earthly kingdoms perish, and other families and kingdoms take their place. The posterity of David, therefore, could only last for ever by running out in a person who lives for ever, *i.e.* by culminating in the Messiah, who lives for ever, and of whose kingdom there is no end. The promise consequently refers to the posterity of David, commencing with Solomon and closing with Christ: so that by the "seed" we are not to understand Solomon alone, with the kings who succeeded him, nor Christ alone, to the exclusion of Solomon and the earthly kings of the family of David; nor is the allusion to Solomon and Christ to be regarded as a double allusion to two different objects.

But if this is established,—namely, that the promise given to the seed of David that his kingdom should endure for ever only attained its ultimate fulfilment in Christ,—we must not restrict the building of the house of God to the erection of Solomon's temple. "The building of the house of the Lord goes hand in hand with the eternity of the kingdom" (Hengstenberg). As the kingdom endures for ever, so the house built for the dwelling-place of the Lord must also endure for ever, as Solomon

said at the dedication of the temple (1 Kings viii. 13): "I have surely built Thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for Thee to abide in for ever." The everlasting continuance of Solomon's temple must not be reduced, however, to the simple fact, that even if the temple of Solomon should be destroyed, a new building would be erected in its place by the earthly descendants of Solomon, although this is also implied in the words, and the temple of Zerubbabel is included as the restoration of that of Solomon. For it is not merely in its earthly form, as a building of wood and stone, that the temple is referred to, but also and chiefly in its essential characteristic, as the place for the manifestation and presence of God in the midst of His people. The earthly form is perishable, the essence eternal. This essence was the dwelling of God in the midst of His people, which did not cease with the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, but culminated in the appearance of Jesus Christ, in whom Jehovah came to His people, and, as God the Word, made human nature His dwelling-place (*ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν*, John i. 14) in the glory of the only-begotten Son of the Father; so that Christ could say to the Jews, "Destroy this temple (*i.e.* the temple of His body), and in three days I will build it up again" (John ii. 19). It is with this building up of the temple destroyed by the Jews, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that the complete and essential fulfilment of our promise begins. It is perpetuated within the Christian church in the indwelling of the Father and Son through the Holy Ghost in the hearts of believers (John xiv. 23; 1 Cor. vi. 19), by which the church of Jesus Christ is built up a spiritual house of God, composed of living stones (1 Tim. iii. 15, 1 Pet. ii. 5; compare 2 Cor. vi. 16, Heb. iii. 6); and it will be perfected in the completion of the kingdom of God at the end of time in the new Jerusalem, which shall come down upon the new earth out of heaven from God, as the true tabernacle of God with men (Rev. xxi. 1-3).

As the building of the house of God receives its fulfilment first of all through Christ, so the promise, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son," is first fully realized in Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of the heavenly Father (*vid.* Heb. i. 5). In the Old Testament the relation between father and son denotes the deepest intimacy of love; and love

is perfected in unity of nature, in the communication to the son of all that the father hath. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand (John iii. 35). Sonship therefore includes the government of the world. This not only applied to Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, but also to the seed of David generally, so far as they truly attained to the relation of children of God. So long as Solomon walked in the ways of the Lord, he ruled over all the kingdoms from the river (Euphrates) to the border of Egypt (1 Kings v. 1); but when his heart turned away from the Lord in his old age, adversaries rose up against him (1 Kings xi. 14 sqq., 23 sqq.), and after his death the greater part of the kingdom was rent from his son. The seed of David was chastised for its sins; and as its apostasy continued, it was humbled yet more and more, until the earthly throne of David became extinct. Nevertheless the Lord did not cause His mercy to depart from him. When the house of David had fallen into decay, Jesus Christ was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, to raise up the throne of His father David again, and to reign for ever as King over the house of Jacob (Luke i. 32, 33), and to establish the house and kingdom of David for ever.—In ver. 16, where the promise returns to David again with the words, “thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever,” the expression לְפָנֶיךָ (before thee), which the LXX. and Syriac have arbitrarily changed into לְפָנַי (before me), should be particularly observed. David, as the tribe-father and founder of the line of kings, is regarded either “as seeing all his descendants pass before him in a vision,” as O. v. Gerlach supposes, or as continuing to exist in his descendants.—Ver. 17. “*According to all these words . . . did Nathan speak unto David,*” i.e. he related the whole to David, just as God had addressed it to him in the night. The clause in apposition, “according to all this vision,” merely introduces a more minute definition of the peculiar form of the revelation. God spoke to Nathan in a vision which he had in the night, i.e. not in a dream, but in a waking condition, and during the night; for וְהָיָה כְּחִזְוִן is constantly distinguished from חֲלִוִּים, a revelation in a dream.

Vers. 18-29. *David's prayer and thanksgiving.*—Ver. 18. King David came, i.e. went into the sanctuary erected upon Zion, and remained before Jehovah. וַיֵּשֶׁב, remained, tarried (as

in Gen. xxiv. 55, xxix. 19, etc.), not “*sat*,” for the custom of sitting before the Lord in the sanctuary, as the posture assumed in prayer, cannot be deduced from Ex. xvii. 12, where Moses is compelled to sit from simple exhaustion. David’s prayer consists of two parts,—thanksgiving for the promise (vers. 18b–24), and supplication for its fulfilment (vers. 25–29). The thanksgiving consists of a confession of unworthiness of all the great things that the Lord had hitherto done for him, and which He had still further increased by this glorious promise (vers. 18–21), and praise to the Lord that all this had been done in proof of His true Deity, and to glorify His name upon His chosen people Israel.—Ver. 18b. “*Who am I, O Lord Jehovah? and who my house (i.e. my family), that Thou hast brought me hitherto?*” These words recal Jacob’s prayer in Gen. xxxii. 10, “I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies,” etc. David acknowledged himself to be unworthy of the great mercy which the Lord had displayed towards him, that he might give the glory to God alone (*vid.* Ps. viii. 5 and cxliv. 3).—Ver. 19. “*And this is still too little in Thine eyes, O Lord Jehovah, and Thou still speakest with regard to the house of Thy servant for a great while to come.*” לְמַחֲרָק, *lit.* that which points to a remote period, *i.e.* that of the eternal establishment of my house and throne. “*And this is the law of man, O Lord Jehovah.*” “The law of man” is the law which determines or regulates the conduct of man. Hence the meaning of these words, which have been very differently interpreted, cannot, with the context immediately preceding it, be any other than the following: This—namely, the love and condescension manifested in Thy treatment of Thy servant—is the law which applies to man, or is conformed to the law which men are to observe towards men, *i.e.* to the law, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Lev. xix. 18, compare Micah vi. 8). With this interpretation, which is confirmed by the parallel text of the Chronicles (in ver. 17), “Thou sawest (*i.e.* visitedst me, or didst deal with me) according to the manner of man,” the words are expressive of praise of the condescending grace of the Lord. “When God the Lord, in His treatment of poor mortals, follows the rule which He has laid down for the conduct of men one towards another, when He shows himself kind and affectionate, this must fill with adoring amazement

those who know themselves and God" (Hengstenberg). Luther is wrong in the rendering which he has adopted: "This is the manner of a man, who is God the Lord;" for "Lord Jehovah" is not an explanatory apposition to "man," but an address to God, as in the preceding and following clause.—Ver. 20. "*And what more shall David speak to Thee? Thou knowest Thy servant, Lord Jehovah.*" Instead of expressing his gratitude still further in many words, David appeals to the omniscience of God, before whom his thankful heart lies open, just as in Ps. xl. 10 (compare also Ps. xvii. 3).—Ver. 21. "*For Thy word's sake, and according to Thy heart* (and therefore not because I am worthy of such grace), *hast Thou done all this greatness, to make it known to Thy servant.*" The word, for the sake of which God had done such great things for David, must be some former promise on the part of God. Hengstenberg supposes it to refer to the word of the Lord to Samuel, "Rise up and anoint him" (1 Sam. xvi. 12), which is apparently favoured indeed by the parallel in the corresponding text of 1 Chron. xvii. 19, "for Thy servant's sake," i.e. because Thou hast chosen Thy servant. But even this variation must contain some special allusion which does not exclude a *general* interpretation of the expression "for Thy word's sake," viz. an allusion to the earlier promises of God, or the Messianic prophecies generally, particularly the one concerning Judah in Jacob's blessing (Gen. xlix. 10), and the one relating to the ruler out of Jacob in Balaam's sayings (Num. xxiv. 17 sqq.), which contain the germs of the promise of the everlasting continuance of David's government. For the fact that David recognised the connection between the promise of God communicated to him by Nathan and Jacob's prophecy in Gen. xlix. 10, is evident from 1 Chron. xxviii. 4, where he refers to his election as king as being the consequence of the election of Judah as ruler. "According to Thine own heart" is equivalent to "according to Thy love and grace; for God is gracious, merciful, and of great kindness and truth" (Ex. xxxiv. 6, compare Ps. ciii. 8). גָּדֹל does not mean great things, but greatness.

The praise of God commences in ver. 22: "*Wherefore Thou art great, Jehovah God; and there is not (one) like Thee, and no God beside Thee, according to all that we have heard with*

our ears." By the word "wherefore," *i.e.* because Thou hast done this, the praise of the singleness of God is set forth as the result of David's own experience. God is great when He manifests the greatness of His grace to men, and brings them to acknowledge it. And in these great deeds He proves the incomparable nature of His Deity, or that He alone is the true God. (For the fact itself, compare Ex. xv. 11; Deut. iii. 24, iv. 35.)—Ver. 23. "*And where is (any) like Thy people, like Israel, a nation upon earth, which God went to redeem as a people for himself, that He might make Him a name, and do great things for you, and terrible things for Thy land before Thy people, which Thou hast redeemed for Thee out of Egypt, (out of the) nations and their gods?*" אֵי does not really mean *where*, but *who*, and is to be connected with the words immediately following, viz. וְנִי אֶחָד (one nation); but the only way in which the words can be rendered into good English (*German* in the original: TR.) is, "where is there any people," etc. The relative אֲשֶׁר does not belong to הָעַמִּים , which follows immediately afterwards; but, so far as the sense is concerned, it is to be taken as the object to לְפָדוֹת , "which Elohim went to redeem." The construing of *Elohim* with a plural arises from the fact, that in this clause it not only refers to the true God, but also includes the idea of the gods of other nations. The idea, therefore, is not, "Is there any nation upon earth to which the only true God went?" but, "Is there any nation to which the deity worshipped by it went, as the true God went to Israel to redeem it for His own people?" The rendering given in the Septuagint to הָעַמִּים , viz. $\omega\delta\eta\gamma\gamma\sigma\epsilon\nu$, merely arose from a misapprehension of the true sense of the words; and the emendation הָעַלְמִים , which some propose in consequence, would only distort the sense. The stress laid upon the incomparable character of the things which God had done for Israel, is merely introduced to praise and celebrate the God who did this as the only true God. (For the thought itself, compare the original passage in Deut. iv. 7, 34.) In the clause וַעֲשֶׂה לָּכֶם , "and to do for you," David addresses the people of Israel with oratorical vivacity. Instead of saying "to do great things to (for) Israel," he says "to do great things to (for) you." *For you* forms an antithesis to *him*, "to make Him a name, and to do great things for you (Israel)." The suggestion made by some, that לָכֶם is to be

taken as a *dativ. comm.*, and referred to *Elohim*, no more needs a serious refutation than the alteration into *לָהֶם*. There have been different opinions, however, as to the object referred to in the suffix attached to *לְאַרְצֶךָ*, and it is difficult to decide between them; for whilst the fact that *נִרְאֹת לְאַרְצֶךָ* (terrible things to Thy land) is governed by *לַעֲשׂוֹת* (to do) favours the allusion to Israel, and the sudden transition from the plural to the singular might be accounted for from the deep emotion of the person speaking, the words which follow ("before Thy people") rather favour the allusion to God, as it does not seem natural to take the suffix in two different senses in the two objects which follow so closely the one upon the other, viz. "*for Thy land*," and "*before Thy people*;" whilst the way is prepared for a transition from speaking of God to speaking to God by the word *לָכֶם* (to you). The words of Deut. x. 21 floated before the mind of David at the time, although he has given them a different turn. (On the "terrible things," see the commentary on Deut. x. 21 and Ex. xv. 11.) The connection of *נִרְאֹת* (terrible things) with *לְאַרְצֶךָ* (to Thy land) shows that David had in mind, when speaking of the acts of divine omnipotence which had inspired fear and dread of the majesty of God, not only the miracles of God in Egypt, but also the marvellous extermination of the Canaanites, whereby Israel had been established in the possession of the promised land, and the people of God placed in a condition to found a kingdom. These acts were performed *before* Israel, before the nation, whom the Lord redeemed to himself out of Egypt. This view is confirmed by the last words, "nations and their gods," which are in apposition to "from Egypt," so that the preposition *בְּ* should be repeated before *גוֹיִם* (nations). The suffix to *וְאֱלֹהֵיהֶם* (literally "and *its* gods") is to be regarded as distributive: "the gods of each of these heathen nations." In the Chronicles (ver. 21) the expression is simplified, and explained more clearly by the omission of "to Thy land," and the insertion of *לְגֵרֶשׁ*, "to drive out nations from before Thy people." It has been erroneously inferred from this, that the text of our book is corrupt, and ought to be emended, or at any rate interpreted according to the Chronicles. But whilst *לְאַרְצֶךָ* is certainly not to be altered into *לְגֵרֶשׁ*, it is just as wrong to do as Hengstenberg proposes,—namely, to take the thought expressed in *לְגֵרֶשׁ*

from the preceding *nîwî* by assuming a *zeugma*; for *nîwî*, to do or make, has nothing in common with driving or clearing away.—Ver. 24. “*And Thou hast established to thyself Thy people Israel to be a people unto Thee for ever: and Thou, Jehovah, hast become a God to them.*” The first clause does not refer merely to the liberation of Israel out of Egypt, or to the conquest of Canaan alone, but to all that the Lord had done for the establishment of Israel as the people of His possession, from the time of Moses till His promise of the eternal continuance of the throne of David. Jehovah had thereby become God to the nation of Israel, *i.e.* had thereby attested and proved himself to be its God.

To this praise of the acts of the Lord there is attached in vers. 25 sqq. the prayer for the fulfilment of His glorious promise. Would Jehovah set up (*i.e.* carry out) the word which He had spoken to His servant that His name might be great, *i.e.* be glorified, through its being said, “The Lord of Sabaoth is God over Israel,” and “the house of Thy servant will be firm before Thee.” The prayer is expressed in the form of confident assurance.—Ver. 27. David felt himself encouraged to offer this prayer through the revelation which he had received. Because God had promised to build him a house, “therefore Thy servant hath found in his heart to pray this prayer,” *i.e.* hath found joy in doing so.—Vers. 28, 29. David then briefly sums up the two parts of his prayer of thanksgiving in the two clauses commencing with *וְעַתָּה*, “and now.”—In ver. 28 he sums up the contents of vers. 18b–24 by celebrating the greatness of the Lord and His promise; and in ver. 29 the substance of the prayer in vers. 25–27. *הוֹאֵל יְיָ*, may it please Thee to bless (*הוֹאֵל*; see at Deut. i. 5). “And from (out of) Thy blessing may the house of Thy servant be blessed for ever.”

DAVID'S WARS, VICTORIES, AND MINISTERS OF STATE.—
CHAP. VIII.

To the promise of the establishment of his throne there is appended a general enumeration of the wars by which David secured the supremacy of Israel over all his enemies round about. In this survey all the nations are included with which

war had ever been waged by David, and which he had conquered and rendered tributary: the Philistines and Moabites, the Syrians of Zobah and Damascus, Toi of Hamath, the Ammonites, Amalekites, and Edomites. It is very evident from this, that the chapter before us not only treats of the wars which David carried on after receiving the divine promise mentioned in ch. vii., but of all the wars of his entire reign. The only one of which we have afterwards a fuller account is the war with the Ammonites and their allies the Syrians (ch. x. and xi.), and this is given on account of its connection with David's adultery. In the survey before us, the war with the Ammonites is only mentioned quite cursorily in ver. 12, in the account of the booty taken from the different nations, which David dedicated to the Lord. With regard to the other wars, so far as the principal purpose was concerned,—namely, to record the history of the kingdom of God,—it was quite sufficient to give a general statement of the fact that these nations were smitten by David and subjected to his sceptre. But if this chapter contains a survey of all the wars of David with the nations that were hostile to Israel, there can be no doubt that the arrangement of the several events is not strictly regulated by their chronological order, but that homogeneous events are grouped together according to a material point of view. There is a parallel to this chapter in 1 Chron. xviii.

Ver. 1. SUBJUGATION OF THE PHILISTINES.—In the introductory formula, "*And it came to pass afterwards,*" the expression "*afterwards*" cannot refer specially to the contents of ch. vii., for reasons also given, but simply serves as a general formula of transition to attach what follows to the account just completed, as a thing that happened afterwards. This is incontestably evident from a comparison of ch. x. 1, where the war with the Ammonites and Syrians, the termination and result of which are given in the present chapter, is attached to what precedes by the same formula, "*It came to pass afterwards*" (cf. ch. xiii. 1). "*David smote the Philistines and subdued them, and took the bridle of the mother out of the hand of the Philistines,*" i.e. wrested the government from them and made them tributary. The figurative expression *Metheg-ammah*, "bridle of the mother," i.e. the capital, has been explained by Alb. Schultens

(on Job xxx. 11) from an Arabic idiom, in which giving up one's bridle to another is equivalent to submitting to him. Gesenius also gives several proofs of this (*Thes.* p. 113). Others, for example Ewald, render it arm-bridle; but there is not a single passage to support the rendering "arm" for *ammah*. The word is a feminine form of מִם, mother, and only used in a tropical sense. "*Mother*" is a term applied to the chief city or capital, both in Arabic and Phœnician (*vid.* Ges. *Thes.* p. 112). The same figure is also adopted in Hebrew, where the towns dependent upon the capital are called its daughters (*vid.* Josh. xv. 45, 47). In 1 Chron. xviii. 1 the figurative expression is dropped for the more literal one: "David took Gath and its daughters out of the hand of the Philistines," *i.e.* he wrested Gath and the other towns from the Philistines. The Philistines had really five cities, every one with a prince of its own (Josh. xiii. 3). This was the case even in the time of Samuel (1 Sam. vi. 16, 17). But in the closing years of Samuel, Gath had a *king* who stood at the head of all the princes of the Philistines (1 Sam. xxix. 2 sqq., cf. xxvii. 2). Thus Gath became the capital of the land of the Philistines, which held the bridle (or reins) of Philistia in its own hand. The author of the Chronicles has therefore given the correct explanation of the figure. The one suggested by Ewald, Bertheau, and others, cannot be correct,—namely, that David wrested from the Philistines the power which they had hitherto exercised over the Israelites. The simple meaning of the passage is, that David wrested from the Philistines the power which the capital had possessed over the towns dependent upon it, *i.e.* over the whole of the land of Philistia; in other words, he brought the capital (Gath) and the other towns of Philistia into his own power. The reference afterwards made to a king of Gath in the time of Solomon in 1 Kings ii. 39 is by no means at variance with this; for the king alluded to was one of the tributary sovereigns, as we may infer from the fact that Solomon ruled over all the kings on this side of the Euphrates as far as to Gaza (1 Kings v. 1, 4).

Ver. 2. SUBJUGATION OF MOAB.—"*He smote Moab (i.e. the Moabites), and measured them with the line, making them lie down upon the ground, and measured two lines (i.e. two parts)*"

to put to death, and one line full to keep alive." Nothing further is known about either the occasion or the history of this war, with the exception of the cursory notice in 1 Chron. xi. 22, that Benaiah, one of David's heroes, smote two sons of the king of Moab, which no doubt took place in the same war. In the earliest period of his flight from Saul, David had met with a hospitable reception from the king of Moab, and had even taken his parents to him for safety (1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4). But the Moabites must have very grievously oppressed the Israelites afterwards, that David should have inflicted a severer punishment upon them after their defeat, than upon any other of the nations that he conquered, with the exception of the Ammonites (ch. xii. 31), upon whom he took vengeance for having most shamefully insulted his ambassadors (ch. x. 2 sqq.). The punishment inflicted, however, was of course restricted to the fighting men who had been taken prisoners by the Israelites. They were ordered to lie down in a row upon the earth; and then the row was measured for the purpose of putting two-thirds to death, and leaving one-third alive. The Moabites were then made "*servants*" to David (*i.e.* they became his subjects), "*bringing gifts*" (*i.e.* paying tribute).

Vers. 3-8. CONQUEST AND SUBJUGATION OF THE KING OF ZOBAB, AND OF THE DAMASCENE SYRIANS.—Ver. 3. The situation of *Zobah* cannot be determined. The view held by the Syrian church historians, and defended by Michaelis, viz. that *Zobah* was the ancient *Nisibis* in northern Mesopotamia, has no more foundation to rest upon than that of certain Jewish writers who suppose it to have been *Aleppo*, the present *Haleb*. *Aleppo* is too far north for *Zobah*, and *Nisibis* is quite out of the range of the towns and tribes in connection with which the name of *Zobah* occurs. In 1 Sam. xiv. 47, compared with ver. 12 of this chapter, *Zobah*, or *Aram Zobah* as it is called in ch. x. 6 and Ps. lx. 2, is mentioned along with Ammon, Moab, and Edom, as a neighbouring tribe and kingdom to the Israelites; and, according to vers. 3, 5, and 9 of the present chapter, it is to be sought for in the vicinity of Damascus and Hamath towards the Euphrates. These data point to a situation to the north-east of Damascus and south of Hamath, between the Orontes and Euphrates, and in fact

extending as far as the latter according to ver. 3, whilst, according to ch. x. 16, it even reached beyond it with its vassal-chiefs into Mesopotamia itself. Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 195) has therefore combined *Zobah*, which was no doubt the capital, and gave its name to the kingdom, with the *Sabe* mentioned in Ptol. v. 19,—a town in the same latitude as Damascus, and farther east towards the Euphrates. The king of Zobah at the time referred to is called *Hadadezer* in the text (*i.e.* whose help is *Hadad*); but in ch. x. 16–19 and throughout the Chronicles he is called *Hadarezer*. The first is the original form; for *Hadad*, the name of the sun-god of the Syrians, is met with in several other instances in Syrian names (*vid.* Movers, *Phönizier*). David smote this king “as he was going to restore his strength at the river (Euphrates).” *וְיָרָם* does not mean to turn his hand, but signifies to return his hand, to stretch it out again over or against any one, in all the passages in which the expression occurs. It is therefore to be taken in a derivative sense in the passage before us, as signifying to restore or re-establish his sway. The expression used in the Chronicles (ver. 3), *וְיָרָם*, has just the same meaning, since establishing or making fast presupposes a previous weakening or dissolution. Hence the subject of the sentence “as he went,” etc., must be Hadadezer and not David; for David could not have extended his power to the Euphrates before the defeat of Hadadezer. The Masoretes have interpolated *P'rath* (Euphrates) after “the river,” as in the text of the Chronicles. This is correct enough so far as the sense is concerned, but it is by no means necessary, as the *nahar* (the river *κ. ἑξ.*) is quite sufficient of itself to indicate the Euphrates.

There is also a war between David and Hadadezer and other kings of Syria mentioned in ch. x.; and the commentators all admit that that war, in which David defeated these kings when they came to the help of the Ammonites, is connected with the war mentioned in the present chapter. But the connection is generally supposed to be this, that the first of David's Aramæan wars is given in ch. viii., the second in ch. x.; for no other reason, however, than because ch. x. stands after ch. viii. This view is decidedly an erroneous one. According to the chapter before us, the war mentioned there terminated in the complete subjugation of the Aramæan kings and king-

doms. Aram became subject to David, paying tribute (ver. 6). Now, though the revolt of subjugated nations from their conquerors is by no means a rare thing in history, and therefore it is perfectly conceivable in itself that the Aramæans should have fallen away from David when he was involved in the war with the Ammonites, and should have gone to the help of the Ammonites, such an assumption is precluded by the fact that there is nothing in ch. x. about any falling away or revolt of the Aramæans from David; but, on the contrary, these tribes appear to be still entirely independent of David, and to be hired by the Ammonites to fight against him. But what is absolutely decisive against this assumption, is the fact that the number of Aramæans killed in the two wars is precisely the same (compare ver. 4 with ch. x. 18): so that it may safely be inferred, not only that the war mentioned in ch. x., in which the Aramæans who had come to the help of the Ammonites were smitten by David, was the very same as the Aramæan war mentioned in ch. viii., but of which the result only is given; but also that all the wars which David waged with the Aramæans, like his war with Edom (vers. 13 sqq.), arose out of the Ammonitish war (ch. x.), and the fact that the Ammonites enlisted the help of the kings of Aram against David (ch. x. 6). We also obtain from ch. x. an explanation of the expression "as he went to restore his power (Eng. Ver. 'recover his border') at the river," since it is stated there that Hadadezer was defeated by Joab the first time, and that, after sustaining this defeat, he called the Aramæans on the other side of the Euphrates to his assistance, that he might continue the war against Israel with renewed vigour (ch. x. 13, 15 sqq.). The power of Hadadezer had no doubt been crippled by his first defeat; and in order to restore it, he procured auxiliary troops from Mesopotamia with which to attack David, but he was defeated a second time, and obliged to submit to him (ch. x. 17, 18). In this second engagement "*David took from him (i.e. captured) seventeen hundred horse-soldiers and twenty thousand foot*" (ver. 4, compare ch. x. 18). This decisive battle took place, according to 1 Chron. xviii. 3, in the neighbourhood of *Hamath*, i.e. Epiphania on the Orontes (see at Num. xiii. 21, and Gen. x. 18), or, according to ch. x. 18 of this book, at *Helam*,—a difference which may easily be reconciled by the

simple assumption that the unknown Helam was somewhere near to Hamath. Instead of 1700 horse-soldiers, we find in the Chronicles (1, xviii. 4) 1000 chariots and 7000 horsemen. Consequently the word *receb* has no doubt dropped out after חָמֵשׁ in the text before us, and the numeral denoting a thousand has been confounded with the one used to denote a hundred; for in the plains of Syria seven thousand horsemen would be a much juster proportion to twenty thousand foot than seventeen hundred. (For further remarks, see at ch. x. 18.) “*And David lamed all the cavalry,*” i.e. he made the war-chariots and cavalry perfectly useless by laming the horses (see at Josh. xi. 6, 9),—“*and only left a hundred horses.*” The word *receb* in these clauses signifies the war-horses generally,—not merely the carriage-horses, but the riding-horses as well,—as the meaning cavalry is placed beyond all doubt by Isa. xxi. 7, and it can hardly be imagined that David would have spared the riding-horses.—Vers. 5, 6. After destroying the main force of Hadadezer, David turned against his ally, against *Aram-Damascus*, i.e. the Aramæans, whose capital was Damascus. *Dammesek* (for which we have *Darmesek* in the Chronicles according to its Aramæan form), *Damascus*, a very ancient and still a very important city of Syria, standing upon the *Chrysorrhoeas* (*Pharpar*), which flows through the centre of it. It is situated in the midst of paradisaical scenery, on the eastern side of the Anti-libanus, on the road which unites Western Asia with the interior. David smote 22,000 Syrians of Damascus, placed garrisons in the kingdom, and made it subject and tributary. מְצִיבִים are not governors or officers, but military posts, garrisons, as in 1 Sam. x. 5, xiii. 3.—Ver. 7. Of the booty taken in these wars, David carried the golden shields which he took from the servants, i.e. the governors and vassal princes, of Hadadezer, to Jerusalem.¹ *Shelet* signifies “a shield,” according to the Targums

¹ The Septuagint has this additional clause: “And Shishak the king of Egypt took them away, when he went up against Jerusalem in the days of Rehoboam the son of Solomon,” which is neither to be found in the Chronicles nor in any other ancient version, and is merely an inference drawn by the Greek translator, or by some copyist of the LXX., from 1 Kings xiv. 25–28, taken in connection with the fact that the application of the brass is given in 1 Chron. xviii. 8. But, in the first place, the author of this gloss has overlooked the fact that the golden shields of Rehoboam which Shishak carried away, were not those captured by David, but those

and Rabbins, and this meaning is applicable to all the passages in which the word occurs; whilst the meaning "equivalent" cannot be sustained either by the rendering *πανοπλία* adopted by Aquila and Symmachus in 2 Kings xi. 10, or by the renderings of the Vulgate, viz. *arma* in loc. and *armatura* in Song of Sol. iv. 4, or by an appeal to the etymology (*vid.* Gesenius' *Thes.* and Dietrich's *Lexicon*).—Ver. 8. And from the cities of *Betach* and *Berothai* David took very much brass, with which, according to 1 Chron. xviii. 8, Solomon made the brazen sea, and the brazen columns and vessels of the temple. The LXX. have also interpolated this notice into the text. The name *Betach* is given as *Tibhath* in the Chronicles; and for *Berothai* we have *Chun*. As the towns themselves are unknown, it cannot be decided with certainty which of the forms and names are the correct and original ones. תבצח appears to have been written by mistake for תבצח. This supposition is favoured by the rendering of the LXX., ἐκ τῆς Μετεβάκ; and by that of the Syriac also (viz. *Tebach*). On the other hand, the occurrence of the name *Tebah* among the sons of *Nahor the Aramæan* in Gen. xxii. 24 proves little or nothing, as it is not known that he founded a family which perpetuated his name; nor can anything be inferred from the fact that, according to the more modern maps, there is a town of *Tayibeh* to the north of Damascus in 35° north lat., as there is very little in common between the names *Tayibeh* and *Tebah*. Ewald connects *Berothai* with the *Barathena* of Ptol. v. 19 in the neighbourhood of Saba. The connection is a possible one, but it is not sufficiently certain to warrant us in founding any conclusions upon it with regard to the name *Chun* which occurs in the Chronicles; so that there is

which Solomon had had made, according to 1 Kings x. 16, for the retainers of his palace; and in the second place, he has not observed that, according to ver. 11 of this chapter, and also of the Chronicles, David dedicated to the Lord all the gold and silver that he had taken, i.e. put it in the treasury of the sanctuary to be reserved for the future temple, and that at the end of his reign he handed over to his son and successor Solomon all the gold, silver, iron, and brass that he had collected for the purpose, to be applied to the building of the temple (1 Chron. xxii. 14 sqq., xxix. 2 sqq.). Consequently the clause in question, which Thenius would adopt from the Septuagint into our own text, is nothing more than the production of a presumptuous Alexandrian, whose error lies upon the very surface, so that the question of its genuineness cannot for a moment be entertained.

no ground whatever for the opinion that it is a corruption of *Berothai*.

Vers. 9-12. After the defeat of the king of Zobah and his allies, TOI king of Hamath sought for David's friendship, sending his son to salute him, and conveying to him at the same time a considerable present of vessels of silver, gold, and brass. The name *Toi* is written *Tou* in the Chronicles, according to a different mode of interpretation; and the name of the son is given as *Hadoram* in the Chronicles, instead of *Joram* as in the text before us. The former is evidently the true reading, and *Joram* an error of the pen, as the Israelitish name *Joram* is not one that we should expect to find among Aramæans; whilst *Hadoram* occurs in 1 Chron. i. 21 in the midst of Arabic names, and it cannot be shown that the *Hadoram* or *Adoram* mentioned in 2 Chron. x. 18 and 1 Kings xii. 18 was a man of Israelitish descent. The primary object of the mission was to salute David ("to ask him of peace;" cf. Gen. xliii. 27, etc.), and to congratulate him upon his victory ("to bless him because he had fought," etc.); for *Toi* had had wars with *Hadadezer*. "*A man of wars*" signifies a man who wages wars (cf. 1 Chron. xxviii. 3; Isa. xlii. 13). According to 1 Chron. xviii. 3, the territory of the king of Hamath bordered upon that of *Hadadezer*, and the latter had probably tried to make king *Toi* submit to him. The secret object of the salutation, however, was no doubt to secure the friendship of this new and powerful neighbour.—Vers. 11, 12. David also sanctified *Toi's* presents to the Lord (handed them over to the treasury of the sanctuary), together with the silver and gold which he had sanctified from all the conquered nations, from *Aram*, *Moab*, etc. Instead of *אֶשֶׁר הִקְדִּישׁ* the text of the Chronicles has *אֶשֶׁר נָשָׂא*, which he took, *i.e.* took as booty. Both are equally correct; there is simply a somewhat different turn given to the thought.¹ In the enumeration of the conquered nations in ver. 12, the text of the Chronicles differs from that of the book before us. In the

¹ Bertheau erroneously maintains that *אֶשֶׁר נָשָׂא*, which he took, is at variance with 2 Sam. viii. 7, as, according to this passage, the golden shields of *Hadadezer* did not become the property of the Lord. But there is not a word to that effect in 2 Sam. viii. 7. On the contrary, his taking the shields to Jerusalem implies, rather than precludes, the intention to devote them to the purposes of the sanctuary.

first place, we find "*from Edom*" instead of "*from Aram*;" and secondly, the clause "*and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob king of Zobah,*" is altogether wanting there. The text of the Chronicles is certainly faulty here, as the name of *Aram* (Syria) could not possibly be omitted. *Edom* could much better be left out, not "because the conquest of Edom belonged to a later period," as Movers maintains, but because the conquest of Edom is mentioned for the first time in the subsequent verses. But if we bear in mind that in ver. 12 of both texts not only are those tribes enumerated the conquest of which had been already noticed, but all the tribes that David ever defeated and subjugated, even the Ammonites and Amalekites, to the war with whom no allusion whatever is made in the present chapter, we shall see that *Edom* could not be omitted. Consequently "*from Syria*" must have dropped out of the text of the Chronicles, and "*from Edom*" out of the one before us; so that the text in both instances ran originally thus, "*from Syria, and from Edom, and from Moab.*" For even in the text before us, "*from Aram*" (Syria) could not well be omitted, notwithstanding the fact that the booty of Hadadezer is specially mentioned at the close of the verse, for the simple reason that David not only made war upon Syria-Zobah (the kingdom of Hadadezer) and subdued it, but also upon Syria-Damascus, which was quite independent of Zobah.

Vers. 13, 14. "*And David made (himself) a name, when he returned from smiting (i.e. from the defeat of) Aram, (and smote Edom) in the valley of Salt, eighteen thousand men.*" The words enclosed in brackets are wanting in the Masoretic text as it has come down to us, and must have fallen out from a mistake of the copyist, whose eye strayed from אֶת־אֲרָם to אֶת־אֲדָוִם; for though the text is not "utterly unintelligible" without these words, since the passage might be rendered "after he had smitten Aram in the valley of Salt eighteen thousand men," yet this would be decidedly incorrect, as the Aramæans were not smitten in the *valley of Salt*, but partly at *Medeba* (1 Chron. xix. 7) and *Helam* (ch. x. 17), and partly in their own land, which was very far away from the Salt valley. Moreover, the difficulty presented by the text cannot be removed, as Movers supposes, by changing אֶת־אֲרָם (Syria) into אֶת־אֲדָוִם (Edom), as the expression בְּשָׁבוֹ ("when he returned") would still be un

explained. The facts were probably these: Whilst David, or rather Israel, was entangled in the war with the Ammonites and Aramæans, the Edomites seized upon the opportunity, which appeared to them a very favourable one, to invade the land of Israel, and advanced as far as the southern extremity of the Dead Sea. As soon, therefore, as the Aramæans were defeated and subjugated, and the Israelitish army had returned from this war, David ordered it to march against the Edomites, and defeated them in the valley of Salt. This valley cannot have been any other than the Ghor adjoining the Salt mountain on the south of the Dead Sea, which really separates the ancient territories of Judah and Edom (Robinson, *Pal.* ii. 483). There Amaziah also smote the Edomites at a later period (2 Kings xiv. 7). We gather more concerning this war of David from the text of the Chronicles (ver. 12) taken in connection with 1 Kings xi. 15, 16, and Ps. lx. 2. According to the Chronicles, it was Abishai the son of Zeruiah who smote the Edomites. This agrees very well not only with the account in ch. x. 10 sqq., to the effect that Abishai commanded a company in the war with the Syrians and Ammonites under the generalship of his brother Joab, but also with the heading to Ps. lx., in which it is stated that Joab returned after the defeat of Aram, and smote the Edomites in the valley of Salt, twelve thousand men; and with 1 Kings xi. 15, 16, in which we read that when David was in Edom, Joab, the captain of the host, came up to bury the slain, and smote every male in Edom, and remained six months in Edom with all Israel, till he had cut off every male in Edom. From this casual but yet elaborate notice, we learn that the war with the Edomites was a very obstinate one, and was not terminated all at once. The difference as to the number slain, which is stated to have been 18,000 in the text before us and in the Chronicles, and 12,000 in the heading to Ps. lx., may be explained in a very simple manner, on the supposition that the reckonings made were only approximative, and yielded different results;¹ and the fact that *David* is named

¹ Michaelis adduces a case in point from the Seven Years' War. After the battle of *Lissa*, eight or twelve thousand men were reported to have been taken prisoners; but when they were all counted, including those who fell into the hands of the conquerors on the second, third, and fourth days of the flight, the number amounted to 22,000.

as the victor in the verse before us, *Joab* in Ps. lx., and *Abishai* in the Chronicles, admits of a very easy explanation after what has just been observed. The Chronicles contain the most literal account. Abishai smote the Edomites as commander of the men engaged, Joab as commander-in-chief of the whole army, and David as king and supreme governor, of whom the writer of the Chronicles affirms, "The Lord helped David in all his undertakings." After the defeat of the Edomites, David placed garrisons in the land, and made all Edom subject to himself.

Vers. 15-18. DAVID'S MINISTERS.—To the account of David's wars and victories there is appended a list of his official attendants, which is introduced with a general remark as to the spirit of his government. As king over all Israel, David continued to execute right and justice.—Ver. 16. The chief ministers were the following:—*Joab* (see at ch. ii. 18) was "over the army," i.e. commander-in-chief. *Jehoshaphat* the son of Ahilud, of whom nothing further is known, was *mazciv*, chancellor; not merely the national annalist, according to the Septuagint and Vulgate (*ἐπὶ τῶν ὑπομνημάτων, ὑπομνηματογράφος; a commentariis*), i.e. the recorder of the most important incidents and affairs of the nation, but an officer resembling the *magister memoriæ* of the later Romans, or the *waka nuvis* of the Persian court, who keeps a record of everything that takes place around the king, furnishes him with an account of all that occurs in the kingdom, places his *visé* upon all the king's commands, and keeps a special protocol of all these things (*vid.* Chardin, *Voyages* v. p. 258, and Paulsen, *Regierung der Morgenländer*, pp. 279-80).—Ver. 17. *Zadok* the son of Ahitub, of the line of Eleazar (1 Chron. v. 34, vi. 37, 38), and *Ahimelech* the son of Abiathar, were *cohanim*, i.e. officiating high priests; the former at the tabernacle at Gibeon (1 Chron. xvi. 39), the latter probably at the ark of the covenant upon Mount Zion. Instead of *Ahimelech*, the Chronicles have *Abimelech*, evidently through a copyist's error, as the name is written *Ahimelech* in 1 Chron. xxiv. 3, 6. But the expression "*Ahimelech the son of Abiathar*" is apparently a very strange one, as Abiathar was a son of Ahimelech according to 1 Sam. xxii. 20, and in other passages *Zadok* and *Abiathar* are men-

tioned as the two high priests in the time of David (ch. xv. 24, 35, xvii. 15, xix. 12, xx. 25). This difference cannot be set aside, as Movers, Thenius, Ewald, and others suppose, by transposing the names, so as to read Abiathar the son of Ahimelech; for such a solution is precluded by the fact that, in 1 Chron. xxiv. 3, 6, 31, *Ahimelech* is mentioned along with Zadok as head of the priests of the line of Ithamar, and according to ver. 6 he was the son of Abiathar. It would therefore be necessary to change the name Ahimelech into Abiathar in this instance also, both in ver. 3 and ver. 6, and in the latter to transpose the two names. But there is not the slightest probability in the supposition that the names have been changed in so many passages. We are therefore disposed to adopt the view held by Bertheau and Oehler, viz. that Abiathar the high priest, the son of Ahimelech, had also a son named Ahimelech, as it is by no means a rare occurrence for grandfather and grandson to have the same names (*vid.* 1 Chron. v. 30-41), and also that this (the younger) Ahimelech performed the duties of high priest in connection with his father, who was still living at the commencement of Solomon's reign (1 Kings ii. 27), and is mentioned in this capacity, along with Zadok, both here and in the book of Chronicles, possibly because Abiathar was ill, or for some other reason that we cannot discover. As Abiathar was thirty or thirty-five years old at the time when his father was put to death by Saul, according to what has already been observed at 1 Sam. xiv. 3, and forty years old at the death of Saul, he was at least forty-eight years old at the time when David removed his residence to Mount Zion, and might have had a son of twenty-five years of age, namely the Ahimelech mentioned here, who could have taken his father's place in the performance of the functions of high priest when he was prevented by illness or other causes. The appearance of a son of Abiathar named Jonathan in ch. xv. 27, xvii. 17, 20, is no valid argument against this solution of the apparent discrepancy; for, according to these passages, he was still very young, and may therefore have been a younger brother of Ahimelech. The omission of any allusion to Ahimelech in connection with Abiathar's conspiracy with Adonijah against Solomon (1 Kings i. 42, 43), and the reference to his son Jonathan alone, might be explained on the supposition that

Ahimelech had already died. But as there is no reference to Jonathan at the time when his father was deposed, no stress is to be laid upon the omission of any reference to Ahimelech. Moreover, when Abiathar was deposed after Solomon had ascended the throne, he must have been about eighty years of age. *Seraiah* was a scribe. Instead of *Seraiah*, we have *Shavsha* in the corresponding text of the Chronicles, and *Sheva* in the parallel passage ch. xx. 25. Whether the last name is merely a mistake for Shavsha, occasioned by the dropping of ש, or an abbreviated form of Shisha and Shavsha, cannot be decided. *Shavsha* is not a copyist's error, for in 1 Kings iv. 3 the same man is unquestionably mentioned again under the name of Shisha, who is called Shavsha in the Chronicles, *Sheva* (שָׁעָה) in the text of ch. xx. 25, and here *Seraiah*. *Seraiah* also is hardly a copyist's error, but another form for Shavsha or Shisha. The scribe was a secretary of state; not a military officer, whose duty it was to raise and muster the troops, for the technical expression for mustering the people was not כָּפַר, but פָּקַד (cf. ch. xxiv. 2, 4, 9; 1 Chron. xxi. 5, 6, etc.).

Ver. 18. *Benaiah* the son of Jehoiada, a very brave hero of Kabzeel (see at ch. xxiii. 20 sqq.), was over the *Crethi* and *Plethi*. Instead of הַכְּרִיתִי, which gives no sense, and must be connected in some way with 1 Kings i. 38, 44, we must read עַל הַכְּרִיתִי according to the parallel passage ch. xx. 23, and the corresponding text of the Chronicles. The *Crethi* and *Plethi* were the king's body-guard, *σωματοφύλακες* (Josephus, *Ant.* vii. 5, 4). The words are adjectives in form, but with a substantive meaning, and were used to indicate a certain rank, *lit.* the executioners and runners, like הַשְּׁלִישִׁי (ch. xxiii. 8). כְּרִיתִי, from כָּרַת, to cut down or exterminate, signifies *confessor*, because among the Israelites (see at 1 Kings ii. 25), as in fact throughout the East generally, the royal halberdiers had to execute the sentence of death upon criminals. פָּלִיתִי, from פָּלַת (to fly, or be swift), is related to פָּלַט, and signifies *runners*. It is equivalent to רָץ, a courier, as one portion of the halberdiers, like the *ἄγγαροι* of the Persians, had to convey the king's orders to distant places (*vid.* 2 Chron. xxx. 6). This explanation is confirmed by the fact that the epithet הַכְּרִיתִי וְהַרְצִים was afterwards applied to the king's body-guard (2 Kings xi. 4, 19), and that הַכְּרִיתִי for הַכְּרִיתִי occurs as early as ch. xx. 23. כְּרִי, from כָּרַת,

fodit, perfodit, is used in the same sense.¹ And David's sons were בְּהֵיָם ("confidants"); not priests, domestic priests, court chaplains, or spiritual advisers, as Gesenius, De Wette, and others maintain, but, as the title is explained in the corresponding text of the Chronicles, when the title had become obsolete, "the first at the hand (or side) of the king." The correctness

¹ Gesenius (*Thes. s. vv.*) and Thenius (on 1 Kings i. 38) both adopt this explanation; but the majority of the modern theologians decide in favour of Lakemacher's opinion, to which Ewald has given currency, viz. that the *Crethi* or *Cari* are Cretes or Carians, and the *Pelethi* Philistines (vid. Ewald, *Krit. Gramm.* p. 297, and *Gesch. des Volkes Israel*, pp. 330 sqq.; Bertheau, *zur Geschichte Israel*, p. 197; Movers, *Phönizier* i. p. 19). This view is chiefly founded upon the fact that the Philistines are called *C'rethi* in 1 Sam. xxx. 14, and *C'rethim* in Zeph. ii. 5 and Ezek. xxv. 16. But in both the passages from the prophets the name is used with special reference to the meaning of the word הַכְרִית, viz. to exterminate, cut off, as Jerome has shown in the case of Ezekiel by adopting the rendering *interficiam interfectores* (I will slay the slayers) for הַכְרִיתִי אֶת־פְּרָתִים. The same play upon the words takes place in Zephaniah, upon which Strauss has correctly observed: "Zephaniah shows that this violence of theirs had not been forgotten, calling the Philistines *Crethim* for that very reason, *ut sit nomen et omen*." Besides, in both these passages the true name *Philistines* stands by the side as well, so that the prophets might have used the name *Crethim* (slayers, exterminators) without thinking at all of 1 Sam. xxx. 14. In this passage it is true the name *Crethi* is applied to a branch of the Philistine people that had settled on the south-west of Philistia, and not to the Philistines generally. The idea that the name of a portion of the royal body-guard was derived from the Cretans is precluded, first of all, by the fact of its combination with הַפְּלִתִי (the *Pelethites*); for it is a totally groundless assumption that this name signifies the *Philistines*, and is a corruption of פְּלִשְׁתִּים. There are no such contractions as these to be found in the Semitic languages, as Gesenius observes in his *Thesaurus* (*l.c.*), "Quis hujusmodi contractionem in linguis Semiticis ferat?" Secondly, it is also precluded by the strangeness of such a combination of two synonymous names to denote the royal body-guard. "Who could believe it possible that two synonymous epithets should be joined together in this manner, which would be equivalent to saying Englishmen and Britons?" (*Ges. Thes.* p. 1107.) Thirdly, it is opposed to the title afterwards given to the body-guard, הַפְּרִי וְהַרְצִיָּם (2 Kings xi. 4, 19), in which the *Cari* correspond to the *Crethi*, as in ch. xx. 23, and *ha-razim* to the *Pelethi*; so that the term *pelethi* can no more signify a particular tribe than the term *razim* can. Moreover, there are other grave objections to this interpretation. In the first place, the hypothesis that the Philistines were emigrants from Crete is merely founded upon the very indefinite statements

of this explanation is placed beyond the reach of doubt by 1 Kings iv. 5, where the *cohen* is called, by way of explanation, "the king's friend." The title *cohen* may be explained from the primary signification of the verb כָּהֵן, as shown in the corresponding verb and noun in Arabic ("*res alicujus gerere*," and "*administrator alieni negotii*"). These *cohanim*, therefore, were the king's confidential advisers.

of Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 3, 2), "*Judæos Creta insula profugos novissima Libyæ insedissee memorant*," and that of Steph. Byz. (s. v. Γαζά), to the effect that the city of Gaza was once called *Minoa*, from *Minos* a king of Crete,—statements which, according to the correct estimate of Strauss (*l.c.*), "have all so evidently the marks of fables that they hardly merit discussion," at all events when opposed to the historical testimony of the Old Testament (Deut. ii. 23; Amos ix. 7), to the effect that the Philistines sprang from *Caphtor*. And secondly, "it is *a priori* altogether improbable, that a man with so patriotic a heart, and so devoted to the worship of the one God, should have surrounded himself with a *foreign* and *heathen* body-guard" (Thenius). This argument cannot be invalidated by the remark "that it is well known that at all times kings and princes have preferred to commit the protection of their persons to foreign mercenaries, having, as they thought, all the surer pledge of their devotedness in the fact that they did not spring from the nation, and were dependent upon the ruler alone" (Hitzig). For, in the first place, the expression "at all times" is one that must be very greatly modified; and secondly, this was only done by kings who did not feel safe in the presence of their own people, which was not the case with David. And the Philistines, those arch-foes of Israel, would have been the last nation that David would have gone to for the purpose of selecting his own body-guard. It is true that he himself had met with a hospitable reception in the land of the Philistines; but it must be borne in mind that it was not as king of Israel that he found refuge there, but as an outlaw flying from Saul the king of Israel, and even then the chiefs of the Philistines would not trust him (1 Sam. xxix. 3 sqq.). And when Hitzig appeals still further to the fact, that according to ch. xviii. 2, David handed over the command of a third of his army to a foreigner who had recently entered his service, having emigrated from Gath with a company of his fellow-countrymen (ch. xv. 19, 20, 22), and who had displayed the greatest attachment to the person of David (ver. 21), it is hardly necessary to observe that the fact of David's welcoming a brave soldier into his army, when he had come over to Israel, and placing him over a division of the army, after he had proved his fidelity so decidedly as Ittai had at the time of Absalom's rebellion, is no proof that he chose his body-guard from the Philistines. Nor can ch. xv. 18 be adduced in support of this, as the notion that, according to that passage, David had 600 Gathites in his service as body-guard, is simply founded upon a misinterpretation of the passage mentioned.

DAVID'S KINDNESS TOWARDS MEPHIBOSHETH.—CHAP. IX.

When David was exalted to be king over all Israel, he sought to show compassion to the house of the fallen king, and to repay the love which his noble-minded friend Jonathan had once sworn to him before the Lord (1 Sam. xx. 13 sqq.; comp. xxiii. 17, 18). The account of this forms the conclusion of, or rather an appendix to, the first section of the history of his reign, and was intended to show how David was mindful of the duty of gratitude and loving fidelity, even when he reached the highest point of his regal authority and glory. The date when this occurred was about the middle of David's reign, as we may see from the fact, that Mephibosheth, who was five years old when Saul died (ch. iv. 4), had a young son at the time (ver. 12).

Vers. 1-8. When David inquired whether there was any one left of the house of Saul to whom he could show favour for Jonathan's sake (הֲכִי יֵשְׁעוֹר: *is it so that there is any one?* = there is certainly some one left), a servant of Saul named Ziba was summoned, who told the king that there was a son of Jonathan living in the house of Machir at Lodebar, and that he was lame in his feet. הֲאֵפֶס עוֹר אִישׁ, "*is there no one at all besides?*" The ל before בֵּית is a roundabout way of expressing the genitive, as in 1 Sam. xvi. 18, etc., and is obviously not to be altered into מִבֵּית, as Thenius proposes. "*The kindness of God*" is love and kindness shown in God, and for God's sake (Luke vi. 36). Machir the son of Ammiel was a rich man, judging from ch. xvii. 27, who, after the death of Saul and Jonathan, had received the lame son of the latter into his house. Lodebar (לֹדְבָר, written לֹאֲדָבָר in ch. xvii. 27, but erroneously divided by the Masoretes into two words in both passages) was a town on the east of Mahanaim, towards Rabbath Amman, probably the same place as Liddir (Josh. xiii. 26); but it is not further known.—Vers. 5 sqq. David sent for this son of Jonathan (*Mephibosheth*: cf. ch. iv. 4), and not only restored his father's possessions in land, but took him to his own royal table for the rest of his life. "*Fear not,*" said David to Mephibosheth, when he came before him with the deepest obeisance, to take away any anxiety lest the king should intend to slay the descendants of the fallen king, according to

the custom of eastern usurpers. It is evident from the words, "*I will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father,*" that the landed property belonging to Saul had either fallen to David as crown lands, or had been taken possession of by distant relations after the death of Saul. "*Thou shalt eat bread at my table continually,*" i.e. eat at my table all thy life long, or receive thy food from my table.—Ver. 8. Mephibosheth expressed his thanks for this manifestation of favour with the deepest obeisance, and a confession of his unworthiness of any such favour. On his comparison of himself to a "*dead dog,*" see at 1 Sam. xxiv. 15.

Vers. 9-13. David then summoned Ziba the servant of Saul, told him of the restoration of Saul's possessions to his son Mephibosheth, and ordered him, with his sons and servants, to cultivate the land for the son of his lord. The words, "*that thy master's son may have food to eat,*" are not at variance with the next clause, "*Mephibosheth shall eat bread alway at my table,*" as bread is a general expression, including all the necessities of life. Although Mephibosheth himself ate daily as a guest at the king's table, he had to make provision as a royal prince for the maintenance of his own family and servants, as he had children according to ver. 12 and 1 Chron. viii. 34 sqq. Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants (ver. 10), with whom he had probably been living in Gibeah, Saul's native place, and may perhaps have hitherto farmed Saul's land.—Ver. 11. Ziba promised to obey the king's command. The last clause of this verse is a circumstantial clause in form, with which the writer passes over to the conclusion of his account. But the words על שֻׁלְחָנִי, "*at my table,*" do not tally with this, as they require that the words should be taken as David's own. This is precluded, however, not only by the omission of any intimation that David spoke again after Ziba, and repeated what he had said once already, and that without any occasion whatever, but also by the form of the sentence, more especially the participle אֹכֵל. There is no other course left, therefore, than to regard שֻׁלְחָנִי (my table) as written by mistake for שֻׁלְחָן בָּתֵּר: "*but Mephibosheth ate at David's table as one of the king's sons.*" The further notices in vers. 12 and 13 follow this in a very simple manner. בֵּל מִוֶּשֶׁב בֵּית, "*all the dwelling,*" i.e. all the inhabitants of Ziba's house, namely his sons and servants, were

servants of Mephibosheth, *i.e.* worked for him and cultivated his land, whilst he himself took up his abode at Jerusalem, to eat daily at the king's table, although he was lamed in both his feet.

III. DAVID'S REIGN IN ITS DECLINE.

CHAP. X.—XX.

In the first half of David's reign he had strengthened and fortified the kingdom of Israel, both within and without, and exalted the covenant nation into a kingdom of God, before which all its enemies were obliged to bow; but in the second half a series of heavy judgments fell upon him and his house, which cast a deep shadow upon the glory of his reign. David had brought these judgments upon himself by his grievous sin with Bathsheba. The success of all his undertakings, and the strength of his government, which increased year by year, had made him feel so secure, that in the excitement of undisturbed prosperity, he allowed himself to be carried away by evil lusts, so as to stain his soul not only with adultery, but also with murder, and fell all the deeper because of the height to which his God had exalted him. This took place during the war with the Ammonites and Syrians, when Joab was besieging the capital of the Ammonites, after the defeat and subjugation of the Syrians (ch. x.), and when David had remained behind in Jerusalem (ch. xi. 1). For this double sin, the adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah, the Lord announced as a punishment, that the sword should not depart from David's house, and that his wives should be openly violated; and notwithstanding the sincere sorrow and repentance of the king, when brought to see his sin, He not only caused the fruit of his sin, the child that was born of Bathsheba, to die (ch. xii.), but very soon afterwards allowed the threatened judgments to fall upon his house, inasmuch as Amnon, his first-born son, violated his half-sister Tamar, and was murdered in consequence by her own brother Absalom (ch. xiii.), whereupon Absalom fled to his father-in-law at Geshur; and

when at length the king restored him to favour (ch. xiv.), he set on foot a rebellion, which nearly cost David his life and throne (ch. xv.-xvii. 23). And even after Absalom himself was dead (ch. xvii. 24-xix. 1), and David had been reinstated in his kingdom (ch. xix. 2-40), there arose the conspiracy set on foot by the Benjaminite Sheba, which was only stopped by the death of the chief conspirator, in the fortified city of Abel-Beth-Maachah (ch. xix. 41-xx. 26).

The period and duration of these divine visitations are not stated; and all that we are able to determine from the different data as to time, given in ch. xiii. 23, 38, xiv. 28, xv. 7, when taken in connection with the supposed ages of the sons of David, is that Amnon's sin in the case of Tamar did not take place earlier than the twentieth year of David's reign, and that Absalom's rebellion broke out seven or eight years later. Consequently the assumption cannot be far from the truth, that the events described in this section occupied the whole time between the twentieth and thirtieth years of David's reign. We are prevented from placing it earlier, by the fact that Amnon was not born till after David became king over Judah, and therefore was probably about twenty years old when he violated his half-sister Tamar. At the same time it cannot be placed later than this, because Solomon was not born till about two years after David's adultery; and he must have been eighteen or twenty years old when he ascended the throne on the death of his father, after a reign of forty years and a half, since, according to 1 Kings xiv. 21, compared with vers. 11 and 42, 43, he had a son a year old, named Rehoboam, at the time when he began to reign.

WAR WITH THE AMMONITES AND SYRIANS.—CHAP. X.

This war, the occasion and early success of which are described in the present chapter and the parallel passage in 1 Chron. xix., was the fiercest struggle, and, so far as the Israelitish kingdom of God was concerned, the most dangerous, that it ever had to sustain during the reign of David. The amount of distress which fell upon Israel in consequence of this war, and still more because the first successful battles with the Syrians of the south were no sooner over than the Edomites

invaded the land, and went about plundering and devastating, in the hope of destroying the people of God, is shown very clearly in the two psalms which date from this period (the 44th and 60th), in which a pious Korahite and David himself pour out their lamentations before the Lord on account of the distress of their nation, and pray for His assistance; and not less clearly in Ps. lxxviii., in which David foretels the victory of the God of Israel over all the hostile powers of the world.

Vers. 1-5. *Occasion of the war with the Ammonites.*—Ver. 1. On the expression “*it came to pass after this,*” see the remarks on ch. viii. 1. When *Nahash*, the king of the Ammonites, died, and *Hanun* his son reigned in his stead, David thought that he would show him the same kindness that Nahash had formerly shown to him. We are not told in what the love shown to David by Nahash consisted. He had most likely rendered him some assistance during the time of his flight from Saul. *Nahash* was no doubt the king of the Ammonites mentioned in 1 Sam. xi. 1, whom Saul had smitten at Jabesh. David therefore sent an embassy to Hanun, “*to comfort him for his father,*” i.e. to show his sympathy with him on the occasion of his father’s death, and at the same time to congratulate him upon his ascent of the throne.—Ver. 3. On the arrival of David’s ambassadors, however, the chiefs of the Ammonites said to Hanun their lord, “*Doth David indeed honour thy father in thine eyes (i.e. dost thou really suppose that David intends to do honour to thy father), because he has sent comforters to thee? Has David not sent his servants to thee with the intention of exploring and spying out the town, and (then) destroying it?*” The first question is introduced with הֲ, because a negative answer is expected; the second with הֲלֹא, because it requires an affirmative reply. רַבָּה is the capital *Rabbah*, a strongly fortified city (see at ch. xi. 1). The suspicion expressed by the chiefs was founded upon national hatred and enmity, which had probably been increased by David’s treatment of Moab, as the subjugation and severe punishment of the Moabites (ch. viii. 2) had certainly taken place a short time before. King Hanun therefore gave credence to the suspicions expressed as to David’s honourable intentions, and had his ambassadors treated in the most insulting manner.—Ver. 4. He had the half of their beard shaved off, and their clothes cut off up to the seat, and in this state he sent them

away. "*The half of the beard,*" i.e. the beard on one side. With the value universally set upon the beard by the Hebrews and other oriental nations, as being a man's greatest ornament,¹ the cutting off of one-half of it was the greatest insult that could have been offered to the ambassadors, and through them to David their king. The insult was still further increased by cutting off the long dress which covered the body; so that as the ancient Israelites wore no trousers, the lower half of the body was quite exposed. כְּרִיָּהֶם, from כָּרַי or כָּרָה, the long robe reaching down to the feet, from the root כָּרַה = כָּרַד, to stretch, spread out, or measure.—Ver. 5. When David received information of the insults that had been heaped upon his ambassadors, he sent messengers to meet them, and direct them to remain in Jericho until their beard had grown again, that he might not have to set his eyes upon the insult they had received.

Ver. 6. When the Ammonites saw that they had made themselves stinking before David, and therefore that David would avenge the insult offered to the people of Israel in the persons of their ambassadors, they looked round for help among the powerful kings of Syria. They hired as auxiliaries (with a thousand talents of silver, i.e. nearly half a million of pounds sterling, according to 1 Chron. xix. 6) twenty thousand foot from *Aram-Beth-Rehob* and *Aram-Zoba*, and one thousand men from the king of *Maacah*, and twelve thousand troops from the men of *Tob*. *Aram-Beth-Rehob* was the Aramæan kingdom, the capital of which was *Beth-Rehob*. This *Beth-Rehob*, which is simply called *Rehob* in ver. 8, is in all probability the city of this name mentioned in Num. xiii. 21 and Judg. xviii. 28, which lay to the south of Hamath, but the exact position of which has not yet been discovered: for the castle of *Hunin*, in the ruins of which Robinson imagines that he has found *Beth-Rehob*

¹ "Cutting off a person's beard is regarded by the Arabs as an indignity quite equal to flogging and branding among ourselves. Many would rather die than have their beard shaved off" (Arvieux, *Sitten der Beduinen-araber*). Niebuhr relates a similar occurrence as having taken place in modern times. In the year 1764, a pretender to the Persian throne, named *Kerim Khan*, sent ambassadors to *Mir Mahenna*, the prince of Bendervigk, on the Persian Gulf, to demand tribute from him; but he in return cut off the ambassadors' beards. *Kerim Khan* was so enraged at this, that he went the next year with a large army to make war upon this prince, and took the city, and almost the whole of his territory, to avenge the insult.

(*Bibl. Researches*, p. 370), is to the south-west of Tell el Kadi, the ancient Laish-Dan, the northern boundary of the Israelitish territory; so that the capital of this Aramæan kingdom would have been within the limits of the land of Israel,—a thing which is inconceivable. *Aram-Naharaim* is also mentioned in the corresponding text of the Chronicles, and for that reason many have identified Beth-Rehob with Rehoboth, on “the river” (Euphrates), mentioned in Gen. xxxvi. 37. But this association is precluded by the fact, that in all probability the latter place is to be found in *Rachabe*, which is upon the Euphrates and not more than half a mile from the river (see Ritter, *Erdk.* xv. p. 128), so that from its situation it can hardly have been the capital of a separate Aramæan kingdom, as the government of the king of Zoba extended, according to ver. 16, beyond the Euphrates into Mesopotamia. On *Aram-Zoba*, see at ch. viii. 3; and for *Maacah* at Deut. iii. 14. אִשׁ-טוֹב is not to be taken as one word and rendered as a proper name, *Ish-Tob*, as it has been by most of the earlier translators; but טוֹב is a common noun used in a collective sense (as it frequently is in the expression אֲנָשֵׁי טוֹב), “the men of Tob.” Tob was the district between Syria and Ammonitis, where Jephthah had formerly taken refuge (Judg. xi. 5). The corresponding text of the Chronicles (1 Chron. xix. 6, 7) is fuller, and differs in several respects from the text before us. According to the Chronicles, Hanun sent a thousand talents of silver to hire chariots and horsemen from Aram-Naharaim, Aram-Maacah, and Zobah. With this the Ammonites hired thirty-two thousand *receb* (*i.e.* chariots and horsemen: see at ch. viii. 4), and the king of Maacah and his people. They came and encamped before *Medeba*, the present ruin of *Medaba*, two hours to the south-east of Heshbon, in the tribe of Reuben (see at Num. xxi. 30, compared with Josh. xiii. 16), and the Ammonites gathered together out of their cities, and went to the war. The Chronicles therefore mention Aram-Naharaim (*i.e.* Mesopotamia) as hired by the Ammonites instead of Aram-Beth-Rehob, and leave out the men of Tob. The first of these differences is not to be explained, as Bertheau suggests, on the supposition that the author of the Chronicles took *Beth-Rehob* to be the same city as *Rehoboth of the river* in Gen. xxxvi. 37, and therefore substituted the well-known “*Aram of the two rivers*” as an

interpretation of the rarer name *Beth-Rehob*, though hardly on good ground. For this conjecture does not help to explain the omission of "the men of Tob." It is a much simpler explanation, that the writer of the Chronicles omitted *Beth-Rehob* and *Tob* as being names that were less known, this being the only place in the Old Testament in which they occur as separate kingdoms, and simply mentioned the kingdoms of *Maacah* and *Zoba*, which frequently occur; and that he included "Aram of the two rivers," and placed it at the head, because the Syrians obtained succour from Mesopotamia after their first defeat. The account in the Chronicles agrees with the one before us, so far as the number of auxiliary troops is concerned. For twenty thousand men of *Zoba* and twelve thousand of *Tob* amount to thirty-two thousand, besides the people of the king of *Maacah*, who sent a thousand men according to the text of Samuel. But according to that of the Chronicles, the auxiliary troops consisted of chariots and horsemen, whereas only foot-soldiers are mentioned in our text, which appears all the more remarkable, because according to ch. viii. 4, and 1 Chron. xviii. 4, the king of *Zoba* fought against David with a considerable force of chariots and horsemen. It is very evident, therefore, that there are copyists' errors in both texts; for the troops of the Syrians did not consist of infantry only, nor of chariots and horsemen alone, but of foot-soldiers, cavalry, and war-chariots, as we may see very clearly not only from the passages already quoted in ch. viii. 4 and 1 Chron. xviii. 4, but also from the conclusion to the account before us. According to ver. 18 of this chapter, when Hadarezer had reinforced his army with auxiliaries from Mesopotamia, after losing the first battle, David smote seven hundred *receb* and forty thousand *parashim* of Aram, whilst according to the parallel text (1 Chron. xix. 18) he smote seven thousand *receb* and forty thousand foot. Now, apart from the difference between seven thousand and seven hundred in the case of the *receb*, which is to be interpreted in the same way as a similar difference in ch. viii. 4, the Chronicles do not mention any *parashim* at all in ver. 18, but foot-soldiers only, whereas in ver. 7 they mention only *receb* and *parashim*; and, on the other hand, there are no foot-soldiers given in ver. 18 of the text before us, but riders only, whereas in ver. 6 there are none but foot-soldiers mentioned, without

any riders at all. It is evident that in both engagements the Syrians fought with all three (infantry, cavalry, and chariots), so that in both of them David smote chariots, horsemen, and foot.

Vers. 7-14. When David heard of these preparations and the advance of the Syrians into the land, he sent Joab and his brave army against the foe. הַגִּבּוֹרִים (*the mighty men*) is in apposition to כָּל־הַצֶּבָא (*all the host*): the whole army, namely the heroes or mighty men, *i.e.* the brave troops that were well used to war. It is quite arbitrary on the part of Thenius to supply *vav* before הַגִּבּוֹרִים; for, as Bertheau has observed, we never find a distinction drawn between the *gibborim* and the whole army.—Ver. 8. On the other hand, the Ammonites came out (from the capital, where they had assembled), and put themselves in battle array before the gate. The Syrians were alone on the field, *i.e.* they had taken up a separate position on the broad treeless table-land (cf. Josh. xiii. 16) by Medeba. Medeba lay about four geographical miles in a straight line to the south-west of Rabbath-Ammon.—Ver. 9. When Joab saw that “the front of the war was (directed) against him both before and behind,” he selected a picked body out of the Israelitish army, and posted them (the picked men) against the children of Aram (*i.e.* the Syrians). The rest of the men he gave to his brother Abishai, and stationed them against the Ammonites. “*The front of the battle:*” *i.e.* the face or front of the hostile army, when placed in battle array. Joab had this in front and behind, as the Ammonites had taken their stand before Rabbah at the back of the Israelitish army, and the Syrians by Medeba in their front, so that Joab was attacked both before and behind. This compelled him to divide his army. *He chose out*, *i.e.* made a selection. Instead of בָּחַר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל (the picked men in Israel) the Chronicles have בָּחַר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל (the men in Israel), the singular בָּחַר being more commonly employed than the plural to denote the men of war. The כָּ before יִשְׂרָאֵל is not to be regarded as suspicious, although the early translators have not expressed it, and the Masoretes wanted to expunge it. “The choice of Israel” signifies those who were selected in Israel for the war, *i.e.* the Israelitish soldiers. Joab himself took up his station opposite to the Syrians with a picked body of men, because they were the

stronger force of the two. He then made this arrangement with Abishai (ver. 11): "*If Aram becomes stronger than I (i.e. overpowers me), come to my help; and if the Ammonites should overpower thee, I will go to help thee.*" Consequently the attack was not to be made upon both the armies of the enemy simultaneously; but Joab proposed to attack the Aramæans (Syrians) first (cf. ver. 13), and Abishai was merely to keep the Ammonites in check, though there was still a possibility that the two bodies of the enemy might make their attack simultaneously.—Ver. 12. "*Be firm, and let us be firm (strong) for our people, and for the towns of our God: and Jehovah will do what seemeth Him good.*" Joab calls the towns of Israel the towns of our God, inasmuch as the God of Israel had given the land to the people of Israel, as being His own property. Joab and Abishai were about to fight, in order that Jehovah's possessions might not fall into the hands of the heathen, and become subject to their gods.—Ver. 13. Joab then advanced with his army to battle against Aram, and "*they fled before him.*"—Ver. 14. When the Ammonites perceived this, they also fled before Abishai, and drew back into the city (Rabbah); whereupon Joab returned to Jerusalem, probably because, as we may infer from ch. xi. 1, it was too late in the year for the siege and capture of Rabbah.

Vers. 15-19. The Aramæans, however, gathered together again after the first defeat, to continue the war; and Hadarezer, the most powerful of the Aramæan kings, sent messengers to Mesopotamia, and summoned it to war. It is very evident, not only from the words "he sent and brought out Aram, which was beyond the river," but also from the fact that Shobach, Hadarezer's general (*Shophach* according to the Chronicles), was at the head of the Mesopotamian troops, that the Mesopotamian troops who were summoned to help were under the supreme rule of Hadarezer. This is placed beyond all possible doubt by ver. 19, where the kings who had fought with Hadarezer against the Israelites are called his "servants," or vassals. וַיָּבֹאוּ הָאֲרָמִי (ver. 16) might be translated "and their army came;" but when we compare with this the וַיָּבֹאוּ הָאֲרָמִי of ver. 17, we are compelled to render it as a proper name (as in the Septuagint, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic)—"*and they (the men from beyond the Euphrates) came (marched) to Helam*"—and to take

הִלָּם as a contracted form of הִלָּאִים. The situation of this place has not yet been discovered. Ewald supposes it to be connected with the Syrian town *Alamatha* upon the Euphrates (Ptol. *Geogr.* v. 15); but this is not to be thought of for a moment, if only because it cannot be supposed that the Aramæans would fall back to the Euphrates, and wait for the Israelites to follow them thither before they gave them battle; and also on account of ch. viii. 4 and 1 Chron. xviii. 3, from which it is evident that *Helam* is to be sought for somewhere in the neighbourhood of Hamath (see p. 360). For הָבֵא הִלָּאִים we find הָבֵא אֲלֵיהֶם, "David came to them" (the Aramæans), in the Chronicles: so that the author of the Chronicles has omitted the unknown place, unless indeed אֲלֵיהֶם has been written by mistake for הִלָּאִים.—Vers. 17 sqq. David went with all Israel (all the Israelitish forces) against the foe, and smote the Aramæans at *Helam*, where they had placed themselves in battle array, slaying seven hundred charioteers and forty thousand horsemen, and so smiting (or wounding) the general *Shobach* that he died there, *i.e.* that he did not survive the battle (Thenius). With regard to the different account given in the corresponding text of the Chronicles as to the number of the slain, see the remarks on ver. 6 (pp. 376–7). It is a fact worthy of notice, that the number of men who fell in the battle (seven hundred *receb* and forty thousand *parashim*, according to the text before us; seven thousand *receb* and forty thousand *ragli*, according to the Chronicles) agrees quite as well with the number of Aramæans reported to be taken prisoners or slain, according to ch. viii. 4 and 1 Chron. xviii. 4, 5 (viz. seventeen hundred *parashim* or a thousand *receb*, and seven thousand *parashim* and twenty thousand *ragli* of Aram-Zoba, and twenty-two thousand of Aram-Damascus), as could possibly be expected considering the notorious corruption in the numbers as we possess them; so that there is scarcely any doubt that the number of Aramæans who fell was the same in both accounts (ch. viii. and x.), and that in the chapter before us we have simply a more circumstantial account of the very same war of which the result is given in ch. viii. and 1 Chron. xviii.—Ver. 19. "And when all the kings, the vassals of Hadarezer, saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and became subject to them; and Aram was afraid to render any further help to the Ammonites." It might appear from the first half of this

verse, that it was only the vassals of Hadarezer who made peace with Israel, and became subject to it, and that Hadarezer himself did not. But the last clause, "and the Aramæans were afraid," etc., shows very clearly that Hadarezer also made peace with the Israelites, and submitted to their rule; so that the expression in the first half of the verse is not a very exact one.

SIEGE OF RABBAH. DAVID'S ADULTERY.—CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1 (cf. 1 Chron. xx. 1). SIEGE OF RABBAH.—"And it came to pass at the return of the year, at the time when the kings marched out, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah: but David remained in Jerusalem." This verse is connected with ch. x. 14, where it was stated that after Joab had put to flight the Aramæans who came to the help of the Ammonites, and when the Ammonites also had fallen back before Abishai in consequence of this victory, and retreated into their fortified capital, Joab himself returned to Jerusalem. He remained there during the winter or rainy season, in which it was impossible that war should be carried on. At the return of the year, *i.e.* at the commencement of spring, with which the new year began in the month Abib (Nisan), the time when kings who were engaged in war were accustomed to open their campaign, David sent Joab his commander-in-chief with the whole of the Israelitish forces to attack the Ammonites once more, for the purpose of chastising them and conquering their capital. The *Chethibh* הַמִּלְחָמִים should be changed into הַמַּלְחָמִים, according to the *Keri* and the text of the Chronicles. The \aleph interpolated is a perfectly superfluous *mater lectionis*, and probably crept into the text from a simple oversight. The "servants" of David with Joab were not the men performing military service, or soldiers, (in which case "all Israel" could only signify the people called out to war in extraordinary circumstances,) but the king's military officers, the military commanders; and "all Israel," the whole of the military forces of Israel. Instead of "the children of Ammon" we find "the country of the children of Ammon," which explains the meaning more fully. But there was no necessity to insert אֶרֶץ (the land

or country), as *הִשְׁחִית* is applied to men in other passages in the sense of "cast to the ground," or destroy (e.g. 1 Sam. xxvi. 15). *Rabbah* was the capital of Ammonitis (as in Josh. xiii. 25): the fuller name was *Rabbath* of the children of Ammon. It has been preserved in the ruins which still exist under the ancient name of *Rabbat-Ammân*, on the Nahr Ammân, i.e. the upper Jabbok (see at Deut. iii. 11). The last clause, "*but David sat (remained) in Jerusalem*," leads on to the account which follows of David's adultery with Bathsheba (vers. 2-27 and ch. xii. 1-25), which took place at that time, and is therefore inserted here, so that the conquest of *Rabbah* is not related till afterwards (ch. xii. 26-31).

Vers. 2-27. **DAVID'S ADULTERY.**—David's deep fall forms a turning-point not only in the inner life of the great king, but also in the history of his reign. Hitherto David had kept free from the grosser sins, and had only exhibited such infirmities and failings as simulation, prevarication, etc., which clung to all the saints of the Old Covenant, and were hardly regarded as sins in the existing stage of religious culture at that time, although God never left them unpunished, but invariably visited them upon His servants with humiliations and chastisements of various kinds. Among the unacknowledged sins which God tolerated because of the hardness of Israel's heart was polygamy, which encouraged licentiousness and the tendency to sensual excesses, and to which but a weak barrier had been presented by the warning that had been given for the Israelitish kings against taking many wives (Deut. xvii. 17), opposed as such a warning was to the notion so prevalent in the East both in ancient and modern times, that a well-filled harem is essential to the splendour of a princely court. The custom to which this notion gave rise opened a dangerous precipice in David's way, and led to a most grievous fall, that can only be explained, as O. v. Gerlach has said, from the intoxication consequent upon undisturbed prosperity and power, which grew with every year of his reign, and occasioned a long series of most severe humiliations and divine chastisements that marred the splendour of his reign, notwithstanding the fact that the great sin was followed by deep and sincere repentance.

Vers. 2-5. Towards evening David walked upon the roof

of his palace, after rising from his couch, *i.e.* after taking his mid-day rest, and saw from the roof a woman bathing, namely in the uncovered court of a neighbouring house, where there was a spring with a pool of water, such as you still frequently meet with in the East. "*The woman was beautiful to look upon.*" Her outward charms excited sensual desires.—Ver. 3. David ordered inquiry to be made about her, and found (וַיִּאָמֶר, "*he, i.e. the messenger, said;*" or indefinitely, "*they said*") that she was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hethite. הִלָּא, *nonne*, is used, as it frequently is, in the sense of an affirmation, "*it is indeed so.*" Instead of *Bathsheba* the daughter of Eliam, we find the name given in the Chronicles (1 Chron. iii. 5) as *Bathshua* the daughter of Ammiel. The form בַּת־שֻׁעַ may be derived from בַּת־שִׁינָה, in which ב is softened into ו; for Bathsheba (with *beth*) is the correct and original form, as we may see from 1 Kings i. 11, 15, 28. *Eliam* and *Ammiel* have the same signification; the difference simply consists in the transposition of the component parts of the name. It is impossible to determine, however, which of the two forms was the original one.—Ver. 4. The information brought to him, that the beautiful woman was married, was not enough to stifle the sensual desires which arose in David's soul. "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin" (Jas. i. 15). David sent for the woman, and lay with her. In the expression "he took her, and she came to him," there is no intimation whatever that David brought Bathsheba into his palace through craft or violence, but rather that she came at his request without any hesitation, and offered no resistance to his desires. Consequently Bathsheba is not to be regarded as free from blame. The very act of bathing in the uncovered court of a house in the heart of the city, into which it was possible for any one to look down from the roofs of the houses on higher ground, does not say much for her feminine modesty, even if it was not done with an ulterior purpose, as some commentators suppose. Nevertheless in any case the greatest guilt rests upon David, that he, a man upon whom the Lord had bestowed such grace, did not resist the temptation to the lust of the flesh, but sent to fetch the woman. "*When she had sanctified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house.*" Defilement from sexual intercourse rendered unclean till the evening (Lev. xv. 18). Bathsheba

thought it her duty to observe this statute most scrupulously, though she did not shrink from committing the sin of adultery.—Ver. 5. When she discovered that she was with child, she sent word to David. This involved an appeal to him to take the necessary steps to avert the evil consequences of the sin, inasmuch as the law required that both adulterer and adulteress should be put to death (Lev. xx. 10).

Vers. 6–13. David had Uriah the husband of Bathsheba sent to him by Joab, under whom he was serving in the army before Rabbah, upon some pretext or other, and asked him as soon as he arrived how it fared with Joab and the people (*i.e.* the army) and the war. This was probably the pretext under which David had had him sent to him. According to ch. xxiii. 39, Uriah was one of the *gibborim* (“mighty men”) of David, and therefore held some post of command in the army, although there is no historical foundation for the statement made by Josephus, viz. that he was Joab’s armour-bearer or aide-de-camp. The king then said to him, “Go down to thy house (from the palace upon Mount Zion down to the lower city, where Uriah’s house was situated), and wash thy feet;” and when he had gone out of the palace, he sent a royal present after him. The Israelites were accustomed to wash their feet when they returned home from work or from a journey, to take refreshment and rest themselves. Consequently these words contained an intimation that he was to go and refresh himself in his own home. David’s wish was that Uriah should spend a night at home with his wife, that he might afterwards be regarded as the father of the child that had been begotten in adultery. נִשְׁכָּח, a present, as in Amos v. 11, Jer. xl. 5, Esther ii. 18.—Ver. 9. But Uriah had his suspicions aroused. The connection between his wife and David may not have remained altogether a secret, so that it may have reached his ears as soon as he arrived in Jerusalem. “He lay down to sleep before the king’s house with all the servants of his lord (*i.e.* the retainers of the court), and went not down to his house.” “Before, or at, the door of the king’s house,” *i.e.* in the court of the palace, or in a building adjoining the king’s palace, where the court servants lived.—Ver. 10. When this was told to David (the next morning), he said to Uriah, “Didst thou not come from the way (*i.e.* from a journey)? why didst thou not go down (as men

generally do when they return from a journey)?" Uriah replied (ver. 11), "*The ark (ark of the covenant), and Israel, and Judah, dwell in the huts, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord encamp in the field; and should I go to my house to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? By thy life, and by the life of thy soul, I do no such thing!*" יָשַׁב בַּסֹּכֹת, to sit or sojourn in huts, is the same practically as being encamped in the field. Uriah meant to say: Whereas the ark, i.e. Jehovah with the ark, and all Israel, were engaged in conflict with the enemies of God and of His kingdom, and therefore encamped in the open country, it did not become a warrior to seek rest and pleasure in his own home. This answer expressed the feelings and the consciousness of duty which ought to animate one who was fighting for the cause of God, in such plain and unmistakeable terms, that it was well adapted to prick the king to the heart. But David's soul was so beclouded by the wish to keep clear of the consequences of his sin in the eyes of the world, that he did not feel the sting, but simply made a still further attempt to attain his purpose with Uriah. He commanded him to stop in Jerusalem all that day, as he did not intend to send him away till the morrow.—Ver. 13. The next day he invited him to his table and made him drunken, with the hope that when in this state he would give up his intention of not going home to his wife. But Uriah lay down again the next night to sleep with the king's servants, without going down to his house; for, according to the counsel and providence of God, David's sin was to be brought to light to his deep humiliation.

Vers. 14-27. When the king saw that his plan was frustrated through Uriah's obstinacy, he resolved upon a fresh and still greater crime. He wrote a letter to Joab, with which he sent Uriah back to the army, and the contents of which were these: "Set ye Uriah opposite to the strongest contest, and then turn away behind him, that he may be slain, and die."¹ David was so sure that his orders would be executed, that he

¹ "We may see from this how deep a soul may fall when it turns away from God, and from the guidance of His grace. This David, who in the days of his persecution would not even resort to means that were really plausible in order to defend himself, was now not ashamed to resort to the greatest crimes in order to cover his sin. O God! how great is our strength

did not think it necessary to specify any particular crime of which Uriah had been guilty.—Ver. 16. The king's wishes were fully carried out by Joab. "*When Joab watched (i.e. blockaded) the city, he stationed Uriah just where he knew that there were brave men*" (in the city).—Ver. 17. "*And the men of the city came out (i.e. made a sally) and fought with Joab, and some of the people of the servants of David fell, and Uriah the Hethite died also.*" The literal fulfilment of the king's command does not warrant us in assuming that Joab suspected how the matter stood, or had heard a rumour concerning it. As a general, who was not accustomed to spare human life, he would be a faithful servant of his lord in this point, in order that his own interests might be served another time.—Vers. 18–21. Joab immediately despatched a messenger to the king, to give him a report of the events of the war, and with these instructions: "When thou hast told all the things of the war to the king to the end, in case the anger of the king should be excited (^{אֲרִיָּה}, ascend), and he should say to thee, Why did ye advance so near to the city to fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbosheth (i.e. Gideon, see at Judg. vi. 32)? did not a woman throw down a millstone from the wall, that he died in Thebez (Judg. ix. 53)? why went ye so nigh to the wall? then only say, Thy servant Uriah the Hethite has perished." Joab assumed that David might possibly be angry at what had occurred, or at any rate that he might express his displeasure at the fact that Joab had sacrificed a number of warriors by imprudently approaching close to the wall: he therefore instructed the messenger, if such should be the case, to announce Uriah's death to the king, for the purpose of mitigating his wrath. The messenger seems to have known that Uriah was in disgrace with the king. At the same time, the words "thy servant Uriah is dead also" might be understood or interpreted as meaning that it was without, or even in opposition to, Joab's command, that Uriah went so far with his men,

when we lay firm hold of Thee! And how weak we become as soon as we turn away from Thee! The greatest saints would be ready for the worst of deeds, if Thou shouldst but leave them for a single moment without Thy protection. Whoever reflects upon this, will give up all thought of self-security and spiritual pride."—*Berleburg Bible*.

and that he was therefore chargeable with his own death and that of the other warriors who had fallen.—Vers. 22 sqq. The messenger brought to David all the information with which Joab had charged him (שָׁלַח with a double accusative, to send or charge a person with anything), but he so far condensed it as to mention Uriah's death at the same time. "When the men (of Rabbah) became strong against us, and came out to us into the field, and we prevailed against them even to the gate, the archers shot at thy servants down from the wall, so that some of the servants of the king died, and thy servant Uriah the Hethite is dead also." The א in the forms יִרְאוּ הַמִּצֻּרִים instead of יִירֵוּ הַמִּצֻּרִים is an Aramaic mode of writing the words.—Ver. 25. David received with apparent composure the intelligence which he was naturally so anxious to hear, and sent this message back to Joab: "*Let not this thing depress thee, for the sword devours thus and thus. Keep on with the battle against the city, and destroy it.*" The construction of אֶל־יָרֵעַ with אַתְּ obj. is analogous to the combination of a passive verb with אַתְּ: "Do not look upon this affair as evil" (disastrous). David then sent the messenger away, saying, "Encourage thou him" (*lit.* strengthen him, put courage into him), to show his entire confidence in the bravery and steadfastness of Joab and the army, and their ultimate success in the capture of Rabbah.—In ver. 26 the account goes back to its starting-point. When Uriah's wife heard of her husband's death, she mourned for her husband. When her mourning was over, David took her home as his wife, after which she bore him a son (the one begotten in adultery). The ordinary mourning of the Israelites lasted seven days (Gen. l. 10 ; 1 Sam. xxxi. 13). Whether widows mourned any longer we do not know. In the case before us Bathsheba would hardly prolong her mourning beyond the ordinary period, and David would certainly not delay taking her as his wife, in order that she might be married to the king as long as possible before the time of childbirth. The account of these two grievous sins on the part of David is then closed with the assurance that "the thing that David had done displeased the Lord," which prepares the way for the following chapter.

NATHAN'S REPROOF AND DAVID'S REPENTANCE. CONQUEST
OF RABBAH.—CHAP. XII.

The Lord left David almost a whole year in his sin, before sending a prophet to charge the haughty sinner with his misdeeds, and to announce the punishment that would follow. He did this at length through Nathan, but not till after the birth of Bathsheba's child, that had been begotten in adultery (compare vers. 14, 15 with ch. xi. 27). Not only was the fruit of the sin to be first of all brought to light, and the hardened sinner to be deprived of the possibility of either denying or concealing his crimes, but God would first of all break his unbroken heart by the torture of his own conscience, and prepare it to feel the reproaches of His prophet. The reason for this delay on the part of God in the threatening of judgment is set forth very clearly in Ps. xxxii., where David describes most vividly the state of his heart during this period, and the sufferings that he endured as long as he was trying to conceal his crime. And whilst in this Psalm he extols the blessedness of a pardoned sinner, and admonishes all who fear God, on the ground of his own inmost experience after his soul had tasted once more the joy and confidence arising from the full forgiveness of his iniquities; in the fifty-first Psalm, which was composed after Nathan had been to him, he shows clearly enough that the promise of divine forgiveness, which the prophet had given him in consequence of his confession of his guilt, did not take immediate possession of his soul, but simply kept him from despair at first, and gave him strength to attain to a thorough knowledge of the depth of his guilt through prayer and supplication, and to pray for its entire removal, that his heart might be renewed and fortified through the Holy Ghost. But Nathan's reproof could not possibly have borne this saving fruit, if David had still been living in utter blindness as to the character of his sin at the time when the prophet went to him.

Vers. 1-14. NATHAN'S REPROOF.—Vers. 1 sqq. To ensure the success of his mission, viz. to charge the king with his crimes, Nathan resorted to a parable by which he led on the king to pronounce sentence of death upon himself. The parable is a very simple one, and drawn from life. Two men

were living in a certain city: the one was rich, and had many sheep and oxen; the other was poor, and possessed nothing at all but one small lamb which he had bought and nourished (חַיָּה, *lit.* kept alive), so that it grew up in his house along with his son, and was treated most tenderly and loved like a daughter. The custom of keeping pet-sheep in the house, as we keep lap-dogs, is still met with among the Arabs (*vid.* Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. p. 594). There came a traveller (דָּרָב, a journey, for a traveller) to the rich man (עָשִׁיר, without an article, the express definition being introduced afterwards in connection with the adjective חָפְזִיר; *vid.* Ewald, § 293a, p. 741), and he grudged to take of his own sheep and oxen to prepare (*sc.* a meal) for the traveller who had come to his house; "and he took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that had come to him."—Vers. 5, 6. David was so enraged at this act of violence on the part of the rich man, that in the heat of his anger he pronounced this sentence at once: "*As the Lord liveth, the man who did this deserves to die; and the lamb he shall restore fourfold.*" The fourfold restoration corresponds to the law in Ex. xxi. 37. The culprit himself was also to be put to death, because the forcible robbery of a poor man's pet-lamb was almost as bad as man-stealing.—Vers. 7 sqq. The parable was so selected that David could not suspect that it had reference to him and to his sin. With all the greater shock therefore did the words of the prophet, "*Thou art the man,*" come upon the king. Just as in the parable the sin is traced to its root—namely, insatiable covetousness—so now, in the words of Jehovah which follow, and in which the prophet charges the king directly with his crime, he brings out again in the most unsparing manner this hidden background of all sins, for the purpose of bringing thoroughly home to his heart the greatness of his iniquity, and the condemnation it deserved. "*Jehovah the God of Israel hath said, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, and I gave thee thy master's house and thy master's wives into thy bosom.*" These words refer to the fact that, according to the general custom in the East, when a king died, his successor upon the throne also succeeded to his harem, so that David was at liberty to take his predecessor's wives; though we cannot infer from this that he actually did so: in fact this is by no means probable,

since, according to 1 Sam. xiv. 50, Saul had but one wife, and according to 2 Sam. iii. 7 only one concubine, whom Abner appropriated to himself. "*And gave thee the house of Israel and Judah;*" i.e. I handed over the whole nation to thee as king, so that thou couldst have chosen young virgins as wives from all the daughters of Judah and Israel. וְאִם קָטַנְתָּ, "*and if (all this was) too little, I would have added to thee this and that.*"—Ver. 9. "*Why hast thou despised the word of Jehovah, to do evil in His eyes? Thou hast slain Uriah the Hethite with the sword, and taken his wife to be thy wife, and slain him with the sword of the Ammonites.*" The last clause does not contain any tautology, but serves to strengthen the thought by defining more sharply the manner in which David destroyed Uriah. הָרַג, to murder, is stronger than הָכָה; and the fact that it was by the sword of the Ammonites, the enemies of the people of God, that the deed was done, added to the wickedness.—Vers. 10–12. The punishment answers to the sin. There is first of all (ver. 10) the punishment for the murder of Uriah: "*The sword shall not depart from thy house for ever, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife,*" etc. "*For ever*" must not be toned down to the indefinite idea of a long period, but must be held firmly in its literal signification. The expression "*thy house,*" however, does not refer to the house of David as continued in his descendants, but simply as existing under David himself until it was broken up by his death. The fulfilment of this threat commenced with the murder of Amnon by Absalom (ch. xiii. 29); it was continued in the death of Absalom the rebel (ch. xviii. 14), and was consummated in the execution of Adonijah (1 Kings ii. 24, 25).—Vers. 11, 12. But David had also sinned in committing adultery. It was therefore announced to him by Jehovah, "*Behold, I raise up mischief over thee out of thine own house, and will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them to thy neighbour, that he may lie with thy wives before the eyes of this sun* (for the fulfilment of this by Absalom, see ch. xvi. 21, 22). *For thou hast done it in secret; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before (in the face of) the sun.*" David's twofold sin was to be followed by a twofold punishment. For his murder he would have to witness the commission of murder in his own family, and for his adultery the violation of his wives, and both of them in an

intensified form. As his sin began with adultery, and was consummated in murder, so the law of just retribution was also carried out in the punishment, in the fact that the judgments which fell upon his house commenced with Amnon's incest, whilst Absalom's rebellion culminated in the open violation of his father's concubines, and even Adonijah lost his life, simply because he asked for Abishag the Shunammite, who had lain in David's bosom to warm and cherish him in his old age (1 Kings ii. 23, 24).—Ver. 13. These words went to David's heart, and removed the ban of hardening which pressed upon it. He confessed to the prophet, "*I have sinned against the Lord.*" "The words are very few, just as in the case of the publican in the Gospel of Luke (xviii. 13). But that is a good sign of a thoroughly broken spirit. . . . There is no excuse, no cloaking, no palliation of the sin. There is no searching for a loophole, . . . no pretext put forward, no human weakness pleaded. He acknowledges his guilt openly, candidly, and without prevarication" (*Berleb. Bible*). In response to this candid confession of his sin, Nathan announced to him, "*The Lord also hath let thy sin pass by (i.e. forgiven it). Thou wilt not die. Only because by this deed thou hast given the enemies of the Lord occasion to blaspheme, the son that is born unto thee shall die.*" נָסַח, *inf. abs. Piel*, with chirek, because of its similarity in sound to the following perfect (see Ewald, § 240, c). מַסַּח, with which the apodosis commences, belongs to the נָסַח which follows, and serves to give emphasis to the expression: "Nevertheless the son" (*vid. Ges. § 155, 2, a*). David himself had deserved to die as an adulterer and murderer. The Lord remitted the punishment of death, not so much because of his heartfelt repentance, as from His own fatherly grace and compassion, and because of the promise that He had given to David (ch. vii. 11, 12),—a promise which rested upon the assumption that David would not altogether fall away from a state of grace, or commit a mortal sin, but that even in the worst cases he would turn to the Lord again and seek forgiveness. The Lord therefore punished him for this sin with the judgments announced in vers. 10-12, as about to break upon him and his house. But as his sin had given occasion to the enemies of the Lord—*i.e.* not only to the heathen, but also to the unbelieving among the Israelites

themselves—to blaspheme or ridicule his religion and that of all other believers also, the child that was begotten in adultery and had just been born should die; in order, on the one hand, that the father should atone for his adultery in the death of the son, and, on the other hand, that the visible occasion for any further blasphemy should be taken away: so that David was not only to feel the pain of punishment in the death of his son, but was also to discern in it a distinct token of the grace of God.

Vers. 15-25. DAVID'S PENITENTIAL GRIEF, AND THE BIRTH OF SOLOMON.—Ver. 15. The last-mentioned punishment was inflicted without delay. When Nathan had gone home, the Lord smote the child, so that it became very ill.—Vers. 16, 17. Then David sought God (in prayer) for the boy, and fasted, and went and lay all night upon the earth. וַיָּבֹא, “*he came*,” not into the sanctuary of the Lord (ver. 20 is proof to the contrary), but into his house, or into his chamber, to pour out his heart before God, and bend beneath His chastising hand, and refused the appeal of his most confidential servants, who tried to raise him up, and strengthen him with food. “*The elders of his house*,” judging from Gen. xxiv. 2, were the oldest and most confidential servants, “the most highly honoured of his servants, and those who had the greatest influence with him” (Clericus).—Ver. 18. On the seventh day, when the child died, the servants of David were afraid to tell him of its death; for they said (to one another), “Behold, while the child was still living, we spoke to him, and he did not hearken to our voice; how should we say to him, now the child is dead, that he should do harm?” (*i.e.* do himself an injury in the depth of his anguish).—Vers. 19, 20. David saw at once what had happened from their whispering conversation, and asked whether the child was dead. When they answered in the affirmative, he rose up from the ground, washed and anointed himself, and changed his clothes; that is to say, he laid aside all the signs of penitential grief and mourning, went into the house of the Lord (the holy tent upon Mount Zion) and worshipped, and then returned to his house, and had food set before him.—Vers. 21 sqq. When his servants expressed their astonishment at all this, David replied, “*As long as the boy lived, I fasted and wept: for*

I thought (said), Perhaps (who knows) the Lord may be gracious to me, that the child may remain alive. But now he is dead, why should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." On this O. v. Gerlach has the following admirable remarks: "In the case of a man whose penitence was so earnest and so deep, the prayer for the preservation of his child must have sprung from some other source than excessive love of any created object. His great desire was to avert the stroke, as a sign of the wrath of God, in the hope that he might be able to discern, in the preservation of the child, a proof of divine favour consequent upon the restoration of his fellowship with God. But when the child was dead, he humbled himself under the mighty hand of God, and rested satisfied with His grace, without giving himself up to fruitless pain." This state of mind is fully explained in Ps. li., though his servants could not comprehend it. The form יחני is the imperfect *Kal*, יחני; according to the *Chethibh*, though the Masoretes have substituted as the *Keri* יחני, the perfect with *vav consec.*—Ver. 23b is paraphrased very correctly by Clericus: "I shall go to the dead, the dead will not come to me."—Ver. 24. David then comforted his wife Bathsheba, and lived with her again; and she bare a son, whom he called *Solomon*, the man of peace (cf. 1 Chron. xxii. 9). David gave the child this name, because he regarded his birth as a pledge that he should now become a partaker again of peace with God, and not from any reference to the fact that the war with the Ammonites was over, and peace prevailed when he was born; although in all probability Solomon was not born till after the capture of Rabbah and the termination of the Ammonitish war. His birth is mentioned here simply because of its connection with what immediately precedes. The writer adds (in vers. 24, 25), "*And Jehovah loved him, and sent by the hand (through the medium) of Nathan the prophet; and he called his son Jedidiah (i.e., beloved of Jehovah), for Jehovah's sake.*" The subject to יחני (he sent) cannot be David, because this would not yield any appropriate sense, but must be *Jehovah*, the subject of the clause immediately preceding. "To send by the hand," i.e. to make a mission by a person (*vid.* Ex. iv. 13, etc.), is equivalent to having a commission performed by a person, or entrusting a person with a commission to another. We learn from

what follows, in what the commission with which Jehovah entrusted Nathan consisted: "*And he (Nathan, not Jehovah) called his (the boy's) name Jedidiah.*" And if Nathan is the subject to "called," there is nothing to astonish in the expression "because of the Lord." The idea is this: Nathan came to David according to Jehovah's instructions, and gave Solomon the name *Jedidiah* for Jehovah's sake, *i.e.* because Jehovah loved him. The giving of such a name was a practical declaration on the part of Jehovah that He loved Solomon, from which David could and was intended to discern that the Lord had blessed his marriage with Bathsheba. *Jedidiah*, therefore, was not actually adopted as Solomon's name.

Vers. 26-31. CONQUEST OF RABBAH, AND PUNISHMENT OF THE AMMONITES (comp. 1 Chron. xx. 1-3).—"*Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the king's city.*" עִיר הַמַּלְכִּיָּה, the capital of the kingdom, is the city with the exception of the acropolis, as ver. 27 clearly shows, where the captured city is called "the water-city." *Rabbah* was situated, as the ruins of *Ammān* show, on both banks of the river (*Moiat*) *Ammān* (the upper *Jabbok*), in a valley which is shut in upon the north and south by two bare ranges of hills of moderate height, and is not more than 200 paces in breadth. "The northern height is crowned by the castle, the ancient acropolis, which stands on the north-western side of the city, and commands the whole city" (see Burckhardt, *Syria* ii. pp. 612 sqq., and Ritter, *Erdkunde* xv. pp. 1145 sqq.). After taking the water-city, Joab sent messengers to David, to inform him of the result of the siege, and say to him, "*Gather the rest of the people together, and besiege the city (i.e. the acropolis, which may have been peculiarly strong), and take it, that I may not take the city (also), and my name be named upon it,*" *i.e.* the glory of the conquest be ascribed to me. Luther adopts this explanation in his free rendering, "and I have a name from it."—Ver. 29. Accordingly David "*gathered together all the people,*"—*i.e.* all the men of war who had remained behind in the land; from which we may see that Joab's besieging army had been considerably weakened during the long siege, and at the capture of the water-city,—"*and fought against the acropolis, and took it.*"—Ver. 30. He then took their king's crown ("*their king,*"

viz. the king of the Ammonites) from off his (the king's) head; so that he had either been taken prisoner or slain at the capture of the city. The weight of the crown was "*a talent of gold, and precious stones*" (sc. were upon it): as the writer of the Chronicles has correctly explained it by supplying כֶּה. The Hebrew talent (equal to 3000 shekels) was $83\frac{1}{2}$ Dresden pounds. But the strongest man could hardly have borne a crown of this weight upon his head for however short a time; and David could scarcely have placed it upon his own head. We must therefore assume that the account of the weight is not founded upon actual weighing, but simply upon an approximative estimate, which is somewhat too high. David also took a great quantity of booty out of the city.—Ver. 31. He also had the inhabitants executed, and that with cruel tortures. "*He sawed them in pieces with the saw and with iron harrows.*" וַיִּשֶׂם בַּמִּנְרוֹת, "he put them into the saw," does not give any appropriate sense; and there can be no doubt, that instead of וַיִּשֶׂם we should read וַיִּשַׁר (from שָׁר): "he cut (sawed) them in pieces." וּבַמִּנְרוֹת הַחֲבָרָל, "*and with iron cutting tools.*" The meaning of the ἀπ. λεγ. מִנְרוֹת cannot be more precisely determined. The current rendering, "axes or hatchets," is simply founded upon the circumstance that נָצַר, to cut, is applied in 2 Kings vi. 4 to the felling of trees. The reading in the Chronicles, וּבַמִּנְרוֹת, is evidently a copyist's error, as we have already had בַּמִּנְרָה, "with the saw." The meaning of the next clause is a disputed point, as the reading itself varies, and the Masoretes read בַּמִּלְכָּן instead of the Chethibh בְּמִלְכָּן, "he made them go through brick-kilns," i.e. burnt them in brick-kilns, as the LXX. and Vulgate render it. On the other hand, Thenius takes the Chethibh under his protection, and adopts Kimchi's explanation: "he led them through *Malchan*, i.e. through the place where the Ammonites burned their children in honour of their idol." Thenius would therefore alter בַּמִּלְכָּן into בְּמִלְכָּם or בְּמִלְכֵם: "he offered them as sacrifices in their image of Moloch." But this explanation cannot be even grammatically sustained, to say nothing of the arbitrary character of the alteration proposed; for the technical expression הָעֵבִיר בְּאֵשׁ לְמִלְכָּה, "to cause to go through the fire for Moloch" (Lev. xviii. 21), is essentially different from הָעֵבִיר בְּמִלְכָּה, to cause to pass through Moloch, an expression that we never meet with. Moreover, it is impossible to see how

burning the Ammonites in the image of Moloch could possibly be "an obvious mode of punishing idolatry," since the idolatry itself consisted in the fact that the Ammonites burned their children to Moloch. So far as the circumstances themselves are concerned, the cruelties inflicted upon the prisoners are not to be softened down, as Daaz and others propose, by an arbitrary perversion of the words into a mere sentence to hard labour, such as sawing wood, burning bricks, etc. At the same time, the words of the text do not affirm that *all* the inhabitants of Rabbah were put to death in this cruel manner. הָעָם אֲשֶׁר בָּהָּ (without כל) refers no doubt simply to the fighting men that were taken prisoners, or at the most to the male population of the acropolis of Rabbah, who probably consisted of fighting men only. In doing this, David merely retaliated upon the Ammonites the cruelties with which they had treated their foes; since according to Ainos i. 13 they ripped up women who were with child, and according to 1 Sam. xi. 2 their king Nahash would only make peace with the inhabitants of Jabesh upon the condition that the right eye of every one of them should be put out. It is sufficiently evident from this, that the Ammonites had aimed at the most shameful extermination of the Israelites. "*Thus did he unto all the cities of the Ammonites,*" i.e. to all the fortified cities that resisted the Israelites. After the close of this war, David returned to Jerusalem with all the men of war. The war with the Syrians and Ammonites, including as it did the Edomitish war as well, was the fiercest in which David was ever engaged, and was also the last great war of his life.

AMNON'S INCEST, AND ABSALOM'S FRATRICIDE.—CHAP. XIII.

The judgments threatened to king David in consequence of his sin with Bathsheba soon began to fall upon him and upon his house, and were brought about by sins and crimes on the part of his own sons, for which David was himself to blame, partly because of his own indulgence and want of discipline, and partly because of the bad example that he had set them. Having grown up without strict paternal discipline, simply under the care of their different mothers, who were jealous of one another, his sons fancied that they might gratify their own

fleshly lusts, and carry ont their own ambitious plans; and from this there arose a series of crimes, which nearly cost the king his life and throne. Amnon, David's eldest son, led the way with his forcible violation of his step-sister Tamar (vers. 1-22). The crime was avenged by her own brother Absalom, who treacherously assassinated Amnon, in consequence of which he was obliged to flee to Geshur and take refuge with his father-in-law (vers. 23-39).

Vers. 1-22. AMNON'S INCEST.—Vers. 1-14. The following occurrences are assigned in a general manner to the times succeeding the Ammonitish war, by the words "*And it came to pass after this;*" and as David did not marry Maacah the mother of Absalom and Tamar till after he had been made king at Hebron (see ch. iii. 3), they cannot well have taken place before the twentieth year of his reign. Amnon, the eldest son of David by Ahinoam the Jezreelite (ch. iii. 2), loved Tamar, the beautiful sister of his step-brother Absalom, so passionately that he became ill in consequence, because he could not get near to her as she was a virgin. Vers. 1 and 2 form one period. וַיֵּצֵר is a continuation of וַיְהִי אִתּוֹ; and the words from וַיֵּצֵר to בְּדָדוֹ are a circumstantial clause. וַיֵּצֵר: literally "it became narrow (anxious) to Amnon, even to making himself ill," i.e. he quite pined away, not "he pretended to be ill" (Luther), for it was not till afterwards that he did this according to Jonadab's advice (ver. 5). הִתְחַלֵּוֹת: to make one's self ill, here to become ill, in ver. 5 to pretend to be ill. The clause בְּכִי בְּתוֹלָהּ הָיְתָה is to be joined to the one which follows: "*because she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible to him to do anything to her.*" The maidenly modesty of Tamar evidently raised an insuperable barrier to the gratification of his lusts.—Vers. 3-5. Amnon's miserable appearance was observed by his cousin Jonadab, a very crafty man, who asked him what was the reason, and then gave him advice as to the way in which he might succeed in gratifying his desires. Shimeah is called Shammah in 1 Sam. xvi. 9.—Ver. 4. "*Why art thou so wasting away* (דָּל, thin, spare, here equivalent to wasting away, looking miserable), *king's son, from morning to morning?*" i.e. day by day. "The morning" is mentioned because sick persons look worst in the morning. The advice given in ver. 5,—viz. "Lay thee down upon thy bed, and

pretend to be ill ; and when thy father comes to visit thee, say to him, May my sister Tamar come to me, and give me to eat ?" etc.,—was very craftily devised, as Amnon's wretched appearance would favour his pretence that he was ill, and it might be hoped that an affectionate father would gratify him, since even if the wish seemed a strange one, it might easily be accounted for from the marvellous desires of persons who are ill, particularly with regard to food,—desires which it is often very difficult to gratify.—Vers. 6 sqq. Amnon acted upon the advice, and begged his father, when he came to ask him how he was, to allow his sister Tamar to come and bake two heart-cakes for him before his eyes, which she very speedily did. לֶכְבֵּב is a *denom.* from לָבַב, to make or bake heart-cakes. לֶכְבֵּב is a heart-strengthening kind of pastry, a kind of pancake, which could be very quickly made. It is evident from these verses that the king's children lived in different houses. Probably each of the king's wives lived with her children in one particular compartment of the palace.—Vers. 9 sqq. "And she took the pan and shook out (what she had prepared) before him. The *ἀπ. λεγ.* מִשְׁחָה signifies a frying-pan or sauce-pan, according to the ancient versions. The etymology is uncertain. But Amnon refused to eat, and, like a whimsical patient, he then ordered all the men that were with him to go out ; and when this had been done, he told Tamar to bring the food into the chamber, that he might eat it from her hand ; and when she handed him the food, he laid hold of her, and said, "Come, lie with me, my sister!"—Vers. 12, 13. Tamar attempted to escape by pointing to the wickedness of such a desire : "Pray, do not, my brother, do not humble me ; for they do not such things in Israel : do not this folly." The words recal Gen. xxxiv. 7, where the expression "folly" (*nebalah*) is first used to denote a want of chastity. Such a sin was altogether out of keeping with the calling and holiness of Israel (*vid.* Lev. xx. 8 sqq.). "And I, whither should I carry my shame?" i.e. shame and contempt would meet me everywhere. "And thou wouldst be as one of the fools in Israel." We should both of us reap nothing but shame from it. What Tamar still further said, "Now therefore, I pray thee, speak to the king, for he will not refuse me to thee," is no doubt at variance with the law which prohibits marriage between step-brothers and sisters (Lev. xviii. 9, 11, xx. 17) ; but

it by no means proves that the laws of Leviticus were not in existence at the time, nor does it even presuppose that Tamar was ignorant of any such law. She simply said this, as Clericus observes, "that she might escape from his hands by any means in her power, and to avoid inflaming him still more and driving him to sin by precluding all hope of marriage."¹ We cannot therefore even infer from these words of hers, that she really thought the king could grant a dispensation from the existing hindrances to their marriage.—Ver. 14. Amnon would not listen to her, however, but overpowered her, forced her, and lay with her.

Vers. 15-22. Amnon had no sooner gratified his animal passion, than his love to the humbled sister turned into hatred, which was even greater than his (previous) love, so that he commanded her to get up and go. This sudden change, which may be fully explained from a psychological point of view, and is frequently exemplified still in actual life, furnishes a striking proof that lust is not love, but simply the gratification of the animal passions.—Ver. 16. Tamar replied, "*Do not become the cause of this great evil, (which is) greater than another that thou hast done to me, to thrust me away,*" i.e. do not add to the great wrong which thou hast done me the still greater one of thrusting me away. This is apparently the only admissible explanation of the difficult expression *אֶל-אֲדָוָתָא*, as nothing more is needed than to supply *הָיָה*. Tamar calls his sending her away a greater evil than the one already done to her, because it would inevitably be supposed that she had been guilty of some shameful conduct herself, that the seduction had come from her; whereas she was perfectly innocent, and had done nothing but what affection towards a sick brother dictated, whilst it was impossible for her to call for help (as prescribed in Deut. xxii. 27), because Amnon had sent the servants away, and Tamar could not in any case expect assistance from them.—Ver. 17. Amnon then called the boy who waited upon him, and ordered him to put out this person (the sister he had humbled), and to bolt the door behind her, so that it had the appearance of her having made a shameful proposal to him.—Ver. 18. Before stating that this command was obeyed, the writer inserts this

¹ Josephus adopts this explanation: "This she said, as desirous to avoid her brother's violent passion at present" (*Ant.* viii. 8, 1).

remark: "*She (Tamar) wore a long dress with sleeves* (see Gen. xxxvii. 3); *for in this manner did the virgin daughters of the king dress themselves with mantles.*" מְעִילֵיהֶן is an accusative belonging to הַלְבִּישָׁנָה, and the meaning is that the king's daughters, who were virgins, wore long dresses with sleeves as cloaks. The *cetoneth passim* was not an ordinary under-garment, but was worn over the plain *cetoneth* or tunic, and took the place of the ordinary *meil* without sleeves. Notwithstanding this dress, by which a king's daughter could at once be recognised, Amnon's servant treated Tamar like a common woman, and turned her out of the house.—Ver. 19. And Tamar took ashes upon her head, rent her sleeve-dress (as a sign of grief and pain at the disgrace inflicted upon her), laid her hand upon her head (as a sign that a grievous trouble had come upon her, that the hand of God was resting as it were upon her: *vid.* Jer. ii. 37), and "*went going and cried,*" *i.e.* crying aloud as she went along.—Ver. 20. Then Absalom said to her, namely when she came home mourning in this manner, "*Has Amnon thy brother been with thee?*" This was a euphemism for what had taken place (cf. Gen. xxxix. 10), as Absalom immediately conjectured. "*And now, my sister, be silent; it is thy brother, do not take this thing to heart.*" Absalom quieted the sister, because he was determined to take revenge, but wished to conceal his plan of vengeance for the time. So Tamar remained in her brother's house, "*and indeed desolate,*" *i.e.* as one laid waste, with the joy of her life hopelessly destroyed. It cannot be proved that שָׁמֵם ever means single or solitary.—Vers. 21, 22. When David heard "all these things," he became very wrathful; but Absalom did not speak to Amnon "*from good to evil*" (*i.e.* either good or evil, not a single word: Gen. xxiv. 50), because he hated him for having humbled his sister. The LXX. add to the words "he (David) was very wroth," the following clause: "He did not trouble the spirit of Amnon his son, because he loved him, for he was his first-born." This probably gives the true reason why David let such a crime as Amnon's go unpunished, when the law enjoined that incest should be punished with death (Lev. xx. 17); at the same time it is nothing but a subjective conjecture of the translators, and does not warrant us in altering the text. The fact that David was contented to be simply angry is probably to be accounted for partly from his own consciousness of

guilt, since he himself had been guilty of adultery; but it arose chiefly from his indulgent affection towards his sons, and his consequent want of discipline. This weakness in his character bore very bitter fruit.

Vers. 23-39. ABSALOM'S REVENGE AND FLIGHT.—Vers. 23, 24. Absalom postponed his revenge for two full years. He then “*kept sheep-shearing*,” which was celebrated as a joyous festival (see 1 Sam. xxv. 2, 8), “*at Baal-Hazor, near Ephraim*,” where he must therefore have had some property. The situation of *Baal-Hazor* cannot be precisely determined. The clause “*which (was) beside Ephraim*” points to a situation on the border of the tribe-territory of Ephraim (*juxta Ephraim*, according to the *Onom. s.v. Baalasor*); for the Old Testament never mentions any city of that name. This definition does not exactly tally with v. Raumer's conjecture (*Pal. p. 149*), that *Baal-Hazor* may have been preserved in *Tell Asûr* (Rob. *Pal. ii. p. 151, iii. p. 79*); for this Tell is about five Roman miles to the north-east of Bethel, *i.e.* within the limits of the tribe of Ephraim. There is greater probability in the suggestion made by Ewald and others, that Baal-Hazor is connected with the *Hazor* of Benjamin (Neh. xi. 33), though the situation of Hazor has not yet been thoroughly decided; and it is merely a conjecture of Robinson's that it is to be found in *Tell Asûr*. The following statement, that “*Absalom invited all the king's sons*” (*sc.* to the feast), somewhat anticipates the course of events: for, according to ver. 24, Absalom invited the king himself, together with his courtiers; and it was not till the king declined the invitation for himself, that Absalom restricted his invitation to the royal princes.—Ver. 25. The king declined the invitation, that he might not be burdensome to Absalom. Absalom pressed him indeed, but he would not go, and blessed him, *i.e.* wished him a pleasant and successful feast (see 1 Sam. xxv. 14).—Ver. 26. Then Absalom said, “*And not (i.e. if thou dost not go), may my brother Amnon go with me?*” The king would not give his consent to this; whether from suspicion cannot be determined with certainty, as he eventually yielded to Absalom's entreaties and let Amnon and all the other king's sons go. From the length of time that had elapsed since Amnon's crime was committed, without Absalom showing any wish for revenge,

David might have felt quite sure that he had nothing more to fear. But this long postponement of revenge, for the purpose of carrying it out with all the more certainty, is quite in the spirit of the East.—Ver. 28. Absalom then commanded his servants to put Amnon to death without fear, as he had commanded, as soon as his heart should become merry with wine and he (Absalom) should tell them to smite him. The arrangement of the meal is passed over as being quite subordinate to the main purpose of the narrative; and the clause added by the LXX. at the close of ver. 27, *καὶ ἐποίησεν Ἀβессαλὼν πότον κατὰ τὸν πότον τοῦ βασιλέως*, is nothing more than an explanatory gloss, formed according to 1 Sam. xxv. 36. The words "Have not I commanded you?" implied that Absalom would take the responsibility upon himself.—Ver. 29. The servants did as he commanded, whereupon the other king's sons all fled upon their mules.—Ver. 30. But whilst they were on the road, the report of what Absalom had done reached the ears of the king, and, as generally happens in such cases, with very great exaggeration: "*Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left.*"—Ver. 31. The king rent his clothes with horror at such a deed, and sat down upon the ground, and all his servants (courtiers) stood motionless by, with their clothes rent as well. This is the rendering adopted by Böttcher, as נָצַף has frequently the idea of standing perfectly motionless (e.g. Num. xxii. 23, 24; Ex. v. 20, etc.).—Ver. 32. Then Jonadab, the same person who had helped Amnon to commit his crime, said, "*Let not my lord say (or think) that they have slain all the young men the king's sons, but Amnon alone is dead; for it was laid upon the mouth of Absalom from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.*" The meaning is either "they might see it (the murder of Amnon) by his mouth," or "they might gather it from what he said." הִיָּתָה שִׁמְחָה: it was a thing laid down, i.e. determined (vid. Ex. xxi. 13). The subject, viz. the thing itself, or the intended murder of Amnon, may easily be supplied from the context. וְאֵין כֵּן is undoubtedly used in the sense of "*no but.*" The negation is implied in the thought: Let the king not lay it to heart, that they say all the king's sons are dead; it is not so, but only Amnon is dead. Jonadab does not seem to speak from mere conjecture; he is much too sure of what he says. He might possibly have heard

expressions from Absalom's lips which made him certain as to how the matter stood.—Ver. 34. "And Absalom fled." This statement follows upon ver. 29. When the king's sons fled upon their mules, Absalom also took to flight.—Vers. 30-33 are a parenthesis, in which the writer describes at once the impression made upon the king and his court by the report of what Absalom had done. The apparently unsuitable position in which this statement is placed may be fully explained from the fact, that the flight of Absalom preceded the arrival of the rest of the sons at the king's palace. The alteration which Böttcher proposes to make in the text, so as to remove this statement altogether on account of its unsuitable position, is proved to be inadmissible by the fact that the account of Absalom's flight cannot possibly be left out, as reference is made to it again afterwards (vers. 37, 38, "Absalom had fled"). The other alterations proposed by Thenius in the text of vers. 34, 37, 38, are just as arbitrary and out of place, and simply show that this critic was ignorant of the plan adopted by the historian. His plan is the following: To the account of the murder of Amnon, and the consequent flight of the rest of the king's sons whom Absalom had invited to the feast (ver. 29), there is first of all appended a notice of the report which preceded the fugitives and reached the king's ears in an exaggerated form, together with the impression which it made upon the king, and the rectification of that report by Jonadab (vers. 30-33). Then follows the statement that Absalom fled, also the account of the arrival of the king's sons (vers. 34-36). After this we have a statement as to the direction in which Absalom fled, the king's continued mourning, and the length of time that Absalom's banishment lasted (vers. 37, 38), and finally a remark as to David's feelings towards Absalom (ver. 39).

Jonadab's assertion, that Amnon only had been slain, was very speedily confirmed (ver. 34). The young man, the spy, *i.e.* the young man who was looking out for the return of those who had been invited to the feast, "lifted up his eyes and saw," *i.e.* saw as he looked out into the distance, "much people (a crowd of men) coming from the way behind him along the side of the mountain." אַחֲרָיו מֵאַחֲרָיו, ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ὀπίσθεν αὐτοῦ (LXX.), *per iter devium* (Vulg.), is obscure; and אַחֲרָיו, "behind," is probably to be understood as meaning "to the west:" from

the way at the back of the spy, *i.e.* to the west of his station. The following words, סִיחַר הַרְרִי, also remain obscure, as the position of the spy is not given, so that the allusion may be to a mountain in the north-west of Jerusalem quite as well as to one on the west.¹ When the spy observed the crowd of men approaching, Jonadab said to the king (ver. 35), "Behold, the king's sons are coming: as thy servant said, so has it come to pass."—Ver. 36. Jonadab had hardly said this when the king's sons arrived and wept aloud, *sc.* as they related what had occurred; whereupon the king and all his retainers broke out in loud weeping.—Ver. 37. "Only Absalom had fled and gone to Talmi the son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur." These words form a circumstantial clause, which the writer has inserted as a parenthesis, to define the expression "the king's sons" more particularly. If we take these words as a parenthesis, there will be no difficulty in explaining the following word "mourned," as the subject (David) may very easily be supplied from the preceding words "the king," etc. (ver. 36). To the remark that David mourned all his life for his son (Amnon), there is attached, just as simply and quite in accordance with the facts, the more precise information concerning Absalom's flight, that he remained in Geshur three years. The repetition of the words "Absalom had fled and gone to Geshur" may be accounted for from the general diffuseness of the Hebrew style. *Talmi* the king of *Geshur* was the father of *Maacah*, Absalom's mother (ch. iii. 3). The LXX. thought it necessary expressly to indicate this by inserting *εἰς γῆν Χαμαχάαδ* (*al. γῆν Μαχάδ*).—Ver. 39. "And it (this) held king David back from going out

¹ The LXX. have very comprehensive additions here: first of all, after *ἐκ πλευρᾶς τοῦ ὄρους*, they have the more precise definition *ἐν τῇ καταβάσει*, and then the further clause, "and the spy came and announced to the king," *Ἀνδρᾶς ἐώρακα ἐκ τῆς ὁδοῦ τῆς ὠρονῆν* (?) *ἐκ μέρους τοῦ ὄρους*, partly to indicate more particularly the way by which the king's sons came, and partly to fill up a supposed gap in the account. But they did not consider that the statement in ver. 35, "and Jonadab said to the king, Behold, the king's sons are coming," does not square with these additions; for if the spy had already informed the king that his sons were coming, there was no necessity for Jonadab to do it again. This alone is sufficient to show that the additions made by the LXX. are nothing but worthless glosses, introduced according to subjective conjectures and giving no foundation for alterations of the text.

to Absalom, for he comforted himself concerning Amnon, because he was dead." In adopting this translation of the difficult clause with which the verse commences, we take וַתִּבֶּל in the sense of בָּלָה, as the verbs בָּלָה and נָלָה frequently exchange their forms; we also take the third pers. fem. as the neuter impersonal, so that the subject is left indefinite, and is to be gathered from the context. Absalom's flight to Geshur, and his stay there, were what chiefly prevented David from going out to Absalom. Moreover, David's grief on account of Amnon's death gradually diminished as time rolled on. צָאָה אֶל-אֲבִישׁ is used in a hostile sense, as in Deut. xxviii. 7, to go out and punish him for his wickedness. The וַיִּ before הָיָה might also be rendered "but," as after a negative clause, as the principal sentence implies a negation: "*He did not go out against Absalom, but comforted himself.*" There is not only no grammatical difficulty in the way of this explanation of the verse, but it also suits the context, both before and after. All the other explanations proposed are either at variance with the rules of the language, or contain an unsuitable thought. The old Jewish interpretation (adopted in the Chaldee version, and also by the Rabbins), viz. David longed (his soul pined) to go out to Absalom (i.e. to see or visit him), is opposed, as Gusset has shown (in his *Lex.* pp. 731-2), to the conduct of David towards Absalom as described in ch. xiv.,—namely, that after Joab had succeeded by craft in bringing him back to Jerusalem, David would not allow him to come into his presence for two whole years (ch. xiv. 24, 28). Luther's rendering, "and king David left off going out against Absalom," is not only precluded by the feminine וַתִּבֶּל, but also by the fact that nothing has been said about any pursuit of Absalom on the part of David. Other attempts at emendations there is no need whatever to refute.

ABSALOM'S RETURN, AND RECONCILIATION TO THE KING.—
CHAP. XIV.

As David did not repeal the banishment of Absalom, even after he had comforted himself for Amnon's death, Joab endeavoured to bring him back to Jerusalem by stratagem (vers. 1-20); and when this succeeded, he proceeded to effect his reconciliation to the king (vers. 21-33). He may have

been induced to take these steps partly by his personal attachment to Absalom, but the principal reason no doubt was that Absalom had the best prospect of succeeding to the throne, and Joab thought this the best way to secure himself from punishment for the murder which he had committed. But the issue of events frustrated all such hopes. Absalom did not succeed to the throne, Joab did not escape punishment, and David was severely chastised for his weakness and injustice.

Vers. 1–20. When Joab perceived that the king's heart was against Absalom, he sent for a cunning woman from Tekoah, to work upon the king and change his mind, so that he might grant forgiveness to Absalom. Ver. 1 is understood by the majority of commentators, in accordance with the Syriac and Vulgate, as signifying that Joab learned that the king's heart was inclined towards Absalom, was well disposed towards him again. But this explanation is neither philologically sustained, nor in accordance with the context. כִּי, written with עַל and without any verb, so that הָיָה has to be supplied, only occurs again in Dan. xi. 28, where the preposition has the meaning "against." It is no argument against this meaning here, that if David had been ill disposed towards Absalom, there would have been no necessity to state that Joab perceived it; for we cannot see why Joab should only have perceived or noticed David's friendly feelings, and not his unfriendly feelings as well. If, however, Joab had noticed the re-awakening of David's good feelings towards Absalom, there would have been no necessity for him to bring the cunning woman from Tekoah to induce him to consent to Absalom's return. Moreover, David would not in that case have refused to allow Absalom to see his face for two whole years after his return to Jerusalem (ver. 24). *Tekoah*, the home of the prophet Amos, the present *Tekua*, two hours to the south of Bethlehem (see at Josh. xv. 59, LXX.). The "wise woman" was to put on mourning, as a woman who had been mourning for a long while for some one that was dead (הִתְאַבֵּל, to set or show herself mourning), and to go to the king in this attire, and say what Joab had put into her mouth.—Ver. 4. The woman did this. All the old translators have given as the rendering of וַתֵּאָמֶר הָאִשָּׁה "the woman came (went) to the king," as if they had read וַתָּבֹא. This reading is actually found in some thirty *Codd.* of De Rossi,

and is therefore regarded by Thenius and the majority of critics as the original one. But Böttcher has very justly urged, in opposition to this, that **וַתֹּאמֶר** cannot possibly be an accidental corruption of **וַתִּבֶּן**, and that it is still less likely that such an alteration should have been intentionally made. But this remark, which is correct enough in itself, cannot sustain the conjecture which Böttcher has founded upon it, namely that two whole lines have dropt out of the Hebrew text, containing the answer which the woman of Tekoah gave to Joab before she went to the king, since there is not one of the ancient versions which contains a single word more than the Masoretic text. Consequently we must regard **וַתֹּאמֶר** as the original reading, and interpret it as a *hysteron-proteron*, which arose from the fact that the historian was about to relate at once what the woman said to the king, but thought it desirable to mention her falling down at the feet of the king before giving her actual words, "*Help, O king,*" which he introduces by repeating the word **וַתֹּאמֶר**.—Vers. 5 sqq. When the king asked her, "What aileth thee?" the woman described the pretended calamity which had befallen her, saying that she was a widow, and her two sons had quarrelled in the field; and as no one interposed, one of them had killed the other. The whole family had then risen up and demanded that the survivor should be given up, that they might carry out the avenging of blood upon him. Thus they sought to destroy the heir also, and extinguish the only spark that remained to her, so as to leave her husband neither name nor posterity upon the earth. The suffix attached to **וַיִּבֶן**, with the object following ("he smote him, the other," ver. 6), may be explained from the diffuseness of the style of ordinary conversation (see at 1 Sam. xxi. 14). There is no reason whatever for changing the reading into **וַיִּבֶן**, as the suffix **ו**, though unusual with verbs **לָחַם**, is not without parallel; not to mention the fact that the plural **וַיִּבֶן** is quite unsuitable. There is also quite as little reason for changing **וַיִּשְׁמְדוּהָ** into **וַיִּשְׁמְדוּהָ**, in accordance with the Syriac and Arabic, as Michaelis and Thenius propose, on the ground that "the woman would have described her relatives as diabolically malicious men, if she had put into their mouths such words as these, 'We will destroy the heir also.'" It was the woman's intention to describe the conduct of the relations and their pursuit of blood-revenge

in the harshest terms possible, in order that she might obtain help from the king. She begins to speak in her own name at the word וְכָבַד ("and so they shall quench and"), where she resorts to a figure, for the purpose of appealing to the heart of the king to defend her from the threatened destruction of her family, saying, "And so they shall quench the burning coal which is left." חֲמָלָה is used figuratively, like τὸ ζῶντρον, the burning coal with which one kindles a fresh fire, to denote the last remnant. לְבִלְלֵי שֵׁם: "so as not to set," i.e. to preserve or leave name and remnant (i.e. posterity) to my husband.

This account differed, no doubt, from the case of Absalom, inasmuch as in his case no murder had taken place in the heat of a quarrel, and no avenger of blood demanded his death; so that the only resemblance was in the fact that there existed an intention to punish a murderer. But it was necessary to disguise the affair in this manner, in order that David might not detect her purpose, but might pronounce a decision out of pity for the poor widow which could be applied to his own conduct towards Absalom.—Ver. 8. The plan succeeded. The king replied to the woman, "*Go home, I will give charge concerning thee,*" i.e. I will give the necessary commands that thy son may not be slain by the avenger of blood. This declaration on the part of the king was perfectly just. If the brothers had quarrelled, and one had killed the other in the heat of the quarrel, it was right that he should be defended from the avenger of blood, because it could not be assumed that there was any previous intention to murder. This declaration therefore could not be applied as yet to David's conduct towards Absalom. But the woman consequently proceeded to say (ver. 9), "My lord, O king, let the guilt be upon me and upon my father's house, and let the king and his throne be guiltless." כִּסֵּא, the throne, for the government or reign. The meaning of the words is this: but if there should be anything wrong in the fact that this bloodshed is not punished, let the guilt fall upon me and my family. The king replied (ver. 10), "*Whosoever speaketh to thee, bring him to me; he shall not touch thee any more.*" וְעָלֶיךָ does not stand for עָלֶיךָ, "against thee;" but the meaning is, whoever speaks to thee any more about this, i.e. demands thy son of thee again.—Ver. 11. The crafty woman was not yet satisfied with this, and sought by repeating

her petition to induce the king to confirm his promise on oath, that she might bind him the more firmly. She therefore said still further: "*I pray thee, let the king remember Jehovah thy God, that the avenger of blood may no more prepare destruction, and that they may not destroy my son.*" The *Chethib*, הִרְבִּית, is probably a copyist's error for הִרְבוֹת, for which the Masoretes would write הִרְבַּת, the construct state of הִרְבָּה, — a form of the inf. abs. which is not commonly used, and which may possibly have been chosen because הִרְבָּה had become altogether an adverb (*vid.* Ewald, § 240, e). The context requires the inf. constr. הִרְבוֹת: that the avenger of blood may not multiply (make much) to destroy, *i.e.* may not add to the destruction; and הִרְבִּית is probably only a verbal noun used instead of the infinitive. The king immediately promised on oath that her son should not suffer the least harm.—Vers. 12, 13. When the woman had accomplished so much, she asked permission to speak one word more; and having obtained it, proceeded to the point she wanted to reach: "*And wherefore thinkest thou such things against people of God? And because the king speaketh this word, he is as one inculcating himself, since the king does not let his own rejected one return.*" כְּאֶחָד, "like one who has laden himself with guilt," is the predicate to the clause וְכִמְדַּבֵּר. These words of the woman were intentionally kept indefinite, rather hinting at what she wished to place before the king, than expressing it distinctly. This is more particularly applicable to the first clause, which needs the words that follow to render it intelligible, as חֲשַׁבְתָּה כְּזֹאת is ambiguous; so that Dathe and Thenius are wrong in rendering it, "Why dost thou propose such things towards the people of God?" and understanding it as relating to the protection which the king was willing to extend to her and to her son. חֲשַׁב with עַל does not mean to think or reflect "with regard to," but "against" a person. Ewald is quite correct in referring the word כְּזֹאת to what follows: such things, *i.e.* such thoughts as thou hast towards thy son, whose blood-guiltiness thou wilt not forgive. עַל־עַם אֱלֹהִים, without the article, is intentionally indefinite, "against people of God," *i.e.* against members of the congregation of God. "*This word*" refers to the decision which the king had pronounced in favour of the widow. לִבְלֹלִי הָשִׁיב, literally, in not letting him return.

In order to persuade the king to forgive, the crafty woman reminded him (ver. 14) of the brevity of human life and of the mercy of God: "*For we must die, and (are) as water spilt upon the ground, which is not (cannot be) gathered up, and God does not take a soul away, but thinks thoughts, that He may not thrust from Him one expelled.*" Although these thoughts are intentionally expressed quite generally, their special allusion to the case in hand can easily be detected. We must all die, and when dead our life is irrevocably gone. Thou mightest soon experience this in the case of Absalom, if thou shouldst suffer him to continue in exile. God does not act thus; He does not deprive the sinner of life, but is merciful, and does not cast off for ever.—Ver. 15. After these allusions to David's treatment of Absalom, the woman returned again to her own affairs, to make the king believe that nothing but her own distress had led her to speak thus: "*And now that I have come to speak this word to the king my lord, was (took place) because the people have put me in fear (sc. by their demand that I should give up my son to the avenger of blood); thy handmaid said (i.e. thought), I will indeed go to the king, perhaps the king will do his handmaid's word,*" i.e. grant her request.—Ver. 16. "*Yea, the king will hear, to save his handmaid out of the hand of the man that would destroy me and my son from the inheritance of God.*" אֲשֶׁר must be supplied before לְהַשְׁמִיד: who is to destroy, i.e. who is seeking to destroy (*vid.* Gesenius, § 132, 3). "The inheritance of God" was the nation of Israel (as in 1 Sam. xxvi. 19; cf. Deut. xxxii. 9).—Ver. 17. "*Then thine handmaid thought, may the word of my lord the king be for rest (i.e. tend to give me rest); for as the angel of God (the angel of the covenant, the mediator of the blessings of divine grace to the covenant-nation), so is my lord the king to hear good and evil (i.e. listening to every just complaint on the part of his subjects, and granting help to the oppressed), and Jehovah thy God be with thee!*"—Vers. 18 sqq. These words of the woman were so well considered and so crafty, that the king could not fail to see both what she really meant, and also that she had not come with her petition of her own accord. He therefore told her to answer the question without disguise: whether the hand of Joab was with her in all this. She replied, "*Truly there is not (אֵין) anything to the right hand or to the left of all that my lord*

the king saith," i.e. the king always hits the right point in everything that he says. "Yea, thy servant Joab, he hath commanded me, and he hath put all these words into thy servant's mouth." שׁ is not a copyist's error, but a softer form of שׁ, as in Micah vi. 10 (*vid.* Ewald, § 53c, and Olshausen, *Gramm.* p. 425).—Ver. 20. "*To turn the appearance of the king (i.e. to disguise the affair in the finest way) Joab hath done this; my lord (i.e. the king), however, is wise, like the wisdom of the angel of God, to know all that is (happens) upon earth.*" She hoped by these flattering words to gain the king completely over.

Vers. 21-33. David then promised Joab, that the request which he had presented through the medium of the woman of Tekoah should be fulfilled, and commanded him to fetch Absalom back. The *Chethib* עֲשִׂיתִי (ver. 21) is the correct reading, and the *Keri* עֲשִׂיתָ has arisen from a misunderstanding.—Ver. 22. Joab thanked the king for this, and blessed him: "*To-day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant.*" It is pretty evident from this, that Joab had frequently applied to David for Absalom's return, without any attention being paid to his application. David therefore suspected that Joab had instructed the woman of Tekoah. The *Chethib* עֲבִירָא is not to be exchanged for the *Keri* עֲבִירָא.—Ver. 23. Joab then went to *Geshur* (see ch. xiii. 37), and fetched Absalom back to Jerusalem.—Ver. 24. But David could not forgive Absalom altogether. He said to Joab, "*Let him turn to his own house, and my face he shall not see.*" This half forgiveness was an imprudent measure, and bore very bitter fruit. The further account of Absalom is introduced in vers. 25-27 with a description of his personal appearance and family affairs.—Ver. 25. There was no man in all Israel so handsome as Absalom. לְהַלֵּל מְאֹד, "to much praising," i.e. so that he was greatly praised. From the sole of the foot even to the crown of his head, there was no fault (מִטָּה, bodily blemish) in him.—Ver. 26. "*When he polled his head, and it took place from year to year that he polled it; for it became heavy upon him (too heavy for him), and so he polled it: they weighed the hair of his head, two hundred shekels by the king's weight.*" A strong growth of hair was a sign of great manly power, and so far a proof of

Absalom's beauty. The statement as to the weight of the hair cut off, viz. two hundred shekels, is in any case a round number, and much too high, although we do not know what the difference between the royal and the sacred shekel really was. According to the sacred reckoning, two hundred shekels would be about six pounds; so that if we were to assume that the royal shekel was about half the other, the number would be still much too high. It is evident, therefore, that there is an error in the text, such as we frequently meet with in the case of numbers, though we have no means of rectifying it, as all the ancient versions contain the same number.—Ver. 27. Unto Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter named Tamar, who was beautiful in figure. Contrary to general usage, the names of the sons are not given, in all probability for no other reason than because they died in infancy. Consequently, as Absalom had no sons, he afterwards erected a pillar to preserve his name (ch. xviii. 18). The daughter's name is probably given as a proof of Absalom's great affection for his sister Tamar, whom Amnon had violated.¹—Vers. 28–30. After Absalom had sat for two whole years in his house at Jerusalem without seeing the king's face, he sent to Joab that he might obtain for him the king's full forgiveness. But as Joab would not come to him, even after he had sent for him twice, Absalom commanded his servants to set fire to one of Joab's fields which adjoined his own and was then full of barley, for the purpose of compelling him to come, as he foresaw that Joab would not take this destruction of his property quietly, but would come to him to complain. וְיָשָׁרְתִּי בְּיָדִי, literally “at my hand,” i.e. by the side of my field or property. The *Chethib* חֲתִיבְתִּי (“come, I will set it on fire”) is a *Hiphil* formation, according to verbs חָתַב, for which the *Keri* has חֲתִיבְתִּי, the ordinary *Hiphil* form of חָתַב in the second person plural, “go and set it on fire.”—Vers. 31, 32. When Joab came to Absalom's house in conse-

¹ The LXX. have this additional clause, *καὶ γίνεται γυνὴ Ῥεβοάμ υἱὸς Σαλωμών καὶ τέκεται αὐτῷ τὸν Ἀβιά* (and she became the wife of Rehoboam the son of Solomon, and bore him a son named Abia). Although this is quite at variance with 1 Kings xv. 2, where it is stated that the wife of Rehoboam and mother of Abia (Abijam) was named *Maacah*, the clause has been adopted by Thenius, who regards it as original, though for reasons which Böttcher has shown to be worthless.

quence of this, and complained of it, Absalom said to him, "See, I have sent to thee, to say to thee, Come hither, and I will send thee to the king, to say to him, Wherefore have I come from Geshur? it were better for me that I were there still: and now I will see the king's face; and if there is any iniquity in me, let him put me to death." This half forgiving was really worse than no forgiveness at all. Absalom might indeed very properly desire to be punished according to the law, if the king could not or might not forgive him; although the manner in which he sought to obtain forgiveness by force manifested an evident spirit of defiance, by which, with the well-known mildness of David's temper, he hoped to attain his object, and in fact did attain it. For (ver. 33) when Joab went to the king, and announced this to him, the king sent for Absalom, and kissed him, as a sign of his restoration to favour. Nothing was said by Absalom about forgiveness; for his falling down before the king when he came into his presence, was nothing more than the ordinary manifestation of reverence with which a subject in the East approaches his king.

ABSALOM'S REBELLION AND DAVID'S FLIGHT.—

CHAP. XV.-XVI. 14.

After his restoration to favour, Absalom soon began to aspire to the throne, setting up a princely court, and endeavouring to turn the hearts of the people towards himself, by addressing in a friendly manner any who came to seek redress from the king in matters in dispute, and by saying things adapted to throw suspicion upon his father's rule (vers. 1-6). When he had succeeded in this, he asked permission from the king to take a journey to Hebron, under the pretence of wanting to fulfil a vow which he had made during his banishment; and when once there, he soon proceeded with his rebellious intentions (vers. 7-12). As soon as David heard of it, he determined to fly from Jerusalem, and crossed the Kidron with his faithful adherents. Having sent the priests with the ark of the covenant back to the city, he went up to the Mount of Olives, amidst the loud lamentations of the people. Hushai, who came to meet him, he sent to the city, to frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel, who was one of the conspirators, and to send

information to him of what was going forward (vers. 13-37). When he reached the top, Ziba, Mephibosheth's servant, came to meet him with provisions and succour (ch. xvi. 1-4); whilst Shimei, a relation of the house of Saul, followed him with curses and stones (vers. 5-14).

With this rebellion the calamities which Nathan had predicted to David on account of his sin with Bathsheba began to burst upon him in all their fulness. The success of the rebellion itself may be accounted for, from the fact that the consciousness of his own fault not only made David weak towards his sons, but produced a want of firmness in his resolutions; whilst the imperfections and defects in the internal administration of the kingdom, when the time of the brilliant victories was past, became more and more perceptible to the people, and furnished occasion for dissatisfaction with his government, which Absalom was skilful enough to bend to his own purposes. During the time that this rebellion was in progress, David poured out his lamentations to the Lord (in Ps. xli. and lv.) as to the faithlessness of his most confidential councillors, and prayed for the judgment of retribution upon the conduct of this wicked band. After it had broken out, he uttered his longings to return to the sanctuary at Jerusalem, and his firm confidence that he should be delivered out of his distresses and reinstated in his kingdom, first of all in Ps. iii. and lxiii. during his flight in the desert of Judah, and in Ps. lxi. and lxii. during his stay in the land to the east of the Jordan.

Vers. 1-6. *Absalom seeks to secure the people's favour.*—

Ver. 1. Soon afterwards (this seems to be the meaning of מֵאַחֲרַיִךְ as distinguished from מֵאַחֲרַיִךְ; cf. ch. iii. 28) Absalom set up a carriage (*i.e.* a state-carriage; cf. 1 Sam. viii. 11) and horses, and fifty men as runners before him, *i.e.* to run before him when he drove out, and attract the attention of the people by a display of princely pomp, as Adonijah afterwards did (1 Kings i. 5). He then went early in the morning to the side of the road to the gate of the palace, and called out to every one who was about to go to the king “for judgment,” *i.e.* seek justice in connection with any matter in dispute, and asked him, “Of what city art thou?” and also, as we may see from the reply in ver. 3, inquired into his feelings towards the king, and then said, “Thy matters are good and right, but there is

no hearer for thee with the king." שָׁמַע signifies the judicial officer, who heard complainants and examined into their different causes, for the purpose of laying them before the king for settlement. Of course the king himself could not give a hearing to every complainant, and make a personal investigation of his cause; nor could his judges procure justice for every complainant, however justly they might act, though it is possible that they may not always have performed their duty conscientiously.—Ver. 4. Absalom also said, "*Oh that I might be judge in the land, and every one who had a cause might come before me; I would procure him justice!*" מִי יִשְׁמַעְנִי is a wish: "who might (*i.e.* oh that one might) appoint me judge," an analogous expression to מִי יִתֵּן (*vid.* Gesenius, § 136, 1, and Ewald, § 329, c). עָלַי placed before בִּי for the sake of emphasis, may be explained from the fact that a judge sat, so that the person who stood before him rose above him (*comp.* Ex. xviii. 13 with Gen. xviii. 8). הִצְדִּיק, to speak justly, or help to justice.—Ver. 5. And when any one came near to him to prostrate himself before him, he took him by the hand and kissed him. It was by conduct of this kind that Agamemnon is said to have secured the command of the Grecian army (*Euripid. Iphig. Aul.* v. 337 sqq.).—Ver. 6. Thus Absalom stole the heart of the men of Israel. לָב לֵב does not mean to deceive or cheat, like לָב לֵב in the *Kal* in Gen. xxxi. 20, but to steal the heart, *i.e.* to bring a person over to his side secretly and by stratagem.

Vers. 7-12. *Absalom's rebellion*.—Vers. 7, 8. After the lapse of forty (?) years Absalom said to the king, "*Pray I will go (i.e. pray allow me to go) and perform a vow in Hebron which I vowed to the Lord during my stay at Geshur*" (ver. 8). The number forty is altogether unsuitable, as it cannot possibly be understood either as relating to the age of Absalom or to the year of David's reign: for Absalom was born at Hebron after David had begun to reign, and David only reigned forty years and a half in all, and Absalom's rebellion certainly did not take place in the last few weeks of his reign. It is quite as inappropriate to assume, as the *terminus a quo* of the forty years, either the commencement of Saul's reign, as several of the Rabbins have done, as well as the author of the marginal note in *Cod.* 380 of De Rossi (למלכות שאול), or the anointing of David

at Bethlehem, as Luther (in the marginal note) and Lightfoot do; for the word "after" evidently refers to some event in the life of Absalom, to which allusion has previously been made, namely, either to the time of his reconciliation with David (ch. xiv. 33), or (what is not so probable) to the period of his return from Geshur to Jerusalem (ch. xiv. 23). Consequently the reading adopted by the Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate, also by Theodoret and others, viz. "four years," must certainly be the correct one, and not "forty days," which we find in Codd. 70 and 96 in Kennicott, since forty days would be far too short a time for maturing the rebellion. It is true, that with the reading אַרְבַּע we should expect, as a rule, the plural שָׁנִים. At the same time, the numbers from two to ten are sometimes construed with a singular noun (*e.g.* 2 Kings xxii. 1; cf. Gesenius, § 120, 2). The pretended vow was, that if Jehovah would bring him back to Jerusalem, he would serve Jehovah. עָבַד אֶת־יְהוָה, "to do a service to Jehovah," can only mean to offer a sacrifice, which is the explanation given by Josephus. The *Chethib* חֵשֶׁב is not the infinitive, but the imperfect *Hiphil*: *ei reduxerit, reduxerit me*, which is employed in an unusual manner instead of the *inf. absol.*, for the sake of emphasis. The *Keri* חֵשֶׁב would have to be taken as an adverb "again;" but this is quite unnecessary.—Ver. 9. The king consented, and Absalom went to Hebron. Absalom had selected this city, probably assigning as the reason that he was born there, but really because his father David had been made king there, and also possibly because there may have been many persons there who had been displeased by the removal of the court to Jerusalem.—Ver. 10. When Absalom went to Hebron, he sent spies into all the tribes of Israel to say, "*When ye hear the sound of the trumpet, say, Absalom has become king in Hebron.*" We must suppose the sending of the spies to have been contemporaneous with the removal of Absalom to Hebron, so that שָׁמַע is used quite regularly, and there is no reason for translating it as a pluperfect. The messengers sent out are called "spies," because they were first of all to ascertain the feelings of the people in the different tribes, and were only to execute their commission in places where they could reckon upon support. The conspiracy had hitherto been kept very secret, as we may see from the statement in ver. 11: "*With Absalom there had gone two*

hundred men out of Jerusalem, invited (to the sacrificial festival), and going in their simplicity, who knew nothing at all of the affair." (לֹא כָל־דָּבָר) : nothing at all.)—Ver. 12. Moreover, Absalom sent for Ahithophel, David's councillor, to come from his own town Giloh, when he offered the sacrifices. The unusual construction of אֶת אִי־תָפֶל with מְעִירוֹ may be explained from the pregnant character of the expression : he sent and bade come, *i.e.* he summoned Ahithophel out of his city. *Giloh*, Ahithophel's home, was upon the mountains of Judah, to the south or south-west of Hebron (see at Josh. xv. 51). Ahithophel had no doubt been previously initiated into Absalom's plans, and had probably gone to his native city, merely that he might come to him with the greater ease ; since his general place of abode, as king's councillor, must have been in Jerusalem. "*And the conspiracy became strong ; for the people multiplied continually with Absalom*" (the latter is a circumstantial clause). These words give a condensed summary of the result of the enterprise.

Vers. 13-21. *David's flight from Jerusalem.*—Vers. 13, 14. When this intelligence reached David, "*The heart of the men of Israel is after Absalom*" (הָיָה אַחֲרָי, as in ch. ii. 10, to be attached to a person as king ; see at 1 Sam. xii. 14), he said to his servants that were with him in Jerusalem, "*Arise, let us flee, for there will be no escape for us from Absalom ! Make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and drive the calamity* (the judgment threatened in ch. xii. 10, 11) *over us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.*" David was perhaps afraid that Jerusalem might fall into Absalom's power through treachery, and therefore resolved to fly as speedily as possible, not only in order to prevent a terrible massacre, but also to give his own faithful adherents time to assemble.—Vers. 15, 16. As his servants declared themselves ready to follow him, the king went out of the city with all his family in his train (*lit.* at his feet, as in Judg. iv. 10, 15, etc.), but left ten concubines behind to keep the palace.—Ver. 17. When outside the city the king and all the people in his suite (*i.e.* the royal family and their servants) halted at "the house of the distance." הַמֵּרוֹחֵק is probably a proper name given to a house in the neighbourhood of the city and on the road to Jericho, which was called "the farthest house," viz. from the city.—

Ver. 18. And all his servants, *i.e.* his state officers and attendants, went along by his side, and the whole body-guard (the *Crethi* and *Plethi*: see at ch. viii. 18); and all the Gathites, namely the six hundred men who had come in his train from Gath, went along in front of the king. David directed the fugitives to fall into rank, the servants going by his side, and the body-guard and the six hundred old companions in arms, who probably also formed a kind of body-guard, marching in front. The verb עָבַר (passed on) cannot be understood as signifying to defile past on account of its connection with עָלָיו (beside him, or by his side). The expression *Gittim* is strange, as we cannot possibly think of actual Gathites or Philistines from Gath. The apposition (the six hundred men, etc.) shows clearly enough that the six hundred old companions in arms are intended, the men who gathered round David on his flight from Saul and emigrated with him to Gath (1 Sam. xxvii. 2, 3), who afterwards lived with him in Ziklag (1 Sam. xxvii. 8, xxix. 2, xxx. 1, 9), and eventually followed him to Hebron and Jerusalem (ch. ii. 3, v. 6). In all probability they formed a separate company of well-tried veterans or a kind of body-guard in Jerusalem, and were commonly known as *Gathites*.¹—Ver. 19. A military commander named *Ittai*, who had emigrated from Gath and come over to David not long before, also accompanied the king from the city. It is evident from ch. xviii. 2, where *Ittai* is said to have commanded a third part of the army sent against Absalom, and to have been placed on an equality with Joab and Abishai the most experienced generals, that *Ittai* was a Philistian general who had entered David's service. The reason for his going over to David is not known. According to ver. 22 of this chapter, *Ittai* did not come alone, but brought all his family with him (*taph*: the little ones). The opinion expressed by

¹ The Septuagint also has πάντες of Γεθαῖοι, and has generally rendered the Masoretic text correctly. But כָּל־עַבְדָּיו has been translated incorrectly, or at all events in a manner likely to mislead, viz. πάντες of παῖδες αὐτοῦ. But in the Septuagint text, as it has come down to us, another paraphrase has been interpolated into the literal translation, which Thenius would adopt as an emendation of the Hebrew text, notwithstanding the fact that the critical corruptness of the Alexandrian text must be obvious to every one.

Thenius, that he had come to Jerusalem as a hostage, is merely founded upon a false interpretation of the last two clauses of the verse before us. David said to Ittai, "*Wherefore goest thou also with us? return and stay with the king; for thou art a stranger, and also emigrating to thy place.*" There is no irony in the words "stay with the king," as Thenius and Clericus suppose (viz. "with the man who behaves as if he were king"); nor is there an acknowledgment of Absalom as king, which certainly could never have emanated from David. The words contain nothing more than the simple thought: Do you remain with whoever is or shall be king, since there is no necessity for you as a stranger to take sides at all. This is the explanation given by Seb. Schmidt: "It is not your place to decide this contest as to who ought to be king; but you may remain quiet and see whom God shall appoint as king, and whether it be I or Absalom, you can serve the one that God shall choose." This is the only way in which we can explain the reason assigned for the admonition, viz. "Thou art a stranger," and not an Israelite. There is some difficulty connected with the following words (rendered in the Eng. version "and also an exile"). In the Septuagint and Vulgate they are rendered *καὶ ὅτι μεσώκησας σὺ ἐκ τοῦ τόπου σου*, *et egressus es de loco tuo* (and thou hast gone out from thine own place); but in adopting this rendering the translators have not only passed over the *אֲלֹ* (also), but have taken *לְמָקוֹמְךָ* for *מִמְּקוֹמְךָ*. Nevertheless Thenius proposes to bring the text into harmony with these versions for the purpose of bringing out the meaning, "and moreover thou art one carried away from his own home." But this is decidedly a mistake; for David would never have made a Philistine—who had just before been carried away from his own home, or, as Thenius understands it, who had been brought to Jerusalem as a hostage—the commander of a third of his army. The meaning is rather the following: "And thou hast still no fatherland," i.e. thou art still wandering about through the earth like an exile from his country: wherever thou findest a place, and art allowed to settle, there only canst thou dwell.—Ver. 20. "*Thy coming is yesterday (from yesterday), and should I disturb thee to-day to go with us, when I am going just where I go?*" i.e. wherever my way may lie (I go I know not whither; Chald.: cf. 1 Sam. xxiii. 13). The

Chethib אָנִיעָה is a copyist's error. The thought requires the *Hiphil* אָנִיעָה (*Keri*), as נָע in the *Kal* has the intransitive meaning, to totter, sway about, or move hither and thither. "Return and take thy brethren back; grace and truth be with thee." It is evidently more in accordance with the train of thought to separate עָפָה from the previous clause and connect it with וְאִמְתָּה וְחֶסֶד, though this is opposed to the accents, than to adopt the adverbial interpretation, "take back thy brethren with thee in grace and truth," as Maurer proposes. (For the thought itself, see Prov. iii. 3.) The reference is to the grace and truth (faithfulness) of God, which David desired that Ittai should receive upon his way. In the Septuagint and Vulgate the passage is paraphrased thus: "Jehovah show thee grace and truth," after ch. ii. 6; but it by no means follows from this that יהוה יַעֲשֶׂה עִפָּה has fallen out of the Hebrew text.—Ver. 21. But Ittai replied with a solemn oath, "Assuredly at the place where my lord the king shall be (stay), whether for death or life, there will thy servant be." אִם כִּי means "only," as in Gen. xl. 14, Job xlii. 8; here, in a declaration on oath, it is equivalent to *assuredly* (*vid.* Ewald, § 356, b). The *Chethib* is therefore correct, and the erasure of אִם in the *Keri* is a bad emendation. The כִּי in the apodosis is either an emphatic declaration, *yea*, or like *ὅτι* merely introduces a distinct assertion.—Ver. 22. After this assurance of his devotedness, David let Ittai do as he pleased. לֵךְ וְעָבַר, "go and pass on." עָבַר does not mean to pass by, but to go forward. Thus Ittai and his men and all his family that was with him went forward with the king. By "the little ones" (*taph*) we are to understand a man's whole family, as in many other instances (see at Ex. xii. 37).

Vers. 22–29. *The king crosses the Kidron, and sends the priests back with the ark to Jerusalem.*—Ver. 23. All the land (as in 1 Sam. xiv. 25) wept aloud when all the people went forward; and the king went over the brook Kidron, and all the people went over in the direction of (*lit.* in the face of) the way to the desert. The brook *Kidron* is a winter torrent, *i.e.* a mountain torrent which only flows during the heavy rains of winter (*χελμαῖος τοῦ Κεδρών*, John xviii. 1). It is on the eastern side of Jerusalem, between the city and the Mount of Olives, and derives its name from the appearance of the water

when rendered muddy through the melting of the snow (cf. Job vi. 16). In summer it is nothing more than a dry channel in the valley of Jehoshaphat (see Robinson, *Pal.* i. 396, and v. Raumer, *Pal.* p. 309, note 81). "*The wilderness*" (*midbar*) is the northern part of the desert of Judah, through which the road to Jericho and the Jordan lay.—Ver. 24. Zadok the priest and all the Levites (who were in Jerusalem) left the city with the fugitive king, bearing the ark of the covenant: "*And they set down the ark of God, and Abiathar came up, till all the people had come completely over from the city.*" עָלָה, ἀνέβη, *ascendit* (LXX., Vulg.), may probably be accounted for from the fact that Abiathar did not come to join the fugitives till the procession halted at the Mount of Olives; so that עָלָה, like ἀναβαίνω, merely refers to his actually going up, and עָלָה affirms that Abiathar joined them until all the people from the city had arrived. The rendering proposed by Michaelis and Böttcher ("he offered sacrifices") is precluded by the fact that עָלָה never means to sacrifice when written without עֹלָה, or unless the context points distinctly to sacrifices, as in ch. xxiv. 22, 1 Sam. ii. 28. The ark of the covenant was put down, because those who went out with the king made a halt, to give the people who were still coming time to join the procession.—Vers. 25 sqq. Then the king said to Zadok, "*Take back the ark of God into the city! If I find favour in the eyes of Jehovah, He will bring me back and let me see Him (i.e. himself: the reference is to God) and His dwelling (i.e. the ark of the covenant as the throne of the divine glory in the tent that had been set up for it). But if He thus say, I have not delight in thee; behold, here am I, let Him do to me as seemeth good to Him.*" Thus David put his fate in believing confidence into the hand of the Lord, because he felt that it was the Lord who was chastising him for his sins through this rebellion.—Ver. 27. He also said still further to Zadok, "*Thou seer! return into the city in peace.*" הָרוּאָה אֲמָה, with הָ interrog., does not yield any appropriate sense, as הָ cannot stand for הָלוֹא here, simply because it does not relate to a thing which the person addressed could not deny. Consequently the word must be pointed thus, הָרוּאָה (with the article), and rendered as a vocative, as it has been by Jerome and Luther. רוֹאֶה, seer, is equivalent to prophet. He applies this epithet to Zadok, as the high priest

who received divine revelations by means of the Urim. The meaning is, Thou Zadok art equal to a prophet; therefore thy proper place is in Jerusalem (O. v. Gerlach). Zadok was to stand as it were upon the watch there with Abiathar, and the sons of both to observe the events that occurred, and send him word through their sons into the plain of the Jordan. "*Behold, I will tarry by the ferries of the desert, till a word comes from you to show me,*" sc. what has taken place, or how the things shape themselves in Jerusalem. Instead of בְּעֶרְבוֹת, the earlier translators as well as the Masoretes adopted the reading בְּעֶרְבוֹת, "in the steppes of the desert." The allusion in this case would be to the steppes of Jericho (2 Kings xxv. 5). But Böttcher has very properly defended the *Chethib* on the strength of ch. xvii. 16, where the *Keri* has עֵרְבוֹת again, though עֶרְבוֹת is the true reading (cf. ch. xix. 19). The "ferries of the desert" are the places where the Jordan could be crossed, the fords of the Jordan (Josh. ii. 7; Judg. iii. 28).—Ver. 29. Zadok and Abiathar then returned to the city with the ark of God.

Vers. 30–37. *Ahithophel and Hushai*.—Vers. 30, 31. When David was going by the height of the olive-trees, i.e. the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, with his head covered, and barefooted, as a sign of grief and mourning (see Esther vi. 12; Ezek. xxiv. 17), and with the people who accompanied him also mourning, he received intelligence that Ahithophel (see at ver. 12) was with Absalom, and among the conspirators. הָיָה דָּוִד הָיָה gives no sense; for David cannot be the subject, because the next clause, "and David said," etc., contains most distinctly an expression of David's on receiving some information. Thenius would therefore alter הָיָה into the *Hophal* הֵיָּח, whilst Ewald (§ 131, a) would change it into הִיָּח, an unusual form of the *Hophal*, "David was informed," according to the construction of the *Hiphil* with the accusative. But although this construction of the *Hiphil* is placed beyond all doubt by Job xxxi. 37, xxvi. 4, and Ezek. xliii. 10, the *Hiphil* is construed as a rule, as the *Hophal* always is, with לְ of the person who receives information. Consequently הָיָה must be altered into לְהֵיָּח, and הָיָה taken as impersonal, "they announced to David." Upon receipt of this intelligence David prayed to the Lord, that He would "turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness," make it appear as folly, i.e. frustrate it,—a prayer

which God answered (*vid.* ch. xvii. 1 sqq.).—Vers. 32, 33. On David's arrival at the height where people were accustomed to worship, *i.e.* upon the top of the Mount of Olives, the Archite *Hushai* came to meet him with his clothes rent and earth upon his head, that is to say, in the deepest mourning (see 1 Sam. iv. 12). It is evident from the words אִשְׁרַיִתְהוּנָהּ וְנָהּ that there was a place of worship upon the top of the Mount of Olives, probably a *bamah*, such as continued to exist in different places throughout the land, even after the building of the temple. According to ver. 37, ch. xvi. 16, and 1 Chron. xxvii. 33, *Hushai* was רֵעֵה, a friend of David, *i.e.* one of his privy councillors. הָאֲרִיטִי (the Archite), if we may judge from Josh. xvi. 2, was the name of a family whose possessions were upon the southern boundary of the tribe of Ephraim, between Bethel and Ataroth. *Hushai* was probably a very old man, as David said to him (vers. 33, 34), "If thou goest with me, thou wilt be a burden to me. But if thou returnest to the city and offerest Absalom thy services, thou canst bring for me the counsel of Ahithophel to nought. If thou sayest to Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; servant of thy father (*i.e.* as regards this) I was that of old, but now I am thy servant." The ו before אִשְׁרַיִתְהוּנָהּ introduces the apodosis both times (*vid.* Ewald, § 348, a).—Vers. 35, 36. David then commissioned him to communicate to the priests Zadok and Abiathar all that he should hear of the king's house, and send word to him through their sons.—Ver. 37. So *Hushai* went into the city when Absalom came to Jerusalem. The ו before the second clause, followed by the imperfect יָבֹא, indicates contemporaneous occurrence (*vid.* Ewald, § 346, b).

Ch. xvi. 1-4. *Ziba's faithless conduct towards Mephibosheth.*—Ver. 1. When David had gone a little over the height (of the Mount of Olives: הָרֵאשִׁית points back to ch. xv. 32), Mephibosheth's servant Ziba came to meet him, with a couple of asses saddled, and laden with two hundred loaves, a hundred raisin-cakes, a hundred date or fig-cakes, and a skin of wine. The word פֶּי פֶּי corresponds to the Greek *δύωρα*, as the LXX. have rendered it in Jer. xl. 10, 12, and is used to signify summer fruits, both here and in Amos viii. 1 (Symm.). The early translators rendered it lumps of figs in the present passage (παλάθαι; cf. Ges. *Thes.* p. 1209). The Septuagint only has

ἐκατὸν φούκιες. The latter is certainly the more correct, as the dried lumps of figs or fig-cakes were called רִבְלִים (1 Sam. xxv. 18); and even at the present day ripe dates, pressed together in lumps like cakes, are used in journeys through the desert, as a satisfying and refreshing food (*vid.* Winer, *bibl. Realwörterbuch*, i. 253).—Ver. 2. When the king asked him, “What are these for thee?” *i.e.* what art thou going to do with them? Ziba replied, “The asses are for the king’s family to ride upon (to ride upon in turn), the bread and summer fruits for the young men (the king’s servants) to eat, and the wine for those that are faint in the desert to drink” (see at ch. xv. 23). The *Chethib* וְהַלֵּחַם is evidently a copyist’s error for וְהַלֵּחִים.—Ver. 3. To the further question put by the king, “Where is thy lord (Mephibosheth)?” Ziba replied, “Behold, he sits (is staying) in Jerusalem; for he said, To-day will the house of Israel restore the kingship (government) of my father.” The “*kingship of my father*,” inasmuch as the throne would have passed to Jonathan if he had outlived Saul. It is obvious enough, apart altogether from ch. xix. 25 sqq., that Ziba was calumniating his master Mephibosheth, in the hope of getting possession of the lands that he was farming for him. A cripple like Mephibosheth, lame in both feet, who had never put in any claim to the throne before, could not possibly have got the idea now that the people of Israel, who had just chosen Absalom as king, would give the throne of Saul to such a cripple as he was. It is true that Ziba’s calumny was very improbable; nevertheless, in the general confusion of affairs, it was not altogether an inconceivable thing that the oppressed party of Saul might avail themselves of this opportunity to make an attempt to restore the power of that house, which many greatly preferred to that of David, under the name of Mephibosheth.—Ver. 4. And in the excited state in which David then was, he was weak enough to give credence to Ziba’s words, and to commit the injustice of promising the calumniator all that belonged to Mephibosheth,—a promise for which he most politely thanked him. הִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתִי, “*I bow myself*,” equivalent to, I lay myself at thy feet. “*May I find favour in the eyes of my lord the king!*” *i.e.* may the king grant me his favour (*vid.* 1 Sam. i. 18).

Vers. 5-14. *Shime’s cursing*.—Vers. 5, 6. When the king had come to *Bahurim*, on the other side of the Mount of Olives,

but not far off (see at ch. iii. 16), there came out of that place a man of the family of the house of Saul, *i.e.* a distant relation of Saul, cursing him; and he pelted David and all his servants with stones, although all the people and all the heroes (the household troops and body-guard: ch. xv. 17, 18) were (marching) on the right and left of the king. The words "all the people," etc., are a circumstantial clause.—Vers. 7, 8. Shimei cursed thus: "*Out, out (away, away), thou man of blood, and worthless man! Jehovah hath repaid thee (now) for all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast become king, and hath given the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son. Behold, now thou art in thy misfortune, for thou art a man of blood.*" אִישׁ דָּמִים, a man of drops of blood, *i.e.* one who has shed blood or committed murder. What Shimei meant by "*all the blood of the house of Saul,*" which David had shed, and because of which he was a man of blood, it is impossible to determine with certainty. He may possibly have attributed to David the murder of Ishbosheth and Abner, notwithstanding the fact that David was innocent of the death of both (see ch. iii. 27 sqq.; and 4, 6 sqq.). By "*in whose stead thou hast reigned,*" he meant whose throne thou hast forcibly usurped; and by הִנֵּה בִרְעָתְךָ, "it is for this that punishment hath overtaken thee now."—Vers. 9, 10. Abishai wanted to put an end to this cursing (on the expression "dead dog," see ch. ix. 8). "Let me go," said he to David, "and take away his head," *i.e.* chop off his head. But David replied, "What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah?" Joab probably joined with Abishai. The formula "what to me and you?" signifies that a person did not wish to have anything in common with the feelings and views of another (cf. 1 Kings xvii. 18, Josh. xxii. 24; and τὶ ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, John ii. 4. For the thing itself, comp. Luke ix. 52-56). "If he curses, and if Jehovah hath said to him, Curse David, who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" For בִּי יִקְלַל וְבִי (Chethib), the Masoretes give us the *Keri*, בָּהּ יִקְלַל בִּי ה', "so let him curse, for Jehovah," etc. This thought lies at the foundation of the rendering adopted by the LXX., who have inserted, by way of explanation, καὶ ἄφερε αὐτὸν καὶ: so let him go, and so may he curse. The Vulgate is just the same: *dimittite eum ut maledicat*. This interpolation is taken from ver. 11, and, like the *Keri*, is nothing more than

a conjecture, which was adopted simply because וְ was taken as a causal particle, and then offence was taken at וְיָ . But וְ signifies if, *quando*, in this passage, and the וְ before the following וְיָ introduces the apodosis.—Vers. 11, 12. David said still further to Abishai and all his servants: “Behold, my own son seeketh after my life; how much more then the Benjaminite! (who belongs to a hostile race.) Let him curse, for Jehovah hath bidden him. Perhaps Jehovah will look upon my guilt, and Jehovah will requite me good for the curse which befalls me this day.” בְּעֵינַי (*Chethib*) has been altered by the Masoretes into בְּעֵינַי , “upon mine eye,” probably in the sense of “upon my tears;” and קִלְלָתִי into קִלְלָתִי ,—from pure misapprehension. בְּעֵינַי does not mean “upon my misery,” for עַיִן never has this meaning, but upon the guilt which really belongs to me, in contrast with that with which Shimei charges me; and קִלְלָתִי is the curse that has come upon me. Although David had committed no murder upon the house of Saul, and therefore Shimei’s cursing was nothing but malicious blasphemy, he felt that it came upon him because of his sins, though not for the sin imputed to him. He therefore forbade their putting the blasphemer to death, and said Jehovah had commanded him to curse; regarding the cursing as the consequence of the wrath of God that was bringing him low (comp. the remarks on 1 Sam. xxvi. 19). But this consciousness of guilt also excited the assurance that the Lord would look upon his sin. When God looks upon the guilt of a humble sinner, He will also, as a just and merciful God, avert the evil, and change the suffering into a blessing. David founded upon this the hope, that the Lord would repay him with good for the curse with which Shimei was pursuing him now.—Ver. 13. “So David went with his men on the way, whilst Shimei went on the slope of the hill opposite to him, cursing continually, and pelted with stones over against him, and with earth.” לְפָנָיו means over against him in both instances. It is not expressly stated that Shimei threw stones and earth at David, but this is implied in the context.—Ver. 14. The king came with his train, pursued in this manner, to Ayephim, and refreshed himself there. The context requires that *Ayephim* should be taken as the name of a place. If it were an appellative, signifying weary, there would be no information as to the place to which

David came, and to which the word בְּיָמָיו (there) distinctly refers. Bahurim cannot be the place alluded to, for the simple reason that, according to ch. xvii. 18, the place where David rested was a considerable distance beyond Bahurim, towards the Jordan, as we may see from the fact that it is stated there that the priests' sons, who were sent to carry information to David of what was occurring in Jerusalem, hid themselves in a well at Bahurim from the officers who were following them, and consequently had to go still further in order to convey the news to David; so that it is out of the question to supply this name from ver. 5. It is true that we never meet with the name *Ayephim* again; but this applies to many other places whose existence is not called in question.¹

ABSALOM'S ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM. ADVICE OF AHITHOPHEL AND HUSHAI.—CHAP. XVI. 15-XVII. 23.

Vers. 15-23. When Absalom and "all the people, the men of Israel," i.e. the people who had joined him out of all the tribes of Israel (ch. xv. 10), came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him, Hushai the Archite also came and greeted him warmly as king, by exclaiming again and again, "Long live the king!"—Vers. 17. sqq. Absalom, apparently astonished at this, said to him, "Is this thy love to thy friend (David)? why wentest thou not with thy friend?" But Hushai replied, "No; but whom Jehovah hath chosen, and this people (i.e. the people who had entered Jerusalem with Absalom), and all the men of Israel (i.e. the whole nation), to him (כִּי for יֵשׁ , *Keri*) will I belong, and will remain with him. And again, whom should I serve? Is it not before his son? As I have served thy father, so will I be before thee" (i.e. serve thee). With great craftiness, Hushai declared at the very outset that Jehovah had chosen Absalom—at least he could not come to any other conclusion, judging from the results. And under such circum-

¹ The meaning of the word, wearied or weariness, does not warrant any conjectures, even though they should be more felicitous than that of Böttcher, who proposes to alter *Ayephim* into *Ephraim*, and assumes that there was a place of this name near Mahanaim, though without reflecting that the place where David rested was on this side of the Jordan, and somewhere near to Gilgal or Jericho (ch. xvii. 16 sqq. and 22).

stances he could not have any doubt as to whom it was his duty to serve. As he had formerly served the father, so now he would serve his son Absalom. In this way he succeeded in completely deceiving Absalom, so that he placed unbounded confidence in him.—Ver. 20. After taking possession of the capital of the kingdom, the next thing to do was to form the resolution to take and keep the throne. Absalom therefore turned to Ahithophel, and said, "Give ye counsel what we are to do." The plural *הִנִּי* (give ye) may be explained on the supposition that the other persons present were addressed as well as Ahithophel, as being capable of giving advice.—Ver. 21. Ahithophel gave the following counsel: "Go to thy father's concubines, whom he hath left behind to keep the house (*i.e.* lie with them: for *בֹּאֵי אֵלַי*, compare ch. iii. 7, etc.); so will all Israel hear that thou hast made thyself stinking with thy father, and the hands of all those who are with thee will strengthen themselves." This advice was sagacious enough. Lying with the king's concubines was an appropriation of the royal harem, and, as such, a complete usurpation of the throne (see at ch. iii. 7), which would render any reconciliation between Absalom and his father utterly impossible, and therefore would of necessity instigate the followers of Absalom to maintain his cause with all the greater firmness. This was what Ahithophel hoped to attain through his advice. For unless the breach was too great to be healed, with the affection of David towards his sons, which might in reality be called weakness, it was always a possible thing that he should forgive Absalom; and in that case Ahithophel would be the one to suffer. But under the superintendence of God this advice of Ahithophel was to effect the fulfilment, without any such intention on his part, of the threat held over David in ch. xii. 8.—Ver. 22. Absalom had a tent put up on the roof of the king's palace, that his going in to the concubines might be done publicly in the sight of all Israel. For (as the historian adds in ver. 23 by way of explanation) the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was like a divine oracle both with David and with Absalom. The words from *וַיִּשְׁמַע הָאֱלֹהִים* are placed at the commencement absolutely: "and (as for) the counsel of Ahithophel, . . . as if one inquired the word of God, so was every counsel of Ahithophel." The Masoretes have supplied *וַיִּשְׁמַע* as the *Keri* to *וַיִּשְׁמַע*. This is

correct so far as the sense is concerned, but it is quite unnecessary, as שָׁאֵל may be taken impersonally. שָׁאֵל בְּרִבְרֵי הָאֱלֹהִים is to be explained from the formula שָׁאֵל בְּאֱלֹהִים (see at Judg. i. 1).

Chap. xvii. 1-14. *Ahithophel's advice frustrated by Hushai.*
—Vers. 1-3. Ahithophel said still further to Absalom, "I will choose out twelve thousand men, and arise, and pursue after David this night; and fall upon him when he is exhausted and weak, and fill him with alarm: so shall all the people that are with him flee; and I will smite the king alone (when he is alone), and will bring back all the people to thee." הַלַּיְלָה, *the night*, is the night following the day of David's flight and Absalom's entrance into Jerusalem, as we may see very clearly from ver. 16. This advice was sagaciously conceived; for if David had been attacked that night by a powerful army, he might possibly have been defeated. אָשִׁיבָה, *to bring back*, may be explained on the supposition that Ahithophel regarded Absalom as king, and those who had fled with David as rebels, who were to be brought back under Absalom's sceptre. The following words, בְּשׁוּב הַכָּל וְנָו, "*as the return of the whole (the whole nation) is the man,*" i.e. the return of all is dependent upon David, for whom thou liest in wait, are somewhat difficult, though the meaning of Ahithophel is evident enough from what precedes: viz. if he is beaten, they will all come over to thee; "the whole nation will be at peace" (שָׁלוֹם is used adverbially).¹
—Vers. 4, 5. Although this advice pleased Absalom and all the elders of Israel (present), Absalom sent for Hushai the Archite to hear his opinion. גִּם־חִישַׁי serves to strengthen the suffix in חִישַׁי (cf. Ewald, § 311, a).—Vers. 6, 7. In answer to Absalom's inquiry, "Shall we do his word (i.e. follow Ahithophel's advice) or not?" Hushai said, "The advice is not good that Ahithophel hath given this time;" and then still further explained (ver. 8):

¹ Consequently no conjectures are needed as to the rendering of the words in the Septuagint, viz. καθώς (al. ὃν τρόπον) ἐπιστρέψει ἡ σύμφορη πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς· πλὴν ψυχὴν ἀνδρὸς ἑνὸς σὺ ζητεῖς, such as Ewald, Thenius, and Böttcher have attempted. For 't is very obvious that ἡ σύμφορη πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς owes its origin simply to a false reading of הַכָּל הָאִשׁ as הַכָּל הָאִשָּׁה, and that πλὴν ψυχὴν ἀνδρὸς ἑνὸς has been interpolated by way of explanation from nothing but conjecture. No other of the ancient versions contains the slightest trace of a different reading from that given in the text.

“Thou knowest thy father and his men, that they are heroes, and of a ferocious disposition (like Judg. xviii. 25), like a bear in the field robbed of her young; and thy father is a man of war, and will not pass the night with the people,” *sc.* so that it would be possible to come upon him unawares and slay him (לִי with אִתּוֹ, as in Job xix. 4). The idea that לִי is to be taken as a *Hiphil*, in the sense of “and does not let the people lodge for the night” (Böttcher), is quite untenable, since it does not tally with ver. 9, “Behold, he is hid now in one of the pits, or one of the places (מְקוֹתִים) are hiding-places that are strong by nature, מְקוֹלֵט are places rendered strong by art); and it comes to pass that he falls upon them at the first: so will men hear it, and say a defeat has taken place among the people that follow Absalom.” נָפַל with אֵל, as in Josh. xi. 7, to fall upon a person. The subject to נָפַל is David, but it is not mentioned as being evident enough from the context; so that there is no necessity for the emendation נָפַל, which Thenius proposes. The suffix מְקוֹלֵט relates to those making the attack, the hosts of Absalom. Thenius has given the meaning correctly: “The report that David has made an attack will be sufficient to give rise to the belief that our men have sustained a severe defeat.”—Ver. 10. “And even if he (the hearer, ver. 9) be a brave man, who has a lion’s heart (lion-like courage), he will be thrown into despair, for all Israel knows that thy father is a hero, and brave men (are those) who are with him.”—Ver. 11. “Yea (כִּי, *profecto*), I advise: let all Israel be gathered round thee from Dan to Beersheba (see at Judg. xx. 1), numerous as the sand by the sea; and thou thyself go into the war.” בְּנִיךָ, thy person, *i.e.* thou thyself be marching. The plural הוֹלְכִים is used because of בְּנִיךָ. For אֵלָיו, to enter into anything, see 1 Kings xix. 4, Isa. xlv. 16, xlv. 2. מִלְחָמָה, war, the early translators have confounded with מִלְחָמָה.—Ver. 12. “And come we to him (if we come upon him) in one of the places where he is found, we let ourselves down upon him, as the dew falls upon the earth; and of him and all the men with him there will not be one left.” נִחָנוּ might be a contraction of נִחָנוּ, as in Gen. xlii. 11, Ex. xvi. 7, 8, etc.: “so we upon him,” equivalent to “so shall we come upon him.” But if this were the meaning, we should expect עָלָיו. It is more correct, therefore, to take נִחָנוּ as the first pers. perf. of נָחַ, as the early translators have done: so do we

let ourselves down upon him. (For **נִי** as applied to an army encamping, see Isa. vii. 2, 19; and as denoting the swarming of flies and grasshoppers, Isa. vii. 19 and Ex. x. 14.) In Ahithophel's opinion, it would be possible with a very small army to crush David and his little band, however brave his followers might be, and in fact to annihilate them altogether.—Ver. 13. "And if he draw back into a city, all Israel lays ropes to that city, and we drag it to the brook, till there is not even a little stone found there." **עַד-הַנָּחַל**: inasmuch as fortified cities were generally built upon mountains. **צֶרֶר** signifies a little stone, according to the ancient versions. Hushai speaks in hyperboles of the irresistible power which the whole nation would put forth when summoned together for battle, in order to make his advice appear the more plausible.—Ver. 14. And he secured his end. Absalom and all Israel thought his advice better than that of Ahithophel; for it was intended to commend itself to Absalom and his supporters. "The counsel appeared safe; at the same time it was full of a certain kind of boasting, which pleased the younger men" (Clericus). All that Hushai had said about the bravery and heroism of David and his followers, was well founded. The deception lay in the assumption that all the people from Dan to Beersheba would crowd around Absalom as one man; whereas it might easily be foreseen, that after the first excitement of the revolution was over, and greater calmness ensued, a large part of the nation and army would gather round David. But such a possibility as this never entered the minds of Absalom and his supporters. It was in this that the divine sentence referred to in ver. 14b was seen: "The Lord had commanded (appointed) it, to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, that he might bring the evil (intended) upon Absalom."

Vers. 15-23. *David is informed of what has occurred.*—

Vers. 15, 16. Hushai communicated without delay to the priests Zadok and Abiathar the advice which had been given to Absalom both by Ahithophel and himself, and requested them to make it known to David as quickly as possible. "*Stay not the night,*" he said, "*by the ferries* (**עֲבָרוֹת**, as in ch. xv. 28) *of the desert; but rather go over, lest the king and all the people with him be destroyed.*" **וְנִם**, "and indeed," or after a negative clause, "but rather." **בִּלְעָד לִפְלֹא** is either "there will be a devouring," i.e. destruction, to the king, it will fall upon him;

or if we supply the subject from the previous clause עָבֹר וְעָבֹר, as Böttcher proposes, "that it (the crossing over) may not be swallowed up or cut off from the king." There is nothing to justify Ewald's explanation, "it (misfortune) is swallowed by him." Hushai recommended of course an immediate crossing of the Jordan; because he did not know whether Absalom would really act upon his advice, although he had expressed his approval of it, or whether he might not change his mind and follow Ahithophel's counsel.—Ver. 17. "Jonathan and Ahimaaz (the sons of the priests: ch. xv. 27) stood at the Rogel spring (the present well of Job or Nehemiah, at the south-east corner of Jerusalem: see at Job xv. 7), and the maid-servant (of one of the high priests) went and told them (Hushai's message), and they went and told it to king David; for they durst not let themselves be seen to come into the city." They had therefore been staying at the Rogel spring outside the city. After what had taken place publicly, according to ch. xv. 24 sqq., Absalom could not be in any doubt as to the views of the high priests. Consequently their sons could not come into the city, with the intention of leaving it again directly, to inform David of the occurrences that had taken place there as he had requested (ch. xv. 28). The clause "*and they went and told David*" anticipates the course of the affair, according to the general plan adopted by Hebrew historians, of communicating the result at the very outset wherever they possibly could.—Ver. 18. "*And a lad (servant) saw them, and told Absalom.*" Absalom had most likely set spies to watch the priests and their sons. But the two sons who had noticed the spy hurried into the house of a man at Bahurim, who had a well (or cistern that was dry at the time) in his court, and went down into the well.—Ver. 19. And the man's wife spread a covering (כִּפְתָּן, the covering which she had close at hand) over the well (over the opening into the cistern), and scattered
• groats (רִימון, peeled barley: Prov. xxvii. 22) upon it, so that nothing was noticed. The Vulgate explanation is a very good one: "*quasi siccans ptisanas*" (as if drying peeled barley).—Ver. 20. When Absalom's servants came and asked for the priest's sons, the woman said, They have gone over the little water-brook (מִיכַל הַמַּיִם, ἀπ. λεγ.), and thus led them wrong, so that they did not find them.—Vers. 21, 22. When they had

gone away, the priest's sons came up out of the well and brought David the news, saying, "Go quickly over the water, for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you;" whereupon David and all the people with him went hastily over the Jordan. "Till the morning dawn not one was missed who had not gone over." עַד אֶחָד, *lit.* even to one there was not any one missed.—Ver. 23. It is still further stated in conclusion, that when Ahithophel saw that his advice was not carried out, he saddled his ass and returned to his home, and there set his house in order and hanged himself, because he could foresee that Absalom would lose his cause through not taking his advice, and it would then be all over with himself. Thus was David's prayer (ch. xv. 31) fulfilled.

ABSALOM'S DEFEAT AND DEATH.—CHAP. XVII. 24-XIX. 1.

The account of the civil war, which terminated with Absalom's defeat and death, is introduced in vers. 24-26 with a description of the relative position of the two hostile parties. David had come to Mahanaim, a city, probably a fortified one, on the east of the Jordan, not far from a ford of the Jabbok (see at ch. ii. 8). Absalom had also gone over the Jordan, "he and all the men with him," *i.e.* all the fighting men that he had gathered together according to Hushai's advice, and encamped in the land of Gilead.—Ver. 25. Absalom had made Amasa captain over his army instead of Joab, who had remained true to David, and had gone with his king to Mahanaim. Amasa was the son of a man named *Jithra*, יִתְרָא, who had gone in to (*i.e.* had seduced) Abigail, the daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother. He was therefore an illegitimate cousin of Joab. The description given of *Jithra* as יִתְרָא is very striking, since there was no reason whatever why it should be stated that Amasa's father was an *Israelite*. The Seventy have therefore given ὁ Ἰεζραηλῆτης, *i.e.* sprung from Jezreel, where David's wife Ahinoam came from (1 Sam. xxvii. 3); but they have done so apparently from mere conjecture. The true reading is evidently יִשְׁמָעֵאל, an Ishmaelite, according to 1 Chron. ii. 17, where the name is written Jether, a contracted form of Jithra. From the description given of Abigail as a daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah, not

of David, some of the earlier commentators have very justly concluded that Abigail and Zeruiah were only step-sisters of David, *i.e.* daughters of his mother by Nahash and not by Jesse.—Vers. 27–29. When David came to Mahanaim, some of the wealthier citizens of the land to the east of the Jordan supplied the men who were with him with provisions. This is mentioned as the first sign that the people had not all fallen away from David, but that some of the more distinguished men were still firm in their adherence. *Shobi*, the son of Nahash of *Rabbah*, the capital of the Ammonites (see ch. xi. 1), was possibly a son of Nahash the deceased king of the Ammonites, and brother of Hanun, who was defeated by David (ch. x. 1, 2), and one of those to whom David had shown favour and kindness when Rabbah was taken. At the same time, it is also quite possible that *Shobi* may have been an Israelite, who was merely living in the capital of the Ammonites, which had been incorporated into the kingdom of David, as it is evident from ver. 25 that Nahash was not an uncommon name among the Israelites. *Machir* the son of Ammiel of *Lodebar* (see at ch. ix. 4), and *Barsillai* of *Roglim* the Gileadite. *Roglim* was a town in Gilead, which is only mentioned once again, *viz.* in ch. xix. 32, and of which nothing further is known. They brought “bedding, basins, earthenware, and wheat, barley, meal, and parched grains, beans, lentils and *parched*.” The position of the verb, which is not placed between the subject and the object of the sentence, but only at the close of the whole series of objects, is certainly unusual; but this does not warrant any alteration of the text. For if we were to supply a verb before מִשְׁכָּב, as having fallen out of the text, it would be necessary, since הִנֵּי follows without a copula, to divide the things enumerated into two classes, so as to connect one portion of the objects with הִנֵּי, which is obviously unnatural. The early translators who interpolate a verb before the objects have therefore also supplied the copula ו before הִנֵּי. There is still less ground for supplying the number 10, as having dropped out before מִשְׁכָּב and כַּפֹּת, as the LXX. have done, since none of the translators of the other ancient versions had any such reading. מִשְׁכָּב, couch or bed, is used here for bedding. כַּפֹּת, basins, probably field-kettles. The repetition of הִנֵּי is very striking; nevertheless the second must not be

struck out without further ground as a supposed copyist's error. As they not only ate parched ears or grains of wheat (see at Lev. ii. 14), but were also in the habit of drying pulse, pease, and lentils before eating them (*vid.* Harmar, *Beobachtungen*, i. pp. 255-6), the second לֶחֶם may be understood as referring to parched pulse. The *ἀπ. λεγ. βῆρ* signifies, according to the Chaldee and the Rabbins, cheese of oxen (*i.e.* of cows), and according to the conjecture of Roediger (*Ges. Thes.* p. 1462), a peculiar kind of cheese, such as the *Aeneze* in the province of Nedjid still make,¹ and for which the term *σαφῶθ βοῶν* retained by the LXX. was probably the technical name. Theodotus, on the other hand, has *γαλαθηνὰ μοσχάρια*, milch-calves; and the Vulgate *pingues vitulos*,—both of them renderings which can certainly be sustained from the Arabic usage of speech, and would be more in accordance with the situation of the words, *viz.* after לֵאמֹר, “for they said (or thought) the people have become hungry and faint and thirsty in the desert,” *i.e.* in their flight to Mahanaim.

Chap. xviii. 1-5. *Preparation for war.*—Vers. 1, 2. David mustered the people that were with him, and placed over them captains of thousands and hundreds, and divided them into three companies, under the generals Joab, Abishai, and Ittai the Gathite, who had given such decided proofs, according to ch. xv. 21, 22, of his fidelity to David. לְשֵׁנָה בְּיָד, to leave to the hand of a person, *i.e.* to his power, is used here in the sense of placing under his direction. The people opposed in the most decided manner the wish of the king to go with them to the war, saying (ver. 3), “Thou shalt not go out: for if we flee, they will take no heed of us (*i.e.* attach no importance to this); and if half of us die, they will take no heed of us: for thou art as ten thousand of us (we must evidently read אַתָּה for עֲתָה, and לְעֵתָהּ has merely got into the text in consequence of לְעֵתָהּ following): and now it is good that thou be ready to give us help from the city” (the *Chethib* לְעֵתָהּ, *inf. Hiphil* for לְעֵתָהּ, is not to be disputed). David was to stay behind in the city with a reserve,

¹ According to Burckhardt's account (*Die Beduinen*, p. 48), “after they have taken the butter from the butter-milk, they beat the latter again till it coagulates, and then dry it till it is quite hard. It is then rubbed to pieces, and in the spring every family stores up two or three lasts of it, which they eat mixed with butter.”

that he might be able to come to their relief in case of need.—Vers. 4, 5. The king gave his consent to these proposals, and went to the side of the gate, whilst the people went out by hundreds and thousands; but in the hearing of all he commanded the principal generals, “*Mildly for me (i.e. deal gently for my sake) with the boy Absalom.*” וְנִסְּתָם is not the imperative of נִסָּה, to cover over, which would not suit the connection, and could not be construed with לָהֶם, but an adverb from נִסָּה, as in Isa. viii. 6, 1 Kings xxi. 27, Job xv. 11.

Vers. 6–18. *Battle in the wood of Ephraim, and death of Absalom.*—Vers. 6, 7. When the people, i.e. David’s army, had advanced into the field against Israel (those who followed Absalom), a battle was fought “in the wood of Ephraim,” when Israel was smitten by David’s warriors and sustained a loss of 20,000 men. The question, where the “wood of Ephraim” was situated, is a disputed one. But both the name and the fact that, according to Josh. xvii. 15, 16, the tribal-land of Ephraim abounded in forests, favour the idea that it was a wood in the inheritance of Ephraim, on this side of the Jordan; and this is in perfect harmony with the statement in ver. 23, that Ahimaaz took the way of the Jordan valley to bring the news of the victory to David, who was staying behind in Mahanaim. Nevertheless the majority of commentators have supposed that the place alluded to was a woody region on the other side of the Jordan, which had received the name of “wood Ephraim” probably after the defeat of the Ephraimites in the time of Jephthah (Judg. xii. 1–5). The reasons assigned are, *first*, that according to ch. xvii. 26, Absalom had encamped in Gilead, and it is not stated that he had crossed the Jordan again; *secondly*, that ver. 3 (“that thou succour us out of the city”) presupposes that the battle took place in the neighbourhood of Mahanaim (Thenius); and *thirdly*, that after the victory the army returned to Mahanaim; whereas if the battle had been fought on this side of the Jordan, it would evidently have been much better for it to remain there and occupy Jerusalem (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 237). But neither of these reasons is decisive, and there is no force in the other arguments employed by Thenius. There was no necessity for an immediate occupation of Jerusalem by David’s victorious army, since all Israel fled to their tents after the fall of Absa-

lom and the defeat of his army (ver. 17 and ch. xix. 9); that is to say, such of Absalom's followers as had not fallen in or after the battle, broke up and returned home, and therefore the revolution was at an end. Consequently there was nothing left for David's army to do but to return to its king at Mahanaim, and fetch him back to Jerusalem, and reinstate him in his kingdom. The other two reasons might have some force in them, if the history before us contained a complete account of the whole course of the war. But even Ewald admits that it is restricted to a notice of the principal battle, which completely crushed the rebellion. There can be no doubt, however, that this was preceded, if not by other battles, yet by such military operations as accompany every war. This is clearly indicated in ver. 6, where it is stated that the army advanced into the field against Israel (ver. 6), which evidently refers to such an advance on the part of David's army as might compel Absalom to draw back from Gilead across the Jordan, until at length a decisive battle was fought, which ended in the complete destruction of his army and his own death. Ewald observes still further, that "it seems impossible, at any rate so far as the name is concerned, to assume that the wood of Ephraim was on the other side of the Jordan, whilst according to ch. xviii. 23, the messenger who reported the victory went from the field of battle towards the Jordan valley in order to get to David." But the way in which Ewald tries to set aside this important point, as bearing upon the conclusion that the battle took place on this side of the Jordan,—namely, by adopting this rendering of ver. 23, "he ran after the manner of *Kikkar*, running, and therefore overtook *Kushi*,"—is far too unnatural to meet with acceptance. Under all these circumstances, therefore, we decide in favour of the assumption that the wood of Ephraim is to be sought for in the tribe-territory of Ephraim.

The nature of the ground contributed a great deal to the utter defeat of Absalom.—Ver. 8. The conflict extended over the surface of the whole land, *i.e.* the whole of that region (the *Chethib* נַפְצוֹת is not the plural נַפְצוֹת, which would be quite unsuitable, but is most probably a noun, נַפְצוֹת, signifying bursting asunder, or wild flight; the *Keri* נִפְצָה is a *Niphal* participle, fem. gen.); "and the wood devoured more of the people than the sword ate on the same day." The woody region was most

likely full of ravines, precipices, and marshes, into which the flying foe was pursued, and where so many perished.—Ver. 9. “And Absalom was lighted upon (יִקְרָה = יִקְרָה) by the servants of David, riding upon the mule; and the mule had come under the thick branches of the great terebinth, and his head fastened itself (remained hanging) on the terebinth, so that he was held (hung) between heaven and earth, as the mule under him went away.” The imperfects, וַיִּבֶא, וַיִּחַזַק, and וַיִּתֵּן, are only a combination of the circumstantial clause וַיִּאֲבֹשׁ רֶגֶל רַבִּי. With regard to the fact itself, it is not clearly stated in the words that Absalom hung only by his hair, but simply that his hair entangled him in the thick branches, and his head was fastened in the terebinth, namely, by being jammed between the strong boughs.—Ver. 10. A man (one of David’s men) saw him in this situation, and told Joab. Joab replied (ver. 11), “Behold, thou hast seen it, and wherefore hast thou not smitten him there to the ground? and it was for me to give thee ten silverlings and a girdle;” i.e. if thou hadst slain him, it would have been my duty to reward thee.—Ver. 12. But the man replied, “*And I . . . not weighing a thousand shekels in my hand . . . might not stretch out my hand to the king’s son,*” i.e. I could not do it for a reward of a thousand shekels. This is the meaning of the *Chethib* וַיִּשָּׂא; the Masoretes, on the other hand, have substituted וַיִּלֶּךְ, which is the reading adopted in most of the ancient versions, and the one preferred by the majority of expositors: “if I weighed . . . I would not,” etc. But there is no necessity for this alteration, as the *Chethib* is quite in accordance with the character of the words. “*For before our ears the king commanded*” (cf. ver. 5): שָׁמְרוּ בִי, “*take care whoever (it be) of the boy Absalom.*” On this use of בִּי, see Ewald, § 104 d, a. The *Keri* וַיִּלֶּךְ is merely a conjecture, notwithstanding the fact that all the versions follow it, and that one of the Codices in Kennicott has וַיִּלֶּךְ. “*Or,*” continued the man (ver. 13), “*should I have acted deceitfully towards his life (i.e. have slain him secretly, which he calls שָׁמְרוּ, cheating, because it was opposed to the king’s open command): and nothing remains hidden from the king; . . . thou wouldst have set thyself in opposition to me,*” i.e. have risen up against me before the king. The middle clause is a circumstantial one, as the fact that וַיִּלֶּךְ is placed first clearly shows; so that it cannot be regarded as introducing the

apodosis, which really follows in the clause commencing with **וְאִתָּהּ**.—Ver. 14. Joab replied, “*Not so will I wait before thee*,” i.e. I will not leave the thing to thee. He then took three staffs in his hand, and thrust them into Absalom’s heart. **שָׁבָטִים** is rendered by the LXX. and Vulgate, *βέλη, lanceas*; and Thenius would adopt **שֵׁלָהִים** accordingly, as an emendation of the text. But in the earlier Hebrew **שֵׁלָה** only occurs in poetical writings in the sense of a missile or dart (Job xxxiii. 18, xxxvi. 12; Joel ii. 8); and it is not till after the captivity that we find it used to denote a weapon generally. There is no necessity, however, for altering the text. Joab caught up in his hurry the first thing that he found, namely pointed staffs, and pierced Absalom with them to the heart. This explains the reason for his taking *three*, whereas one javelin or dart would have been sufficient, and also the fact that Absalom was not slain, notwithstanding their being thrust at his heart. The last clause of the verse belongs to what follows: “*Still living (i.e. as he was still alive) in the midst of the terebinth, ten young men, Joab’s armour-bearers, surrounded him, and smote him to death.*”—Ver. 16. Immediately afterwards Joab stopped any further pursuit, “for Joab spared the people,” i.e. he wanted to spare them.—Ver. 17. But Absalom they cast into a great pit in the wood, and threw up over him a very large heap of stones, as an ignominious monument, like those thrown up over Achan (Josh. vii. 26) and the king of Ai (Josh. viii. 29). This was the end of Absalom and his rebellion. “All Israel (that had crowded round him) had fled, every one to his tent” (i.e. home: see at Deut. xvi. 7).—Ver. 18. Absalom had erected a monument to himself in the king’s valley during his lifetime; “for he said, I have no son to preserve the remembrance of my name, and he called the monument by his own name; and so it was called *hand* (memorial) of Absalom unto this day.” The **לָקֵה** before **וַיִּצַב** is apparently pleonastic; but it belongs to the diffuse and circumstantial character of the antiquated Hebrew diction (as in Num. xvi. 1). **מַצֵּבָה**, a memorial of stone; whether in the form of a column, or an obelisk, or a monolith, cannot be determined (*vid.* Gen. xxviii. 22, xxxi. 52). The king’s valley, which received its name from the event narrated in Gen. xiv. 17, was two stadia from Jerusalem according to Josephus (*Ant.* vii. 10, 3), and therefore not “close to the

Dead Sea," or in *regione transjordanensi* (Ges. *Thes.* pp. 1045, 1377), or "in the Jordan valley in Ephraim" (Tuch and Winer). It was on the eastern side of Jerusalem, in the Kidron valley; though Absalom's pillar, which ecclesiastical tradition has transferred thither, a monument about forty feet in height and pointed like a pyramid, is not of early Hebrew, but of Grecian origin. On the words "I have no son," see at ch. xiv. 27.

Vers. 19–32. *David is informed of the victory, and of the death of Absalom.*—Vers. 19, 20. Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, wanted to carry the news to David, that Jehovah had "procured the king justice out of the hand of his enemies" (שָׁפַט with כִּן is a pregnant expression signifying to procure justice and deliver out of); but Joab, knowing how David would receive the tidings of the death of Absalom, replied, "Thou art no man of good tidings to-day; thou shalt take the news on another day, not on this, even because (כִּי עֲלֶיךָ, see at Gen. xviii. 5) the king's son is dead." The *Keri* כִּי עֲלֶיךָ is to be preferred to the *Chethib* בְּרִיעַ; and כִּן has no doubt been dropt out merely because of כִּן which follows. The *Chethib* does not give any suitable sense; for the absence of the article before מֵת is decisive against the explanation proposed by Maurer, viz. "for (tidings have to be carried) concerning the king's son dead." If מֵת were to be construed as an adverb with בְּרִיעַ, it would of necessity have the article.—Ver. 21. Joab therefore entrusted the Cushite with the duty of conveying to David the announcement of what had occurred. It cannot be decided with certainty whether הַכּוּשִׁי or *Cushi* is the proper name of an Israelite, or whether it signifies the "Cushite," i.e. a descendant of Cush. The form of the name rather favours the latter view, in which case it would suggest the idea of a Moorish slave in the service of Joab.—Vers. 22, 23. As Ahimaaz still expressed a wish to hasten to the king, even after Cushi had been sent, and could not be induced to relinquish his purpose by the repeated expostulations of Joab, the latter at length permitted him to run. And he ran so fast, that he got before Cushi. וְיָהִי מָה: let whatever will happen. לָכֵן is the pronoun "to thee," as in Gen. xxvii. 37, and not the imperative of הָלַךְ, "thou mayest go." The meaning is, "and there is no striking message for thee," no message that strikes the mark, or affects anything. We must supply

“he said” in thought before ver. 23. There was the less necessity to write it here (as in 1 Sam. i. 20), since it is perfectly obvious from the repetition of *וַיֵּן מִן* that it is Ahimaaz who is speaking. Ahimaaz then ran by the way of the plain, *i.e.* the way which lies through or across the plain of the Jordan. Now he could not possibly have taken this road, if the battle had been fought in a wood on the eastern side of the Jordan, and he had wanted to hurry from the scene of battle to Mahanaim; for in that case he would have taken a circuitous route two or three times the distance of the straight road, so that it would have been utterly impossible for him to get there before the Cushite, however quickly he might run. This notice therefore furnishes a decisive proof that the battle was fought upon the mountains of Ephraim, in the land to the west of the Jordan, since the straight road thence to Mahanaim would lie through the valley of the Jordan.—Ver. 24. David was sitting between the two gates of Mahanaim waiting for tidings of the result of the battle. The two gates are the outer and inner gate of the fortified city wall, between which there was a small court, where David was sitting. The watchman then went up to the roof of the gate by the wall, probably the outer gate in the city wall, and as he looked he saw a man running alone.—Ver. 25. When he announced this to the king, he said, “If he (is or comes) alone, there is good news in his mouth,” namely, because several runners would have shown themselves if it had been a flight. As the first messenger came nearer and nearer, the watchman saw another man running, and shouted this into the gate (*וַיִּשְׁמַע* is wrongly pointed for *וַיִּשְׁמַע*, according to the LXX., Syr., and Vulgate); whereupon the king replied, “This is also a good messenger.”—Ver. 27. When the watchman saw by the running of the first that it was Ahimaaz, recognising him probably by the swiftness of his running, and announced it to the king, he replied, “He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings,” because Joab would not have selected him to bring any other than good news.—Ver. 28. Ahimaaz then called out to the king, “*Shalom*,” *i.e.* *Hail!* and fell down before him to greet him reverentially, and said, “Blessed be Jehovah thy God, who hath given up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.”—Ver. 29. In answer to the king’s inquiry, “Is it well with the young man Absalom?” Ahimaaz

replied, "I saw the great tumult (that arose) when Joab sent off the king's servant, and thy servant, and know not what" (*sc.* had occurred). Ahimaaz spoke as if he had been sent off before Absalom's fate had been decided or could be known. "*The king's servant*" is the Cushite, whom Ahimaaz saw just approaching, so that he could point to him. *Joab* is the subject, which is sometimes written after the object in the case of an infinitive construction (*vid.* Gesenius, § 133, 3 Anm.); and the expression "thy servant" is a conventional one for "me" (*viz.* Ahimaaz).—Ver. 30. And the king said, "Turn, and stand here," that he might hear the further news from the Cushite, who had just arrived.—Ver. 31. The Cushite said, "Let my lord the king receive good tidings, for Jehovah hath procured thee justice to-day out of the hand of all who have risen up against thee" (*cf.* ver. 19).—Ver. 32. When asked about the welfare of Absalom, the Cushite replied, "May it happen to the enemies of my lord the king, and all who have risen up against thee for evil (*i.e.* to do thee harm), as to the young man." The death of Absalom was indicated clearly enough in these words.

Ver. 33. The king understood the meaning of the words. He was agitated, and went up to the balcony of the gate (the room above the entrance) and wept, and said, walking about, "My son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Oh that I had died for thee, Absalom, my son, my son!" To understand this passionate utterance of anguish, we must bear in mind not only the excessive tenderness, or rather weakness, of David's paternal affection towards his son, but also his anger that Joab and his generals should have paid so little regard to his command to deal gently with Absalom. With the king's excitable temperament, this entirely prevented him from taking a just and correct view of the crime of his rebel son, which merited death, and of the penal justice of God which had been manifested in his destruction.

DAVID REINSTATED IN HIS KINGDOM.—CHAP. XIX. 1-39.

In his passionate and sinful sorrow on account of Absalom's death, David not only forgot altogether what it was his duty to do, in order to recover the affections of the people, so that Joab

was obliged to remind him of this duty which was binding upon him as king (vers. 1-8) ; but he even allowed himself to be carried away into the most inconsiderate measures (vers. 9-14), and into acts of imprudence and injustice (vers. 16-23, 24-30), which could not contribute to the strengthening of his throne, however much the affection with which he wished to reward the old man Barzillai for his faithful services (vers. 31-40) might show that the king was anxious to promote the welfare of his subjects.

Vers. 1-8. *David's mourning, and Joab's reproof.*—Vers. 1-6. When Joab was told that the king was mourning and weeping for Absalom, he went to him into the house to expostulate with him. Ver. 5 introduces the continuation of ver. 1 ; vers. 2-4 contain parenthetical sentences, describing the impression made upon the people by the king's mourning. Through the king's deep trouble, the salvation (the victory) upon that day became mourning for all the people who had fought for David, and they went by stealth into the city (אֶת־עֲנַבֵּי לְבוֹיָא: they stole to come, came by stealth), "as people steal away who have covered themselves with shame, when they flee in battle."—Ver. 4. But the king had covered his face, and cried aloud, "My son Absalom," etc.—Ver. 5. Then Joab went into the house to the king, and said to him, "Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants who have saved thy life, and the life of thy sons and daughters, thy wives and concubines" (covered them with shame, by deceiving their hope that thou wouldest rejoice in the victory).—Ver. 6. לֹא־אֶהְבֶּה, "to love" (i.e. in that thou lovest) "those who hate thee, and hatest those who love thee ; for thou hast given to know to-day (through thy conduct) that chiefs and servants (commanders and soldiers) are nothing (are worth nothing) ; for I have perceived to-day (or I perceive to-day) that if (אִם for הִנֵּה) Absalom were alive, and we had all perished, that it would be right in thine eyes."—Ver. 7. "And now rise up, go out and speak to the heart of thy servants, (i.e. speak to them in a friendly manner : Gen. xxxiv. 3, l. 21, etc.) : for I swear by Jehovah, if thou go not out, verily not a man will stay with thee to-night ; and this will be worse to thee than all the evil that has come upon thee from thy youth until now." Joab was certainly not only justified, but bound in David's own interests, to expostulate with him upon his conduct, and to urge

him to speak in a friendly manner to the people who had exposed their lives for him, inasmuch as his present conduct would necessarily stifle the affection of the people towards their king, and might be followed by the most serious results with reference to his throne. At the same time, he did this in so heartless and lordly a manner, that the king could not fail to be deeply hurt by his words.—Ver. 8. Nevertheless David was obliged to yield to his representations. “*The king rose up, and sat in the gate, and . . . all the people came before the king,*” *i.e.* the troops marched before the king, who (as we may supply from the context) manifested his good-will in both looks and words. But Israel, *i.e.* that portion of the people which had followed Absalom, had returned to its tents (*i.e.* gone home: cf. ch. xviii. 17). This sentence forms the transition to the account which follows.

Vers. 9–14. *Preliminaries to the return of David to Jerusalem.*—Vers. 9, 10. As the rebellion was entirely crushed by Absalom’s death, and the dispersion of his followers to their respective homes, there arose a movement among all the tribes in favour of David. “All the people were disputing (רָגְזוּ, casting reproaches at one another) in all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king has saved us out of the hand of our enemies, . . . and now he is fled out of the land before Absalom. But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle; and now why do ye keep still, to bring back the king?” This movement arose from the consciousness of having done an injustice to the king, in rising up in support of Absalom.—Vers. 11, 12. When these words of all Israel were reported to David, he sent to the priests Zadok and Abiathar, saying, “Speak to the elders of Judah, why will ye be the last to bring back the king to his palace? . . . Ye are my brethren, my bones and flesh (*i.e.* my blood relations): why then,” etc.? The last clause of ver. 11, “*the speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house,*” is a circumstantial clause inserted in the midst of David’s words, to explain the appeal to the men of Judah not to be the last. In the LXX., and some Codices of the Vulgate, this sentence occurs twice, viz. at the end of ver. 10, and also of ver. 11; and Thenius, Ewald, and Böttcher regard the clause at the end of ver. 10 as the original one, and the repetition of it at the close of ver. 11 as a gloss. But this

is certainly a mistake : for if the clause, "and the speech of all Israel came to the king to his house (at Mahanaim)," ought to stand at the close of ver. 10, and assigns the reason for David's sending to Zadok and Abiathar, ver. 11 would certainly, or rather necessarily, commence with וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ : "The word of all Israel came to the king, and then king David sent," etc. But instead of this, it commences with וַהֲמֶלֶךְ דָּוִד שָׁלַח, "But king David sent." This construction of the sentence decidedly favours the correctness of the Hebrew text ; whereas the text of the Septuagint, apart altogether from the tautological repetition of the whole of the sentence in question, shows obviously enough that it is nothing more than a conjecture, by which the attempt was made to remove the difficulty occasioned by the striking position in which the circumstantial clause occurred. —Ver. 13. "And say ye to Amasa, Art thou not my bone and flesh ? so shall God do to me, and so add, if thou shalt not be prince of the army (chief captain) before me continually in the place of Joab." —Ver. 14. Thus he (David) inclined the heart of all the people as of one man, and they sent to the king, saying, "Return thou, with all thy servants." The result of David's message to the priests is given summarily here. The subject to וַיֵּן is David, not Amasa or Zadok. So far as the fact itself is concerned, it was certainly wise of David to send to the members of his own tribe, and appeal to them not to be behind the rest of the tribes in taking part in his restoration to the kingdom, lest it should appear as though the tribe of Judah, to which David himself belonged, was dissatisfied with his victory, since it was in that tribe that the rebellion itself first broke out ; and this would inevitably feed the jealousy between Judah and the rest of the tribes. But it was not only unwise, but unjust, to give to Amasa, the traitor-general of the rebels, a promise on oath that he should be commander-in-chief in the place of Joab ; for even if the promise was only given privately at first, the fact that it had been given could not remain a secret from Joab very long, and would be sure to stir up his ambition, and lead him to the commission of fresh crimes, and in all probability the enmity of this powerful general would become dangerous to the throne of David. For however Joab might have excited David's anger by slaying Absalom, and by the offensive manner in which he had reproved the king for giving way to his grief,

David ought to have suppressed his anger in his existing circumstances, and ought not to have rendered evil for evil, especially as he was not only about to pardon Amasa's crime, but even to reward him as one of his faithful servants.

Vers. 15-30. *Return of the king; and occurrences at the crossing of the Jordan.*—Vers. 15-23. *Pardon of Shimei.*—Vers. 15, 16. When David reached the Jordan on his return, and Judah had come to Gilgal "to meet him, to conduct the king over the Jordan," *i.e.* to form an escort at the crossing, Shimei the Benjaminite hastened down from Bahurim (see ch. xvi. 5 sqq.) with the men of Judah to meet David.—Vers. 17 sqq. There also came along with Shimei a thousand men of Benjamin, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, with his fifteen sons and twenty servants (see ch. ix. 10); and they went over the Jordan before the king, *viz.* through a ford, and the ferry-boat had crossed over to carry over the king's family, and to do whatever seemed good to him, *i.e.* to be placed at the king's sole disposal. And Shimei fell down before the king, בָּעֲבָרוֹ, *i.e.* "when he (David) was about to cross over the Jordan," not "when Shimei had crossed over the Jordan;" for after what has just been stated, such a remark would be superfluous: moreover, it is very doubtful whether the infinitive with בָּ can express the sense of the pluperfect. Shimei said, "Let not my lord impute to me any crime, and do not remember how thy servant hath sinned."—Ver. 20. "For thy servant knoweth (*i.e.* I know) that I have sinned, and behold I have come to-day the first of the whole house of Joseph, to go to meet my lord the king." By "*the whole house of Joseph*" we are to understand the rest of the tribes with the exception of Judah, who are called "*all Israel*" in ver. 12. There is no reason for the objection taken by Thenius and Böttcher to the expression בְּיִתְיִי. The rendering of the LXX. (παντὸς Ἰσραὴλ καὶ οἴκου Ἰωσήφ) does not prove that בְּיִתְיִי was the original reading, but only that the translator thought it necessary to explain οἴκου Ἰωσήφ by adding the gloss παντὸς Ἰσραὴλ; and the assertion that it was only in the oratorical style of a later period, when the kingdom had been divided, that Joseph became the party name of all that were not included in Judah, is overthrown by 1 Kings xi. 28. The designation of the tribes that opposed Judah by the name of the leading tribe (*Joseph*:

Josh. xvi. 1) was as old as the jealousy between these tribes and Judah, which did not commence with the division of the kingdom, but was simply confirmed thereby into a permanent distinction. Shimei's prayer for the forgiveness of his sin was no more a proof of sincere repentance than the reason which he adduced in support of his petition, namely that he was the first of all the house of Joseph to come and meet David. Shimei's only desire was to secure impunity for himself. Abishai therefore replied (ver. 21), "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this (וְעַתָּה זֶה, for this, which he has just said and done), because he hath cursed the anointed of Jehovah?" (*vid.* ch. xvi. 5 sqq.) But David answered (ver. 22), "What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah (cf. ch. xvi. 10), for ye become opponents to me to-day?" שָׂטָן, *an opponent*, who places obstacles in the way (Num. xxii. 22); here it signifies one who would draw away to evil. "Should any one be put to death in Israel to-day? for do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?" The reason assigned by David here for not punishing the blasphemer as he had deserved, by taking away his life, would have been a very laudable one, if the king had really forgiven him. But as David when upon his death-bed charged his successor to punish Shimei for this cursing (1 Kings ii. 8, 9), the favour shown him here was only a sign of David's weakness, which was not worthy of imitation, the more especially as the king swore unto him (ver. 24) that he should not die.

Vers. 24-30. *David's conduct towards Mephibosheth* admits still less of justification.—Ver. 24. Mephibosheth, the son, *i.e.* grandson, of Saul, had also come down (from Jerusalem to the Jordan) to meet David, and had not "*made his feet and his beard,*" *i.e.* had not washed his feet or arranged his beard (עָשָׂה, as in Deut. xxi. 12), and had not washed his clothes—all of them signs of deep mourning (cf. Ezek. xxiv. 17)—since the day that the king had gone (*i.e.* had fled from Jerusalem) until the day that he came (again) in peace.—Ver. 25. "*Now when Jerusalem (i.e. the inhabitants of the capital) came to meet the king,*"¹ David said to him (*i.e.* to Mephibosheth, who was

¹ Dathe and Thénius propose to alter מִירוּשָׁלַם into מִירוּשָׁלַם (from Jerusalem), from a simple misunderstanding of the true meaning of the words; for, as Böttcher has observed, the latter (from Jerusalem) would

with the deputation from the capital which welcomed David at the Jordan), "*Why wentest thou not with me, Mephibosheth?*" David was justified in putting this question after what Ziba had told him concerning Mephibosheth (ch. xvi. 3).—Ver. 26. Mephibosheth replied, "My lord king, my servant hath deceived me: for thy servant thought I will have the ass saddled and go to the king; for thy servant is lame." If we understand אֶת־בִּשְׁתֵּה as signifying that Mephibosheth had the ass saddled by a servant, and not that he saddled it with his own hands, the meaning is obvious, and there is no ground whatever for altering the text. קָבַשׁ is certainly used in this sense in Gen. xxii. 3, and it is very common for things to be said to be done by a person, even though not done with his own hands. The rendering adopted by the LXX. and Vulgate, "Thy servant said to him (the servant), Saddle me the ass," is not true to the words, though correct so far as the sense is concerned.—Vers. 27, 28. "And he (Ziba) slandered thy servant to my lord the king." Mephibosheth had not merely inferred this from David's words, and the tone in which they were spoken, but had certainly found it out long ago, since Ziba would not delay very long to put David's assurance, that all the possessions of Mephibosheth should belong to him, in force against his master, so that Mephibosheth would discover from that how Ziba had slandered him. "And my lord the king is as the angel of God," *i.e.* he sees all just as it really is (see at ch. xiv. 17); "and do what is good in thy sight: for all my father's house (the whole of my family) were but men of death against my lord the king (*i.e.* thou mightest have had us all put to death), and thou didst set thy servant among thy companions at table

be quite superfluous, as it is already contained in the previous יָרַד. But Böttcher's emendation of בָּא into בָּאָה, because Jerusalem or the population of Jerusalem is a feminine notion, is equally unnecessary, since towns and lands are frequently construed as masculines when the inhabitants are intended (*vid.* Ewald, § 318, a). On the other hand, the rendering adopted by the LXX., and by Luther, Michaelis, and Maurer, in which יִרְגְּלִים is taken as an accusative in the sense of "when Mephibosheth came to Jerusalem to meet the king," is altogether wrong, and has been very properly given up by modern expositors, inasmuch as it is at variance not only with the word יָרַד, but also with ch. xvi. 3 and ix. 13, where Mephibosheth is said to have lived in Jerusalem.

(see ch. ix. 7, 11); and what right or (what) more have I still to cry (for help) to the king?" The meaning is, "I cannot assert any claims, but will yield to anything you decide concerning me." It must have been very evident to David from these words of Mephibosheth, that he had been deceived by Ziba, and that he had formed an unfounded prejudice against Mephibosheth, and committed an act of injustice in handing over his property to Ziba. He therefore replied, in evident displeasure (ver. 29), "Why talkest thou still of thine affairs? I have said, thou and Ziba shall divide the field?" to which Mephibosheth answered (ver. 30), "He may take the whole, since my lord the king has returned in peace to his own house." This reply shows very clearly that an injustice had been done to Mephibosheth, even if it is not regarded as an expression of wounded feeling on the part of Mephibosheth because of David's words, but, according to the view taken by Seb. Schmidt and others, as a vindication of himself, as said not to blame the king for the opinion he had formed, but simply to defend himself. But this completely overthrows the opinion held by Thenius and O. v. Gerlach, that David's words in ver. 30 contain nothing more than a revocation of his hasty declaration in ch. xvi. 4, and a confirmation of his first decision in ch. ix. 7-10, and are to be understood as signifying, "Let everything be as I settled it at first; hold the property jointly," inasmuch as Ziba and his sons had of course obtained their living from the produce of the land. Moreover, the words "thou and Ziba divide the land" are directly at variance with the promise in ch. ix. 7, "I will restore thee *all* the land of Saul thy father," and the statement in ch. ix. 9, "I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul, and to all his house." By the words, "*I have said, thou and Ziba divide the land,*" David retracted the hasty decree in ch. xvi. 4, so as to modify to some extent the wrong that he had done to Mephibosheth, but he had not courage enough to retract it altogether. He did not venture to dispute the fact that Mephibosheth had really been calumniated by Ziba, which was placed beyond all doubt by his mourning during the whole period of David's flight, as described in ver. 24. There is no ground for Winer's statement, therefore, that "it is impossible now to determine whether Mephibosheth was really innocent or not."

Vers. 31-39. *Barzillai comes to greet David.*—Ver. 31. Barzillai the octogenarian “had also come down from Roglim and gone across the Jordan with the king, to escort him over the river.” אֶת־בִּירְדָן is the portion in, or over, the Jordan. אֶת is the sign of the accusative, “the piece in the Jordan,” and no further. This is the correct explanation as given by Böttcher, after Gesenius and Maurer; and the *Keri* הַיַּרְדֵּן is a bad emendation.—Vers. 32, 33. As Barzillai had supplied the king with provisions during his stay in Mahanaim (שִׁיבָה for שִׁיבָה, like צֹאֵה for צֹאֵה, and other words of the same kind), because he was very wealthy (*lit.* great), David would gladly have taken him with him to Jerusalem, to repay him there for his kindness; but Barzillai replied (vers. 34 sqq.), “How many days are there of the years of my life (*i.e.* how long shall I have yet to live), that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? I am now eighty years old; can I (still) distinguish good and evil, or will thy servant taste what I eat and drink, or listen again to the voice of the singing men and singing women? and why should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? Thy servant would go over the Jordan with the king for a short time (*i.e.* could not remain long with him), and why does the king wish to repay me this favour?” אֲשֶׁר־נָא: “Let thy servant return, that I may die in my city (my home), at the grave of my parents; and behold thy servant Chimham (*i.e.* according to the explanation given by Josephus, Barzillai’s son, who had come down with his father, as we may infer from 1.Kings ii. 7) may go over with my lord the king; and do to him what seemeth good to thee,” *i.e.* show him favours at thy pleasure.—Ver. 38. David consented to this, and said, “All that thou desirest of me I will do to him.” עָלְךָ with בָּחַר is a pregnant construction, signifying to choose and impose, “choose upon me,” *i.e.* the thing for me to grant thee.—Ver. 39. Thus all the people went over the Jordan; and when the king had crossed over, he kissed Barzillai (to take leave of him: *vid.* Ruth i. 9); and he (Barzillai) blessed him, and turned to his place (returned home). Barzillai only escorted the king over the Jordan, and the conversation (vers. 31-38) probably took place as they were crossing.

DISCONTENT IN ISRAEL, AND SHEBA'S REBELLION.—

CHAP. XIX. 40-XX. 26.

Vers. 40-43. *Quarrel between Israel and Judah about the restoration of the king.*—Ver. 40. David went across to Gilgal (in the plain of the Jordan: Josh. iv. 19), and Chimham (*Chimhan* is a modified form for *Chimham*: ver. 37) had gone over with him, and all the people of Judah had brought the king over (the *Keri* הַקֶּרִי is an easier reading than the *Chethib* וַיַּעֲבִירֵהוּ, “and as for the people, they had,” etc.), and also “half the people of Israel,” namely, beside the thousand Benjaminites who came with Shimei (ver. 17), other Israelites who dwelt in the neighbourhood.—Ver. 41. *All the men of Israel*, i.e. the representatives of the other tribes of Israel, came to meet the king in Gilgal; and being annoyed at the fact that the men of Judah had anticipated them, they exclaimed, “Why have our brethren the men of Judah stolen thee away?” i.e. fetched thee thus secretly without saying a word to us. “*All David's men*” were all his faithful adherents who had fled with him from Jerusalem (ch. xv. 17 sqq.).—Ver. 42. The men of Judah replied against (על) the men of Israel: “The king stands near to us” (inasmuch as he belonged to their tribe), “and wherefore then art thou angry at this matter? Have we eaten from the king (i.e. derived any advantage from our tribe-relationship to him, as the Benjaminites did from Saul, according to 1 Sam. xxii. 7), or received anything for ourselves therefrom?” וְנִשְׂמַח is an infinitive *abs. Niph.* with a feminine termination, borrowed from לָחַץ; literally, “or has taking been taken for us.”—Ver. 43. The Israelites were annoyed at this answer, and retorted, “I (Israel) have ten portions in the king, and also more than thou in David; and wherefore hast thou despised me?” They considered that they had ten shares in the king, because they formed ten tribes, in opposition to the one tribe of Judah, as the Levites did not come into consideration in the matter. Although David was of the tribe of Judah, he was nevertheless king of the whole nation, so that the ten tribes had a larger share than one tribe. וְהַקֶּלֶתִּי refers to the fact, that Judah took no notice at all of the tribes of Israel when fetching back the king. וְלֹא־הָיָה וְנִי, “and was not my speech the first to fetch back my king?” (On the fact itself, see

ch. xix. 10, 11.) ^ל is an emphatic *dat. commodi*, and is to be taken in connection with ^ל, notwithstanding the accents. "And the speech of the men of Judah became fiercer (more violent) than the speech of the men of Israel." With these words the historian sums up briefly the further progress of the dispute, for the purpose of appending the account of Sheba's rebellion, to which it gave rise.

Chap. xx. 1-22. SHEBA'S REBELLION.—Ver. 1. There happened to be a worthless man there, named *Sheba*, a Benjaminite. He blew the trumpet, and said, "We have no part in David, nor inheritance in the son of Jesse. Every man to his tents, O Israel!" "*To his tents*," i.e. to his home, as in ch. xix. 9, etc.—Ver. 2. All the men of Israel responded to this call, and went up (to the mountains) away from David and after Sheba; but the men of Judah adhered to their king from the Jordan to Jerusalem. The construction of ^ל with ^ל . . . ^ל is a pregnant one: they adhered to and followed him. The expression "*from Jordan*" does not prove that Sheba's rebellion broke out at the Jordan itself, and before David's arrival in Gilgal, but may be accounted for from the fact that the men of Judah had already fetched the king back across the Jordan.—Ver. 3. As soon as David returned to his palace at Jerusalem, he brought the ten concubines whom he had left behind, and with whom Absalom had lain, into a place of safety, and took care of them, without going in unto them any more. The masculine suffixes attached to ^ל, ^ל, and ^ל are used, as they frequently are, as being the more general and indefinite, instead of the feminine, which is the more definite form. Thus were they shut up in lifelong widowhood until the day of their death. ^ל is an adverbial accusative, and ^ל signifies "condition in life;" literally, in widowhood of life.—Ver. 4. David then ordered Amasa to call the men of Judah to pursue Sheba the rebel, and attack him within three days, and then to present himself to him again. This commission was intended as the commencement of the fulfilment of the promise which David had given to Amasa (ch. xix. 14). It was no doubt his intention to give him the command over the army that marched against Sheba, and after the defeat of the rebel to make him commander-in-chief. But this first step towards the fulfilment

of the promise was a very imprudent act, like the promise itself, since Joab, who had been commander of the army for so many years, was grievously offended by it; and moreover, being a well-trying general, he had incomparably more distinction in the tribe of Judah than Amasa, who had taken part in Absalom's rebellion and even led the rebel army, could possibly have.—Vers. 5, 6. But when Amasa stayed out beyond the time fixed for the execution of the royal commission (the *Chethib* חֵתִיב is the *Piel* חֵתִיב, whilst the *Keri* is either the *Hiphil* חֵתִיב, or the imperfect *Kal* of חָתַר = חָתַר, cf. חָתַר, ver. 9, and is quite unnecessary), probably because the men of Judah distrusted him, and were not very ready to respond to his summons, David said to Abishai, "Now will Sheba the son of Bichri be more injurious (more dangerous) to us than Absalom. Take thou the servants (soldiers) of thy lord and pursue after him, lest he reach fortified cities, and *tear out our eye*," i.e. do us a serious injury. This is the correct explanation given by Böttcher, who refers to Deut. xxxii. 10 and Zech. ii. 12, where the apple of the eye is the figure used to signify the most valuable possession; for the general explanation, "and withdraw from our eye," cannot be grammatically sustained.—Ver. 7. *Thus there went after him* (Abishai) *Joab's men* (the corps commanded by Joab), and the *Crethi and Plethi* (see at ch. viii. 18), out of Jerusalem, to pursue Sheba.—Ver. 8. "When they were by the great stone at Gibeon, and Amasa came to meet them (there), Joab was girded with his armour-coat as his clothing, and the girdle of the sword was bound over it upon his loins in its sheath, which came out, and it fell (i.e. the sheath came out of the sword-belt in which it was fastened, and the sword fell to the ground), Joab said to Amasa," etc. The eighth verse contains only circumstantial clauses, the latter of which (from וְהָיָה onwards) are subordinate to the earlier ones, so that וַיִּפְּצֵהוּ (ver. 9) is attached to the first clause, which describes the meeting between the advancing army and Amasa.

There is something striking, however, in the fact that Joab appears among them, and indeed, as we see from what follows, as the commander of the forces; for according to ver. 6, David had commissioned Abishai, Joab's brother, to pursue Sheba, and even in ver. 7 Joab's men only are mentioned. This difficulty can hardly be solved in any other manner than by the

simple assumption that David had told Abishai to go out with Joab, and that this circumstance is passed over in the brief account in ver. 6, in which the principal facts alone are given, and consequently the name of Joab does not occur there. Clericus adopts the following explanation. "Mention," he says, "has hitherto been made simply of the command given to Abishai, but this included an order to Joab to go as well; and there is nothing to preclude the supposition that Joab's name was mentioned by the king, although this is not distinctly stated in the brief account before us."¹—Ver. 9. Joab asked Amasa how he was, and laid hold of his beard with his right hand to kiss him. And as Amasa took no heed of the sword in Joab's hand, he smote him with it in the paunch (abdomen), and shed out his bowels upon the ground, "*and repeated not (the stroke) to him*" (cf. 1 Sam. xxvi. 8). Laying hold of the beard to kiss is still customary among Arabs and Turks as a sign of friendly welcome (*vid.* Arvieux, *Merkwürdige Nachrichten*, iv. p. 182, and Harmar, *Beobachtungen*, ii. p. 61). The reason for this assassination was Joab's jealousy of Amasa. Joab and Abishai then followed Sheba.—Ver. 11. One of Joab's attendants remained standing by him (Amasa), no doubt at Joab's command, and said to the people who came thither, *i.e.* to the men of Judah who were collected together by Amasa (*vid.* ver. 4), "He that favoureth Joab, and he that (is) for David, let him (go) after Joab," *i.e.* follow him to battle against Sheba.—Vers. 12, 13. Amasa lay wallowing in blood in the midst of the road; and when the man (the attendant) saw that all the

¹ This difficulty cannot be removed by emendations of the text, inasmuch as all the early translators, with the exception of the Syriac, had our Hebrew text before them. Thenius does indeed propose to alter *Abishai* into *Joab* in ver. 6, after the example of Josephus and the Syriac; but, as Böttcher observes, if *Joab* had originally formed part of the text, it could not have been altered into *Abishai* either accidentally or intentionally, and the Syriac translators and Josephus have inserted *Joab* merely from conjecture, because they inferred from what follows that Joab's name ought to be found here. But whilst this is perfectly true, there is no ground for Böttcher's own conjecture, that in the original text ver. 6 read as follows: "Then David said to Joab, Behold, the three days are gone: shall we wait for Amasa?" and through the copyist's carelessness a whole line was left out. For this conjecture has no tenable support in the senseless reading of the *Cod. Vat.*, *προς Ἀμωναί* for *Ἀβισαί*.

people stood still (by the corpse), he turned (pushed) Amasa from the road to the field, and threw a cloth over him, whereupon they all passed by and went after Joab.—Ver. 14. But Joab “went through all the tribes of Israel to Abela, and Beth-Maacah, and all Berim.” *Abela* (ver. 15), or *Abel* (ver. 18), has been preserved in the large Christian village of *Abil*, a place with ruins, and called *Abil-el-Kamh* on account of its excellent wheat (*Kamh*), which lies to the north-west of Lake Huleh, upon a Tell on the eastern side of the river *Derdāra*; not in *Ibl-el-Hawa*, a place to the north of this, upon the ridge between *Merj Ayun* and *Wady et Teim* (vid. Ritter, *Erdk.* xv. pp. 240, 241; Robinson, *Bibl. Researches*, pp. 372-3; and v. de Velde, *Mem.* p. 280). *Beth-Maacah* was quite close to *Abela*; so that the names of the two places are connected together in ver. 15, and afterwards, as *Abel-Beth-Maacah* (vid. 1 Kings xv. 20, and 2 Kings xv. 29), also called *Abel-Maim* in 2 Chron. xvi. 4. *Berim* is the name of a district which is unknown to us; and even the early translators did not know how to render it. There is nothing, however, either in the *πάντες ἐν χαρρί* of the LXX or the *omnes viri electi* of the Vulgate, to warrant an alteration of the text. The latter, in fact, rests upon a mere conjecture, which is altogether unsuitable; for the subject to יִקְהִלִי cannot be בְּלִיְהוֹיִם on account of the *vav consec.*, but must be obtained from בְּכָל־שִׁבְטֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל. The *Chethib* וִיקְהִלֵּהוּ is evidently a slip of the pen for וִיקְהִלֵּהוּ.—Ver. 15. They besieged him (*Sheba*) in *Abel-Beth-Maacah*, and piled up a rampart against the city, so that it rose up by the town-moat (חֵל, the moat with the low wall belonging to it); and all the people with Joab destroyed to throw down the wall.

Vers. 16 sqq. Then a wise woman of the city desired to speak to Joab, and said (from the wall) to him (ver. 18), “They were formerly accustomed to say, ask Abel; and so they brought (a thing) to pass.” These words show that Abel had formerly been celebrated for the wisdom of its inhabitants.—Ver. 19. “I am of the peaceable, faithful in Israel: thou seekest to slay a city and mother in Israel; wherefore wilt thou destroy the inheritance of Jehovah?” The construing of אֶנֶכִּי with a predicate in the plural may be explained on the simple ground that the woman spoke in the name of the city as well as in its favour, and therefore had the citizens in her mind at

the time, as is very evident from the figurative expression מִן (mother) for mother-city or capital.¹ The woman gave Joab to understand, in the first place, that he ought to have asked the inhabitants of Abela whether they intended to fight for Sheba before commencing the siege and destruction of the town, according to the law laid down in Deut. xx. 10 sqq. with reference to the siege of foreign towns; and secondly, that he ought to have taken into consideration the peaceableness and fidelity of the citizens of Abela, and not to destroy peace-loving citizens and members of the nation of God.—Ver. 20. The woman's words made an impression upon Joab. He felt the truthfulness of her reproaches, and replied, "Far be it, far be it from me, to swallow up or destroy." מִן, as in the case of oaths: "*truly not.*"—Ver. 21. "It is not so (*sc.* as thou sayest), but a man of the mountains of Ephraim (which extended into the tribe of Benjamin: see at 1 Sam. i. 1), Sheba the son of Bichri, hath lifted up his hand against the king David. Only give him up, and I will draw away from the city." The woman promised him this: "Behold, his head shall be thrown out to thee over the wall."—Ver. 22. She then came to all the people (*i.e.* the citizens of the town) "*with her wisdom,*" *i.e.* with the wise counsel which she had given to Joab, and which he had accepted; whereupon the citizens cut off Sheba's head, and threw it out to Joab. Then Joab had a trumpet blown for a retreat, and the men disbanded, whilst he himself returned to Jerusalem to the king.

Vers. 23-26. DAVID'S MINISTERS OF STATE.—The second section of the history of David's reign closes, like the first (ch. viii. 16 sqq.), with a list of the leading ministers of state. The author evidently found the two lists in his sources, and included

¹ The correctness of the text is not to be called in question, as Thenius and Böttcher suppose, for the simple reason that all the older translators have followed the Hebrew text, including even the LXX. with their *ἐγώ εἰμι εἰρηνικὰ τῶν σπληνισμάτων ἐν Ἰσραὴλ*; whereas the words *αἱ θέντο οἱ πιστοὶ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ*, which some of the MSS. contain at the close of ver. 18 after *εἰ ἐξέλιπον*, and upon which Thenius and Böttcher have founded their conjectures, are evidently a gloss or paraphrase of מִן הַמִּתְחַבֵּר, and of so little value on critical grounds, that Tischendorf did not even think the reading worth mentioning in his edition of the Septuagint.

them both in his work, for the simple reason that they belonged to different periods, as the difference in the names of some of the officers clearly shows, and that they supplemented one another. The list before us belongs to a later period of David's reign than the one in ch. viii. 16-18. In addition to the office-bearers mentioned in ch. viii., we find here *Adoram* over the tribute, and *Ira* the Jairite a confidential counsellor (*cohen*: see at ch. viii. 18), in the place of the sons of David noticed in ch. viii. 18. The others are the same in both lists. The *Chethib* חֶתִּיב is to be read חֶפְרִי (cf. 2 Kings xi. 4, 19), from *כפר*, *perfodit*, and is synonymous with חֶפְרִי (see at ch. viii. 18). Adoram is the same person as Adoniram, who is mentioned in 1 Kings iv. 6 and v. 28 as overseer over the tributary service in the time of Solomon; as we may see from the fact, that the latter is also called Adoram in 1 Kings xii. 18, and Hadoram in 2 Chron. x. 18. Hadoram is apparently only a contracted form of the name, and not merely a copyist's mistake for Adoniram. But when we find that, according to the passages cited, the same man filled this office under three kings, we must bear in mind that he did not enter upon it till the close of David's reign, as he is not mentioned in ch. viii. 16 sqq., and that his name only occurs in connection with Rehoboam's ascent of the throne; so that there is no ground for assuming that he filled the office for any length of time under that monarch. חֶפְרִי does not mean *vectigal*, i.e. tribute or tributary service, but tributary labourers. The derivation of the word is uncertain, and has been disputed. The appointment of a special prefect over the tributary labourers can hardly have taken place before the closing years of David's reign, when the king organized the internal administration of the kingdom more firmly than before. On the tributary labourers, see at 1 Kings v. 27. Ira the Jairite is never mentioned again. There is no ground for altering *Jairi* (the Jairite) into *Jithri* (the Jithrite), as Thenius proposes, since the rendering given in the Syriac ("from Jathir") is merely an inference from ch. xxiii. 38; and the assumption upon which this conclusion is founded, viz. that *Ira*, the hero mentioned in ch. xxiii. 38, is the same person as *Ira* the royal *cohen*, is altogether unfounded.

IV. CLOSE OF DAVID'S REIGN.

CHAP. XXI.—XXIV.

After the suppression of the rebellion headed by Sheba, David spent the remaining years of his reign in establishing the kingdom upon a firmer basis, partly by organizing the army, the administration of justice, and the general government of the realm, and partly by making preparations for the erection of the temple, and enacting rules for the service of the Levites; that he might be able to hand over the government in a firm and satisfactory state to his youthful son Solomon, whom the Lord had appointed as his successor. The account of these regulations and enactments fills up the whole of the last section of the history of David's reign in the first book of Chronicles. But in the book before us, several other things—(1) two divine punishments inflicted upon Israel, with the expiation of the sins that occasioned them (ch. xxi. 1–14, and ch. xxiv.); (2) David's psalm of praise for deliverance out of the hand of all his enemies (ch. xxii.), and his last prophetic words (ch. xxiii. 1–7); and (3) a few brief notices of victorious acts performed in the wars with the Philistines (ch. xxi. 15–22), and a longer list of David's heroes (ch. xxiii. 8–39)—form, as it were, a historical framework for these poetical and prophetic portions. Of the two divine visitations mentioned, the pestilence occasioned by the numbering of the people (ch. xxiv.) occurred undoubtedly in the closing years of David's reign; whereas the famine, and the expiation connected with it (ch. xxi. 1–14), happened most probably at an earlier period, and are merely introduced here because no fitting opportunity had presented itself before. The kernel and centre of this last section of the history of David is to be found unquestionably in the psalm of thanksgiving in ch. xxii., and the prophetic announcement of an exalted and blessed king. In the psalm of thanksgiving David looks back at the close of his life upon all the mercy and faithfulness which he had experienced throughout his reign, and praises the Lord his God for the whole. In his "last words" he looks forward into the time to come, and on the strength of the promise which he has received, of the eternal duration of the dominion of his house,

sees in spirit the just Ruler, who will one day arise from his seed, and take the throne of his kingdom for ever. These two lyrical and prophetic productions of David, the ripest spiritual fruit of his life, form a worthy conclusion to his reign. To this there is appended the list of his heroes, in the form of a supplement (ch. xxiii. 8-39); and finally in ch. xxiv. the account of the numbering of the people, and the pestilence which fell upon Israel, as a punishment for this fault on the part of David. This account is placed at the close of the books of Samuel, merely because the altar which was built to expiate the wrath of God, together with the sacrifices offered upon it, served to consecrate the site for the temple, which was to be erected after David's death, in accordance with the divine promise (ch. vii. 13), by his son and successor Solomon.

THREE YEARS' FAMINE. HEROIC ACTS PERFORMED IN THE
WARS WITH THE PHILISTINES.—CHAP. XXI.

Vers. 1-14. THREE YEARS' FAMINE.—A three years' famine in the land, the occasion of which, as Jehovah declared to the king, was Saul's crime with regard to the Gibeonites, was expiated by David's delivering up to the Gibeonites, at their own request, seven of Saul's descendants, who were then hung by them upon a mountain before Jehovah. This occurrence certainly did not take place in the closing years of David's reign; on the other hand, it is evident from the remark in ver. 7, to the effect that Mephibosheth was spared, that it happened after David had received tidings of Mephibosheth, and had taken him to his own table (ch. ix.). This is mentioned here as a practical illustration, on the one hand of the manner in which Jehovah visited upon the house of Saul, even after the death of Saul himself, a crime which had been committed by him; and, on the other hand, of the way in which, even in such a case as this, when David had been obliged to sacrifice the descendants of Saul to expiate the guilt of their father, he showed his tenderness towards him by the honourable burial of their bones.

Vers. 1-6a. A famine, which lasted for three successive years, induced David to seek the face of Jehovah, *i.e.* to approach God in prayer and ask the cause of this judgment

which had fallen upon the land. The Lord replied, "Because of Saul, and because of the house of blood-guiltiness, because he hath slain the Gibeonites." The expression "because of the house of blood-guiltiness" is in apposition to "Saul," and determines the meaning more precisely: "because of Saul, and indeed because of the blood-guiltiness which rests upon his house." *בֵּית הַדָּמִים* signifies the house upon which blood that had been shed still rested as guilt, like *עֵיר הַדָּמִים* in Ezek. xxii. 2, xxiv. 6, 9, and *אֵשׁ דָּמִים* in Ps. v. 7, xxvi. 9, etc. Nothing further is known about the fact itself. It is simply evident from the words of the Gibeonites in ver. 5, that Saul, in his pretended zeal for the children of Israel, had smitten the Gibeonites, *i.e.* had put them to death. Probably some dissatisfaction with them had furnished Saul with a pretext for exterminating these Amoritish heathen from the midst of the people of God.—Ver. 2. In consequence of this answer from God, which merely indicated in a general manner the cause of the visitation that had come upon the land, David sent for the Gibeonites to ask them concerning the wrong that had been done them by Saul. But before the historian communicates their answer, he introduces an explanation respecting the Gibeonites, to the effect that they were not Israelites, but remnants of the Amorites, to whom Joshua had promised on oath that their lives should be preserved (*vid.* Josh. ix. 3 sqq.). They are called *Hivites* in the book of Joshua (ch. ix. 7); whereas here they are designated *Amorites*, according to the more general name which is frequently used as comprehending all the tribes of Canaan (see at Gen. x. 16 and xv. 16). David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you, and where-with shall I expiate" (*sc.* the wrong done you), "that ye may bless the inheritance (*i.e.* the nation) of Jehovah?" On the use of the imperative *יִכְרֹתִי* to denote the certain consequences, see Ewald, § 347.—Ver. 4. The Gibeonites answered, "I have not to do with silver and gold concerning Saul and his house" (*lit.* it is not, does not stand, to me at silver and gold with Saul and his house), *i.e.* I have no money to demand of Saul, require no pecuniary payment as compensation for the blood which he shed among us (*vid.* Num. xxxv. 31). The *Chethib* *לֹא* is not to be touched, notwithstanding the *לֹא* which follows. The use of the singular may be explained on the simple ground that the

speaker thought of the Gibeonites as a corporation. "And it does not pertain to us to put any one to death in Israel" (*sc.* of our own accord). When David inquired still further, "What do you mean, then, that I should do to you?" they replied, "(As for) the man who consumed us, and who thought against us, that we should be destroyed (לְשַׁמְרֵנוּ without כִּי, subordinate to רָמָה, like אֲעִשֶׂה in the previous verse), so as not to continue in the whole of the territory of Israel, let seven men of his sons be given us, that we may crucify them to Jehovah at Gibeah of Saul, the chosen of Jehovah." אִישׁ אֶשֶׁר וְנִי is placed at the head absolutely (*cf.* Gesenius, § 145, 2). On crucifixion as a capital punishment, see at Num. xxv. 4, where it has already been observed that criminals were not impaled or fastened to the cross alive, but were first of all put to death. Consequently the Gibeonites desired that the massacre, which had taken place among them by the command of Saul, should be expiated by the execution of a number of his sons—blood for blood, according to Num. xxxv. 31. They asked for the crucifixion for Jehovah, *i.e.* that the persons executed might be impaled, as a public exhibition of the punishment inflicted, before the face of the Lord (*vid.* ver. 9), as the satisfaction required to expiate His wrath. Seven was a sacred number, denoting the performance of a work of God. This was to take place in Gibeah, the home and capital of Saul, who had brought the wrath of God upon the land through his crime. There is a sacred irony in the epithet applied to Saul, "chosen of the Lord." If Saul was the chosen of Jehovah, his actions ought to have been in accordance with his divine election.

Vers. 6b-10. David granted the request, because, according to the law in Num. xxxv. 33, blood-guiltiness when resting upon the land could only be expiated by the blood of the criminal; but in delivering up the members of Saul's house for whom they asked, he spared Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul, for the sake of the bond of friendship which he had formed with Jonathan on oath (1 Sam. xviii. 3, xx. 8, 16), and gave up to the Gibeonites two sons of Rizpah, a concubine of Saul (*vid.* ver. 11 and ch. iii. 7), and five sons of Merab the daughter of Saul, whom she had borne to Adriel of Meholah. The name of *Michal*, which stands in the text, is founded upon an error of memory or a copyist's mistake; for it

was not Michal, but *Merab*, Saul's eldest daughter, who was given to Adriel the Meholathite as his wife (1 Sam. xviii. 19). The Gibeonites crucified those who were delivered up to them upon the mountain at Gibeah before Jehovah (see the remarks on ver. 6). "*Thus fell seven at once.*" The *Chethib* שִׁבְעָתָם, at which the Masoretes took such offence that they wanted to change it into שִׁבְעָתָם, is defended by Böttcher very properly, on the ground that the dual of the numeral denotes what is uniformly repeated as if by pairing; so that here it expresses what was extraordinary in the event in a more pictorial manner than the *Keri*: "They fell sevenfold at once," i.e. seven in the same way. The further remark, "they were slain in the first days of harvest, at the beginning of the barley harvest," belongs to what follows, for which it prepares the way. The two *Keris*, וְהָפְתָּ for וְהָם, and בְּתַחֲלֵל for תַּחֲלֵל, are needless emendations. וְתַחֲלֵל is an adverbial accusative (*vid.* Ges. § 118, 2). The harvest began with the barley harvest, about the middle of Nisan, our April.—Ver. 10. And Rizpah took sackcloth, i.e. the coarse hairy cloth that was worn as mourning, and spread it out for herself by the rock—not as a tent, as Clericus supposes, still less as a covering over the corpses of those who had been executed, according to the exegetical handbook, but for a bed—"from the beginning of the harvest till water was poured out upon them (the crucified) from heaven," i.e. till rain came as a sign that the plague of drought that had rested upon the land was appeased; after which the corpses could be openly taken down from the stakes and buried,—a fact which is passed over in the account before us, where only the principal points are given. This is the explanation which Josephus has correctly adopted; but his assumption that the rain fell at once, and before the ordinary early rain, has no foundation in the text of the Bible. "And suffered not the birds of heaven to settle upon the corpses by day, or the wild beasts by night." Leaving corpses without burial, to be consumed by birds of prey and wild beasts, was regarded as the greatest ignominy that could befall the dead (see at 1 Sam. xvii. 44). According to Deut. xxi. 22, 23, persons executed were not to remain hanging through the night upon the stake, but to be buried before evening. This law, however, had no application whatever to the case before us, where the expiation of

guilt that rested upon the whole land was concerned. In this instance the expiatory sacrifices were to remain exposed before Jehovah, till the cessation of the plague showed that His wrath had been appeased.

Vers. 11-14. When this touching care of Rizpah for the dead was told to David, he took care that the bones of the whole of the fallen royal house should be buried in the burial-place of Saul's family. He therefore sent for the bones of Saul and Jonathan, which the men of Jabesh had taken away secretly from the wall of Beisan, where the Philistines had fastened the bodies, and which had been buried in Jabesh (1 Sam. xxxi. 10 sqq.), and had the bones of the sons and grandsons of Saul who had been crucified at Gibeah collected together, and interred all these bones at Zela in the land of Benjamin, in the family grave of Kish the father of Saul. וָנֶכֶד, to take away secretly. מִתְּחֵלֶת בֵּית־שֵׁן, from the *market-place* of Bethshan, does not present any contradiction to the statement in 1 Sam. xxxi. 10, that the Philistines fastened the body to the *wall* of Bethshan, as the *rechob* or market-place in eastern towns is not in the middle of the town, but is an open place against or in front of the gate (cf. 2 Chron. xxxii. 6; Neh. viii. 1, 3, 16). This place, as the common meeting-place of the citizens, was the most suitable spot that the Philistines could find for fastening the bodies to the wall. The *Chethib* חֶתִּיב is the true Hebrew form from חָתַב, whereas the *Keri* חֶלֶאִים is a formation resembling the Aramæan (cf. Ewald, § 252, a). The *Keri* חֶלֶאִים is correct, however, as חֶלֶאִים, being a proper name, does not take any article. In יוֹם הַכּוֹת the literal meaning of יוֹם (day) must not be strictly pressed, but the expression is to be taken in the sense of "at the time of the smiting;" for the hanging up of the bodies did not take place till the day after the battle (1 Sam. xxxi. 8 sqq.).—In ver. 14 the account is abridged, and the bones of the crucified persons are not mentioned again. The situation of *Zela* is unknown (see at Josh. xviii. 28). After this had been carried out in accordance with the king's command, God suffered himself to be entreated for the land, so that the famine ceased.

Vers. 15-22. **HEROIC ACTS PERFORMED IN THE WARS WITH THE PHILISTINES.**—The brief accounts contained in

these verses of different heroic feats were probably taken from a history of David's wars drawn up in the form of chronicles, and are introduced here as practical proofs of the gracious deliverance of David out of the hand of all his foes, for which he praises the Lord his God in the psalm of thanksgiving which follows, so that the enumeration of these feats is to be regarded as supplying a historical basis for the psalm.—Vers. 15–17. The Philistines had war with Israel again. עַד (again) refers generally to earlier wars with the Philistines, and has probably been taken without alteration from the chronicles employed by our author, where the account which follows was attached to notices of other wars. This may be gathered from the books of the Chronicles, where three of the heroic feats mentioned here are attached to the general survey of David's wars (*vid.* 1 Chron. xx. 4). David was exhausted in this fight, and a Philistian giant thought to slay him; but Abishai came to his help and slew the giant. He was called *Yishbo benob* (*Keri, Yishbi*), *i.e.* not *Yishbo* at *Nob*, but *Yishbobenob*, a proper name, the meaning of which is probably “his dwelling is on the height,” and which may have been given to him because of his inaccessible castle. He was one of the descendants of *Raphah*, *i.e.* one of the gigantic race of *Rephaim*. *Raphah* was the tribe-father of the *Rephaim*, an ancient tribe of gigantic stature, of whom only a few families were left even in Moses' time (*vid.* Deut. ii. 11, iii. 11, 13, and the commentary on Gen. xiv. 5). The weight of his lance, *i.e.* of the metal point to his lance, was three hundred shekels, or eight pounds, of brass, half as much as the spear of Goliath (1 Sam. xvii. 7); “and he was girded with new armour.” Böttcher has no doubt given the correct explanation of the word הַרְשָׁה; he supposes the feminine to be used in a collective sense, so that the noun (“armour,” הַרְשָׁה) could be dispensed with. (For parallels both to the words and facts, *vid.* Judg. xviii. 11 and Deut. i. 41.) וַיֹּאמֶר, he said (*sc.* to himself), *i.e.* he thought.—Ver. 17. The danger into which the king had been brought in this war, and out of which he had been rescued solely by Abishai's timely help, induced his attendants to make him swear that he would not go into battle any more in person. וְשָׁבַע לוֹ, administered an oath to him, *i.e.* fixed him by a promise on oath. וְלֹא תִכְבֶּה אֶת-נֹרְאָה יִשְׂרָאֵל, “and shalt not extinguish the light of Israel.” David had

become the light of Israel from the fact that Jehovah was his light (ch. xxii. 29), or, according to the parallel passage in Ps. xviii. 29, that Jehovah had lighted his lamp and enlightened his darkness, *i.e.* had lifted him out of a state of humiliation and obscurity into one of honour and glory. The light (or lamp) is a figure used to represent the light of life as continually burning, *i.e.* life in prosperity and honour. David's regal life and actions were the light which the grace of God had kindled for the benefit of Israel. This light he was not to extinguish, namely by going into the midst of war and so exposing his valuable life to danger.—Ver. 18 (compare 1 Chron. xx. 4). In a second war, *Sibbechai* the Hushathite slew *Saph* the Rephaite at Gob. According to 1 Chron. xxvii. 11, *Sibbechai*, one of the *gibborim* of David (1 Chron. xi. 29), was the leader of the eighth division of the army (see at ch. xxiii. 27). הַחֲשִׁיטִי is a patronymic from חֲשִׁיטָה in 1 Chron. iv. 4. The scene of conflict is called *Gob* in our text, and *Gezer* in the Chronicles. As *Gob* is entirely unknown, Thenius supposes it to be a slip of the pen for *Gezer*; but this is improbable, for the simple reason that *Gob* occurs again in ver. 19. It may possibly have been a small place somewhere near to *Gezer*, which some suppose to have stood on the site of *el Kubab*, on the road from *Ramleh* to *Yalo* (see at Josh. x. 33). The name *Saph* is written *Sippai* in the Chronicles.—Ver. 19 (*vid.* 1 Chron. xx. 5). In another war with the Philistines at Gob, *Elhanan* the son of *Yaare-Origim* of Bethlehem smote *Goliath* of Gath, whose spear was like a weaver's beam. In the Chronicles, however, we find it stated that "*Elhanan* the son of *Jair* smote *Lahmi* the brother of *Goliath* of Gath, whose spear," etc. The words of our text are so similar to those of the Chronicles, if we only leave out the word אֲרִיִּים, which probably crept in from the next line through oversight on the part of a copyist, that they presuppose the same original text, so that the difference can only have arisen from an error in copying. The majority of the expositors (*e.g.* Piscator, Clericus, Michaelis, Movers, and Thenius) regard the text of the Chronicles as the true and original one, and the text before us as simply corrupt. But Bertheau and Böttcher maintain the opposite opinion, because it is impossible to see how the reading in 2 Sam. could grow out of that in the Chronicles; whereas the reading in the

Chronicles might have arisen through conscious alteration originating in the offence taken by some reader, who recalled the account of the conflict between David and Goliath, at the statement that Elhanan smote a giant named Goliath, and who therefore altered *אֶת בֵּית הַלָּחִמִּי* into *אֶת לָחִמִּי אָחִי*. But apart from the question whether there were two Goliaths, one of whom was slain by David and the other by Elhanan, the fact that the conjecture of Bertheau and Böttcher presupposes a deliberate alteration of the text, or rather, to speak more correctly, an intentional falsification of the historical account, is quite sufficient to overthrow it, as not a single example of anything of the kind can be adduced from the whole of the Chronicles. On the other hand, the recollection of David's celebrated officer *Elhanan* of Bethlehem (ch. xxiii. 24; 1 Chron. xi. 26) might easily lead to an identification of the Elhanan mentioned here with that officer, and so occasion the alteration of *אֶת לָחִמִּי* into *בֵּית הַלָּחִמִּי*. This alteration was then followed by that of *אֶת אָחִי גִלְיָת* into *אֶת גִּלְיָת*, and all the more easily from the fact that the description of Lahmi's spear corresponds word for word with that of Goliath's spear in 1 Sam. xvii. 7. Consequently we must regard the reading in the Chronicles as the correct one, and alter our text accordingly; since the assumption that there were two Goliaths is a very improbable one, and there is nothing at all strange in the reference to a brother of Goliath, who was also a powerful giant, and carried a spear like Goliath. Elhanan the son of *Jairi* is of course a different person from *Elhanan* the Bethlehemite, the son of Dodo (ch. xxiii. 24). The Chronicles have *יָעִיר* instead of *Jairi* (the reading according to the *Chethib*), and the former is probably the correct way of writing the name.—Vers. 20, 21 (cf. 1 Chron. xx. 6, 7). In another war at Gath, a Philistian warrior, who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot,¹ defied Israel, and was slain by Jonathan the son of Shimeah, the brother of David (see at ch. xiii. 3). The *Chethib* מֵרֵן is probably to be read מֵרִין, an archaic plural ("a man of measures,

¹ Men with six fingers and six toes have been met with elsewhere. Pliny (*h. nat.* xi. 43) speaks of certain *sedigiti* (six-fingered) Romans. This peculiarity is even hereditary in some families. Other examples are collected by Trusen (*Sitten, Gebräuche, und Krankheiten der alten Hebräer*, pp. 198–9, ed. 2) and Friedreich (*zur Bibel*, i. 298–9).

or extensions:” de Dieu, etc.); in the Chronicles we find the singular *מִיָּדָה* instead.—Ver. 22 (cf. 1 Chron. xx. 8). This verse contains a postscript, in which the previous verses are summed up. The accusative *אֶת־אֲרִיבְעָה* may be explained from a species of attraction, *i.e.* from the fact that the historian had *יָבִיחַ* (ver. 21) still in his mind: “As for these four, they were born to *Rapha*,” *i.e.* they were descendants of the Rephaite family at Gath, where remnants of the aboriginal Canaanitish tribes of gigantic stature were still to be found, as in other towns of the Philistines (*vid.* Josh. xi. 22). “They fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.” “By the hand of David” refers to the fact that David had personally fought with *Yishbubenob* (ver. 16).

DAVID'S PSALM OF THANKSGIVING FOR VICTORY OVER ALL
HIS ENEMIES.—CHAP. XXII.

In the following psalm of thanksgiving, David praises the Lord as his deliverer out of all dangers during his agitated life and conflicts with his foes (vers. 2–4). In the first half he pictures his marvellous deliverance out of all the troubles which he passed through, especially in the time of Saul's persecutions, under the image of an extraordinary theophany (vers. 5–20), and unfolds the ground of this deliverance (vers. 21–28). In the second half he proclaims the mighty help of the Lord, and his consequent victories over the foreign enemies of his government (vers. 29–46), and closes with renewed praise of God for all His glorious deeds (vers. 47–51). The psalm is thus arranged in two leading divisions, with an introductory and concluding strophe. But we cannot discover any definite system of strophes in the further arrangement of the principal divisions, as the several groups of thoughts are not rounded off symmetrically.

The contents and form of this song of praise answer to the fact attested by the heading, that it was composed by David in the later years of his reign, when God had rescued him from all his foes, and helped his kingdom to victory over all the neighbouring heathen nations. The genuineness of the psalm is acknowledged to be indisputable by all the modern critics,

except J. Olshausen and Hupfeld,¹ who, with hypercritical scepticism, dispute the Davidic origin of the psalm on subjective grounds of æsthetic taste. This psalm is found in the Psalter as Ps. xviii., though with many divergences in single words and clauses, which do not, however, essentially affect the meaning. Commentators are divided in opinion as to the relation in which the two different forms of the text stand to one another. The idea that the text of 2 Sam. rests upon a careless copy and tradition must decidedly be rejected: for, on the one hand, by far the larger portion of the deviations in our text from that of the Psalter are not to be attributed to carelessness on the part of copyists, but are evidently alterations made with thoughtfulness and deliberation: *e.g.* the omission of the very first passage (ver. 1), "I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength;" the change of אֱלֹהֵי צוּרִי (my God, my strength, or rock) into אֱלֹהֵי צוּרֵי (the God of my rock), as "the God of the rock" occurs again in ver. 47 of the text before us; or the substitution of הָיָא (He was seen, ver. 11) for הָיָא (He did fly), etc. On the other hand, the original reading has undoubtedly been retained in many passages of our text, whilst simpler and more common forms have been substituted in that of the Psalms; *e.g.*

¹ Even Hitzig observes (*die Psalmen*, i. p. 95): "There is no ground whatever for calling in question the Davidic authorship of the psalm, and therefore the statement made in the heading; and, in fact, there is all the more reason for adhering to it, because it is attested twice. The recurrence of the psalm as one of Davidic origin in 2 Sam. xxii. is of some weight, since not the slightest suspicion attaches to any of the other songs or sayings attributed to David in the second book of Samuel (*e.g.* iii. 33, 34, v. 8, vii. 18-29, xxiii. 1-7). Moreover, the psalm is evidently ancient, and suited to the classical period of the language and its poetry. Ver. 31 is quoted as early as Prov. xxx. 5, and ver. 34 in Hab. iii. 19. The psalm was also regarded as Davidic at a very early period, as the 'diaskeuast' of the second book of Samuel met with the heading, which attributes the psalm to David. No doubt this opinion might be founded upon ver. 51; and with perfect justice if it were: for if the psalm was not composed by David, it must have been composed in his name and spirit; and who could have been this contemporaneous and equal poet?" Again, after quoting several thoroughly Davidic signs, he says at p. 96: "It is very obvious with how little justice the words of ver. 51, relating to 2 Sam. vii. 12-16, 26, 29, have been pronounced spurious. Besides, the psalm can no more have concluded with לְמִשְׁתֵּי (ver. 51) than with ver. 50; and if David refers to himself by name at the commencement in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, and in the middle in ch. vii. 20, why should he not do the same at the close?"

in ver. 5, מוֹסְדֵי מֵט instead of מוֹסְדֵי הַמָּוֶת; in ver. 8, מוֹסְדֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם (the foundations of the heavens) for מוֹסְדֵי הָהָרִים (the foundations of the hills); in ver. 12, חֲשֻׁב־מִים for חֲשֻׁב־תַּמִּים; in ver. 16, אֶפְיָיִם for אֶפְיָיִם מִים; in ver. 28, וְעֵינָיִךְ עַל־רָמִים תִּשְׁפֹּל for וְעֵינָיִךְ עַל־רָמִים תִּשְׁפֹּל; in ver. 33, וַיִּהְיֶה תַּמִּים דְּרָכֶי for וַיִּהְיֶה תַּמִּים דְּרָכֶי; and in ver. 44, תִּשְׁמְרֵנִי לְרֹאשׁ for תִּשְׁמְרֵנִי לְרֹאשׁ, and several others. In general, however, the text of the Psalms bears the stamp of poetical originality more than the text before us, and the latter indicates a desire to give greater clearness and simplicity to the poetical style. Consequently neither of the two texts that have come down to us contains the original text of the psalm of David unaltered; but the two recensions have been made quite independently of each other, one for the insertion of the psalm in the Psalter intended for liturgical use, and the other when it was incorporated into the history of David's reign, which formed the groundwork of our books of Samuel. The first revision may have been made by David himself when he arranged his Psalms for liturgical purposes; but the second was effected by the prophetic historian, whose object it was, when inserting David's psalm of praise in the history of his reign, not so much to give it with diplomatic literality, as to introduce it in a form that should be easily intelligible and true to the sense.

Ver. 1. The heading is formed precisely according to the introductory formula of the song of Moses in Deut. xxxi. 30, and was no doubt taken from the larger historical work employed by the author of our books. It was probably also adopted from this into the canonical collection of the Psalter, and simply brought into conformity with the headings of the other psalms by the alteration of וַיִּדְבֹר דָּוִד (and David said) into לְעַבְדֵי יְהוָה לְדָוִד אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר ("of David, the servant of the Lord, who spake:" Eng. ver.), and the insertion of לְמַנְצֵה ("to the chief musician:" Eng. ver.) at the head (see Delitzsch on the Psalms). "*In the day,*" i.e. at the time, "*when Jehovah had delivered him.*" Deliverance "*out of the hand of Saul*" is specially mentioned, not because this was the last, but because it was the greatest and most glorious,—a deliverance out of the deepest misery into regal might and glory. The psalm is opened by וַיֵּאמֶר in both texts.—Vers. 2-4 form the introduction.

- Ver. 2 Jehovah is my rock, my castle, and my deliverer to me ;
 3 My Rock-God, in whom I trust :
 My shield and horn of my salvation, my fortress and my refuge,
 My Saviour ; from violence Thou redeemest me.
 4 I call upon the praised one, Jehovah,
 And I am saved from my enemies.

This introduction contains the sum and substance of the whole psalm, inasmuch as David groups the many experiences of divine deliverance in his agitated life into a long series of predicates, in all of which he extols God as his defence, refuge, and deliverer. The heaping up of these predicates is an expression both of liveliest gratitude, and also of hope for the future. The different predicates, however, are not to be taken as in apposition to *Jehovah*, or as vocatives, but are declarations concerning God, how He had proved himself faithful to the Psalmist in all the calamities of his life, and would assuredly do so still. David calls God *סֵלַי וצִרְיָאִי* (my rock, and my castle) in Ps. xxxi. 4 as well (cf. Ps. lxxi. 4). The two epithets are borrowed from the natural character of Palestine, where steep and almost inaccessible rocks afford protection to the fugitive, as David had often found at the time when Saul was pursuing him (*vid.* 1 Sam. xxiv. 23, xxii. 5). But whilst David took refuge in rocks, he placed his hopes of safety not in their inaccessible character, but in God the Lord, the eternal spiritual rock, whom he could see in the earthly rock, so that he called Him his true castle. *מַלְאָכִי לִי* (my deliverer to me) gives the real explanation of the foregoing figures. The *לִי* (to me) is omitted in Ps. xviii. 2, and only serves to strengthen the suffix, "my, yea my deliverer." "*My Rock-God*," equivalent to, God who is my Rock: this is formed after Deut. xxxii. 4, where Moses calls the Lord the Rock of Israel, because of His unchangeable faithfulness; for *zur*, a rock, is a figure used to represent immoveable firmness. In Ps. xviii. 3 we find *אֱלֹהֵי צִרְיָאִי*, "my God" (strong one), "my rock," two synonyms which are joined together in our text, so as to form one single predicate of God, which is repeated in ver. 47. The predicates which follow, "*my horn and my salvation-shield*," describe God as the mighty protector and defender of the righteous. A shield covers against hostile attacks. In this respect God was Abraham's shield (Gen. xv. 1), and the helping shield of Israel

(Deut. xxxiii. 29; cf. Ps. iii. 4, lix. 12). He is the "horn of salvation," according to Luther, because He overcomes enemies, and rescues from foes, and gives salvation. The figure is borrowed from animals, which have their strength and defensive weapons in their horns (see at 1 Sam. ii. 1). "*My fortress*:" *misgab* is a high place, where a person is secure against hostile attacks (see at Ps. ix. 10). The predicates which follow, viz. *my refuge*, etc., are not given in Ps. xviii. 3, and are probably only added as a rhythmical completion to the strophe, which was shortened by the omission of the introductory lines, "I love thee heartily, Jehovah" (Ps. xviii. 1). The last clause, "*My Saviour, who redeemest me from violence*," corresponds to אֲחֻסֵּה בִי in the first hemistich. In ver. 4, David sums up the contents of his psalm of thanksgiving in a general sentence of experience, which may be called the theme of the psalm, for it embraces "the result of the long life which lay behind him, so full of dangers and deliverances." מְהֻלָּל, "*the praised one*," an epithet applied to God, which occurs several times in the Psalms (xlvi. 2, xcvi. 4, cxiii. 3, cxlv. 3). It is in apposition to Jehovah, and is placed first for the sake of emphasis: "I invoke Jehovah as the praised one." The imperfects אֶקְרָא and אֶשָּׂא are used to denote what continually happens. In ver. 5 we have the commencement of the account of the deliverances out of great tribulations, which David had experienced at the hand of God.

Ver. 5 For breakers of death had compassed me,

Streams of wickedness terrified me.

6 Cords of hell had girt me about,

Snares of death overtook me.

7 In my distress I called Jehovah,

And to my God I called;

And He heard my voice out of His temple,

And my crying came into His ears.

David had often been in danger of death, most frequently at the time when he was pursued by Saul, but also in Absalom's conspiracy, and even in several wars (cf. ch. xxi. 16). All these dangers, out of which the Lord delivered him, and not merely those which originated with Saul, are included in vers. 5, 6. The figure "*breakers or waves of death*" is analogous to that of the "*streams of Belial*." His distress is represented in both of them under the image of violent floods of water. In the psalm we find מִקְּוֵי מָוֶת, "snares of death," as in Ps. cxvi. 3,

death being regarded as a hunter with a net and snare (cf. Ps. xci. 3): this does not answer so well to the parallel *נָחַל*, and therefore is not so good, since *נָחַל יִשָּׂאֵל* follows immediately. *בְּלִיעַל* (*Belial*), *uselessness* in a moral sense, or *worthlessness*. The meaning "mischief," or injury in a physical sense, which many expositors give to the word in this passage on account of the parallel "death," cannot be grammatically sustained. *Belial* was afterwards adopted as a name for the devil (2 Cor. vi. 15). Streams of wickedness are calamities that proceed from wickedness, or originate with worthless men. *קָרַם*, to come to meet with a hostile intention, *i.e.* to fall upon (*vid.* Job xxx. 27). *הַיִּכָּל*, the temple out of which Jehovah heard him, was the heavenly abode of God, as in Ps. xi. 4; for, according to vers. 8 sqq., God came down from heaven to help him.

- Ver. 8 Then the earth swayed and trembled,
The foundations of the heavens shook
And swayed to and fro, because He was wroth.
9 Smoke ascended in His nose,
And fire out of His mouth devoured,
Red-hot coals burned out of Him.
10 And He bowed the heavens and came down,
And cloudy darkness under His feet.

Jehovah came down from heaven to save His servant, as He had formerly come down upon Sinai to conclude His covenant with Israel in the midst of terrible natural phenomena, which proclaimed the wrath of the Almighty. The theophany under which David depicts the deliverance he had experienced, had its type in the miraculous phenomenon which accompanied the descent of God upon Sinai, and which suggested, as in the song of Deborah (Judg. v. 4, 5), the idea of a terrible storm. It is true that the deliverance of David was not actually attended by any such extraordinary natural phenomena; but the saving hand of God from heaven was so obviously manifested, that the deliverance experienced by him could be poetically described as a miraculous interposition on the part of God. When the Lord rises up from His heavenly temple to come down upon the earth to judgment, the whole world trembles at the fierceness of His wrath. Not only does the earth tremble, but the foundations of the heavens shake: the whole universe is moved. In the psalm we have "the foundations of the hills" instead of "*the foundations of the heavens*,"—a weaker expression, signify-

ing the earth to its deepest foundations. The *Hithpael* יִתְנַפֵּץ, *lit. to sway itself*, expresses the idea of continuous swaying to and fro. לוֹ, בְּיָתָרוֹ, "for it (*sc. wrath*) *burned to him*," it flamed up like a fire; cf. Deut. xxxii. 22, xix. 19. "Smoke," the forerunner of fire, "ascended in His nose." The figurative idea is that of snorting or violent breathing, which indicates the rising of wrath. Smoke is followed by fire, which devours out of the mouth, *i.e.* bursts forth devouring or consuming all that opposes it. The expression is strengthened still further by the parallel: "red-hot coals come out of Him," *i.e.* the flame of red-hot coals pours out of Him as out of a glowing furnace (cf. Gen. xv. 17). This description is based entirely upon Ex. xix. 18, where the Lord comes down upon Sinai in smoke and fire. We are not to picture to ourselves flashes of lightning; for all these phenomena are merely the forerunners of the appearance of God in the clouds, which is described in ver. 10, "He bowed the heavens" to come down. עָרַפַּל, which is frequently connected with עָנָן, signifies cloudy darkness, or dark clouds. The substratum of this description is the fact that in a severe storm the heavens seem to sink down upon the earth with their dark clouds. The Lord draws near riding upon black thunder-clouds, "that the wicked may not behold His serene countenance, but only the terrible signs of His fierce wrath and punishment" (J. H. Michaelis).

- Ver. 11 He rode upon a cherub and flew hither,
 And appeared upon the wings of the wind.
 12 He made darkness round about Him as pavilions,
 Water-gathering, thick clouds.
 13 Out of the splendour before Him
 Burned red-hot coals of fire.

These three verses are a further expansion of ver. 10, and ver. 11 of ver. 10a. The *cherub* is not a personified earthly creature, for *cherubim* are angels around the throne of God (see at Gen. iii. 22). The poetical figure "riding upon the cherub" is borrowed from the fact that God was enthroned between the two cherubim upon the lid of the ark of the covenant, and above their outspread wings (Ex. xxv. 20, 21). As the idea of His "dwelling between the cherubim" (ch. vi. 2; 1 Sam. iv. 4; Ps. lxxx. 2) was founded upon this typical manifestation of the gracious presence of God in the Most Holy place, so here David

depicts the descent of Jehovah from heaven as "riding upon a cherub," picturing the cherub as a throne upon which God appears in the clouds of heaven, though without therefore imagining Him as riding upon a sphinx or driving in a chariot-throne. Such notions as these are precluded by the addition of the term *וָעָלָה*, "did fly." The "*flying*" is also suggested by the wings of the cherubim. As the divine "*shechinah*" was enthroned above the ark of the covenant upon the wings of the cherubim, David in his poetical description represents the cherub and his wings as carrying the throne of God, to express the thought that Jehovah came down from heaven as the judge and saviour of His servants in the splendour of His divine glory, surrounded by cherubim who stand as His highest servants around His throne, just as Moses in his blessing (Deut. xxxiii. 2) speaks of Jehovah as coming out of myriads of His holy angels. The elementary substratum of this was the wings of the wind, upon which He appeared. In the psalm we have *וָעָלָה*, from *וָעָלָה*, to soar (Deut. xxviii. 49; Jer. xlviii. 40), which suggests the idea of flying better than *וָרָא* (He was seen), though the latter gives the real explanation. In vers. 12 and 13, the "cloudy darkness under His feet" (ver. 10b) is still further expanded, so as to prepare the way for the description of thunder and lightning in vers. 14 sqq. God in His wrath withdraws His face from man. He envelopes himself in clouds. The darkness round about him is the black thunder-cloud which forms His hut or tent. The plural *succoth* is occasioned by the plural *סְבִיבוֹתָיו*, "His surroundings:" it is used with indefinite generality, and is more probably the original term than *סִבְתּוֹ* in the psalm. The "*darkness*" is still further explained in the second clause, *חֲשִׁירוֹת מַיִם*, *water-gatherings*. *חֲשִׁירוֹת* (*ἀπ. λεγ.*) signifies, according to the Arabic, a gathering or collection. The expression used in the psalm is *חֲשִׁיחַת מַיִם*, *water-darkness*, which, if not less appropriate, is at any rate not the original term. *עֲבֵי שָׁחִים*, *clouds of clouds*, i.e. the thickest clouds; a kind of superlative, in which a synonym is used instead of the same noun.—Ver. 13. The splendour of the divine nature enveloped in clouds breaks through the dark covering in burning coals of fire. The coals of fire which burst forth, i.e. which break out in flame from the dark clouds, are the lightning which shoots forth from the dark storm-clouds in streams of fire.

- Ver. 14 Jehovah thundered from the heavens,
And the Most High gave His voice.
15 He sent arrows, and scattered them ;
Lightning, and discomfited them.
16 Then the beds of the sea became visible ;
The foundations of the world were uncovered,
Through the threatening of Jehovah,
By the snorting of the breath of His nostrils.

God sent lightning as arrows upon the enemies along with violent thunder, and threw them thereby into confusion. הָמָם, to throw into confusion, and thereby to destroy, is the standing expression for the destruction of the foe accomplished by the miraculous interposition of God (*vid.* Ex. xiv. 24, xxiii. 27 ; Josh. x. 10 ; Judg. iv. 15 ; 1 Sam. vii. 10). To the thunder there were added stormy wind and earthquake, as an effect of the wrath of God, whereby the foundations of the sea and land were laid bare, *i.e.* whereby the depth of the abyss and of the hell in the interior of the earth, into which the person to be rescued had fallen, were disclosed.¹

- Ver. 17 He reached out of the height, He laid hold of me ;
Drew me out of great waters :
18 Saved me from my enemy strong ;
From my haters, because they were too strong for me.
19 They fell upon me in my day of calamity :
Then Jehovah became my stay,
20 And led me out into a broad place ;
Delivered me, because He had pleasure in me.

¹ In vers. 13-16 the text of the Psalms deviates greatly and in many instances from that before us. In ver. 13 we find עָבְרוּ בְּרֶד וְנִחֲלִי אֵשׁ instead of בָּעָרִי וְנִחֲלִי אֵשׁ ; and after ver. 14 בְּרֶד וְנִחֲלִי אֵשׁ is repeated in the psalm. In ver. 15 we have בָּרֶק וְיִבְרָקִים רַב for בָּרֶק, and in ver. 16 אֶפְיִי מִיָּם אֶפְיִי יָם. The other deviations are inconsiderable. So far as the repetition of בְּרֶד וְנִחֲלִי אֵשׁ at the end of ver. 14 is concerned, it is not only superfluous, but unsuitable, because the lightning following the thunder is described in ver. 15, and the words repeated are probably nothing more than a gloss that has crept by an oversight into the text. The אֶפְיִי מִיָּם in ver. 16 is an obvious softening down of the אֶפְיִי יָם of the text before us. In the other deviations, however, the text of the Psalms is evidently the more original of the two ; the abridgment of the second clause of ver. 13 is evidently a simplification of the figurative description in the psalm, and בָּרֶק in the 15th verse of the psalm is more poetical and a stronger expression than the mere בָּרֶק of our text.

The Lord stretched His hand from the height into the deep abysses, which had been uncovered through the threatening of the wrath of God, and drew out the sinking man. *וַיִּשְׁלַח* without *יָד* is used to denote the stretching out of the hand, and in the sense of reaching out to a thing (as in ch. vi. 6). *מִיַּם רַבִּים* (great waters) does not refer to the enemy, but to the calamities and dangers (waves of death and streams of Belial, ver. 5) into which the enemies of the Psalmist had plunged him. *וַיִּצְלַח*, from *צָלַח* (Ex. ii. 10), from which the name of *Moses* was derived, to whom there is probably an allusion made. As Moses was taken out of the waters of the Nile, so David was taken out of great (many) waters. This deliverance is still further depicted in more literal terms in vers. 18 sqq. *אִי־יָצַח*, my enemy strong, poetical for my strong enemy, does not refer to one single enemy, namely Saul; but, as the parallel "my haters" shows, is a poetical personification of all his enemies. They were stronger than David, therefore the Lord had to deliver him with an almighty hand. The "*day of calamity*" in which the enemy fell upon him (*יָמֵי צָרָה*: see at ver. 6) was the time when David wandered about in the desert helpless and homeless, fleeing from the pursuit of Saul. The Lord was then his support, or a staff on which he could support himself (*vid.* Ps. xxiii. 4), and led him out of the strait into the broad, *i.e.* into a broad space where he could move freely, because God had pleasure in him, and had chosen him in His grace to be His servant. This reason for his deliverance is carried out still further in what follows.

- Ver. 21 Jehovah rendered to me according to my righteousness,
 According to the cleanness of my hands He recompensed me.
 22 For I have observed the ways of Jehovah,
 And have not wickedly departed from my God.
 23 For all His rights are before my eyes;
 And His statutes,—I do not depart from them.
 24 And I was innocent towards Him,
 And kept myself from mine iniquity.

צָדִיק signifies to do to a person good or evil, like the Greek *εὖ* and *κακῶς πράττειν τινα*. The *righteousness* and *cleanness of hands*, *i.e.* the innocence, which David attributed to himself, were not perfect righteousness or holiness before God, but the righteousness of his endeavours and deeds as contrasted with the

unrighteousness and wickedness of his adversaries and pursuers, and consisted in the fact that he endeavoured earnestly and sincerely to walk in the ways of God and to keep the divine commandments. *רָשָׁע מֵן*, *to be wicked from*, is a pregnant expression, signifying to depart wickedly from God. *לְנֶגְדִי*, *i.e.* as a standard before my eye. In the psalm we find *תָּקִים עִמּוֹ*, innocent in intercourse with the Lord, instead of *לִי תָקִים* (see Deut. xviii. 13); and for the fact itself, David's own testimony in 1 Sam. xxvi. 23, 24, the testimony of God concerning him in 1 Kings xiv. 8, and the testimony of history in 1 Kings xv. 5. *מִמִּיעוֹנִי*, from mine iniquity, *i.e.* from the iniquity which I might have committed.

Ver. 25 Thus Jehovah repaid me according to my righteousness,
According to my cleanness before His eyes.

26 Towards the pious Thou showest thyself pious,
Towards the perfectly innocent Thou showest thyself innocent.

27 Towards the genuine Thou showest thyself genuine,
And towards the perverse Thou showest thyself crooked.

28 And afflicted people Thou helpst,
And Thine eyes are against the haughty; them Thou humblest.

The motive for deliverance, which was expounded in vers. 21-24, is summed up briefly in ver. 25; and then in vers. 26 and 27 it is carried back to the general truth, that the conduct of God towards men is regulated according to the conduct of men towards God. The *vav cons.* in *וַיִּשָּׁב* expresses the logical consequence. *כְּבָרִי* is used instead of *כְּבָר יְדִי* in ver. 21, which is repeated in the psalm simply for the sake of variation. The truth that God treats every man in accordance with his conduct towards Him, is expounded in four parallel clauses, in which the conduct of God is expressed in verbs in the *Hithpael*, formed from the adjectives used to describe the conduct of men towards God. To the *תָּקִים*, the pious or devoted to God, He also shows himself pious; and innocent, blameless, to the *גִּבּוֹר תָּקִים*, the man strong in innocence, who walks in perfect innocence. *נָקֵר*, a *Niphal* participle, from *נָקַר*, he who keeps himself pure, strives after purity of walk. *תִּתְקַר*, an anomalous contraction of *תִּתְקַרֵּר* (Ps.), analogous to the formation of *נָקֵר* for *נָקַר*. The form *תִּתְקַרֵּל* for *תִּתְקַרֵּל*, to show one's self perverse or crooked, is still more anomalous. God shows himself so towards the perverse, by giving him up to his perverseness (Rom. i. 28).

This general truth is applied in ver. 28 to the congregation of God, in the contrast which it presents of humble and haughty, and is expounded from the conduct of God, as displayed in the history of Israel, towards these two classes of men, into which the nation was divided. In the psalm, therefore, we find *אֶתְּהָא*, for which the simple *וְ* is substituted here, because the verse does not contain any actual reason for what goes before. *עַם עָנִי*, afflicted people, is used to denote the pious and depressed in the nation; *רִשִׁים*, the high, *i.e.* the haughty, or godless rich and mighty in the nation. *לְיָשָׁרִים* is to be taken as a relative: whom Thou humblest (see Ewald, § 332, *b*; and for the thought, Isa. ii. 11). In the psalm the unusual mode of expression in the second clause is changed into the more common phrase, "Thou bringest down high, *i.e.* proud looks" (cf. Prov. vi. 17, xxi. 4, xxx. 13; Ps. cxxxi. 1, etc.).

Ver. 29 commences the description of the help which David had already received from God in his conflict with the enemies of Israel, and which he would still receive.

- Ver. 29 For Thou art my lamp, O Jehovah !
 And Jehovah maketh my darkness bright.
 30 For through Thee I run troops,
 And through my God I leap walls.
 31 God—innocent is His way.
 The word of Jehovah is refined,
 A shield is He to all who trust in Him.

The explanatory *וְ*, with which the new description of the divine mercy commences, refers to the thought implied in ver. 28, that David belonged to the "afflicted people," whom the Lord always helps. As the Lord delivered him out of the danger of death, because He took pleasure in him, so He also gave him power over all his enemies. For He was his lamp, *i.e.* He had lifted him out of a condition of depression and contempt into one of glory and honour (see at ch. xxi. 17), and would still further enlighten his darkness, *i.e.* "would cause the light of His salvation to shine upon him and his tribe in all the darkness of their distress" (Hengstenberg). In the psalm the verse reads thus: "For Thou lightest (makest bright) my lamp (or candle), Jehovah my God enlighteneth my darkness;" the bold figure "Jehovah the lamp of David" being more literally explained. The figure is analogous to the one in Ps.

xxvii. 1, "The Lord is my light;" whilst the form נֵר is a later mode of writing נֹר .—Ver. 30. In the strength of his God he could run hostile troops and leap walls, *i.e.* overcome every hostile power. אָרַן , not from רָצַן , to smash in pieces, but from רָץ , to run; construed with the accusative according to the analogy of verbs of motion.—Ver. 31. He derives this confidence from the acts of God, and also from His word. הָאֵל (God) is written absolutely, like הָעֵזִי in Deut. xxxii. 4. The article points back to בְּאֵלֹהֵי . Jehovah is *the* God (הָאֵל), whose way is perfect, without blemish; and His word is refined brass, pure silver (cf. Ps. xii. 7). He who trusts in Him is safe from all foes. The last two clauses occur again in Agur's proverbs (Prov. xxx. 5). The thought of the last clause is still further explained in vers. 32 sqq.

- Ver. 32 For who is God save Jehovah,
 And who a rock save our God?
 33 This God is my strong fortress,
 And leads the innocent his way.
 34 He makes my feet like the hinds,
 And setteth me upon my high places;
 35 He teacheth my hands to fight,
 And my arms span brazen bows.

There is no true God who can help, except or by the side of Jehovah (cf. Deut. xxxii. 31; 1 Sam. ii. 2). צֹר , as in ver. 2. This God is "my strong fortress:" for this figure, comp. Ps. xxxi. 5 and xxvii. 1. חֵיל , strength, might, is construed with מָעֲזִי , by free subordination: "my fortress, a strong one," like מַחֲסִי עֵז (Ps. lxxi. 7; cf. Ewald, § 291, b). יָתֵר for יָתַר , from יָתַר (*vid.* Ges. § 72; Olshausen, *Gram.* p. 579), in the sense of leading or taking round, as in Prov. xii. 26. God leads the innocent his way, *i.e.* He is his leader and guide therein. The *Keri* יָרַדְתִּי rests upon a misunderstanding. There is an important difference in the reading of this verse in Ps. xviii., viz. "The God who girdeth me with strength, and makes my way innocent." The last clause is certainly an alteration which simplifies the meaning, and so is also the first clause, the thought of which occurs again, word for word, in ver. 40a, with the addition of לְמַלְחָמָה . אֵילָה or אֵילַת , the hind, or female stag, is a figure of speech denoting swiftness in running. "*Like the hinds:*" a condensed simile for "like the hinds' feet," such as we frequently

meet with in Hebrew (*vid.* Ges. § 144, Anm.). The reference is to swiftness in pursuit of the foe (*vid.* ch. ii. 18; 1 Chron. xii. 8). רַגְלָיו, *his feet*, for רַגְלִי (*my feet*) in the psalm, may be accounted for from the fact, that David had spoken of himself in the third person as the innocent one. "*My high places*" were not the high places of the enemy, that became his by virtue of conquest, but the high places of his own land, which he maintained triumphantly, so that he ruled the land from them. The expression is formed after Deut. xxxii. 13, and is imitated in Hab. iii. 19. לְפָד is generally construed with a double accusative: here it is written with an accusative and לְ, and signifies to instruct for the war. נָחַת, in the psalm נִחַתָּה, on account of the feminine יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, is not the *Niphal* of נָחַת, to be broken in pieces, but the *Piel* of נָחַת, to cause to go down, to press down the bow, *i.e.* to set it. The bow of brass is mentioned as being the strongest: setting such a bow would be a sign of great heroic strength. The two verses (34 and 35) are simply a particularizing description of the power and might with which the Lord had endowed David to enable him to conquer all his foes.

- Ver. 36 And Thou reachest me the shield of my salvation,
 And Thy hearing makes me great.
 37 Thou makest my steps broad under me,
 And my ankles have not trembled.

The Lord bestows the true strength for victory in His salvation. The shield of salvation is the shield which consists of salvation, of the helping grace of the Lord. עֲנִיתְךָ, for which we find in the psalm עֲנִיתֶךָ, thy humility, *i.e.* God's condescending grace, does not mean "thy humiliation," but "*thy hearkening*," *i.e.* that practical hearkening on the part of God, when called upon for help, which was manifested in the fact that God made his steps broad, *i.e.* provided the walker with a broad space for free motion, removing obstructions and stumbling-blocks out of the way. God had done this for David, so that his ankles had not trembled, *i.e.* he had not been wanting in the power to take firm and safe steps. In this strength of his God he could destroy all his foes.

- Ver. 38 I will pursue my enemies and destroy them,
 I will not turn till they are consumed.

- 39 I will consume them and dash them in pieces, that they may
not arise,
And may fall under my feet.
40 And Thou girdest me with strength for war,
Thou bowest mine adversaries under me.
41 And Thou makest mine enemies turn the back to me;
My haters, I root them out.

The optative form **אֶרְדֵּף** serves to make the future signification of **אֶרְדֵּף** (in the psalm) the more apparent. Consequently it is quite out of the question to take the other verbs as preterites. We are not compelled to do this by the interchange of imperfects *c. vav consec.* with simple imperfects, as the *vav consec.* is not used exclusively as expressive of the past. On the contrary, the substance of the whole of the following description shows very clearly that David refers not only to the victories he has already won, but in general to the defeat of all his foes in the past, the present, and the future; for he speaks as distinctly as possible not only of their entire destruction (vers. 38, 39, 43), but also of the fact that God makes him the head of the nations, and distant and foreign nations do him homage. Consequently he refers not only to his own personal dominion, but also, on the strength of the promise which he had received from God, to the increase of the dominion of the throne of his house, whilst he proclaims in the Spirit the ultimate defeat of all the enemies of the kingdom of God. This Messianic element in the following description comes out in a way that cannot be mistaken, in the praise of the Lord with which he concludes in vers. 47-51. **וְאֶשְׁמְדֵם**, "I destroy them," is stronger than **וְאֶשְׁיִיגֵם**, "I reach them" (in the psalm). In ver. 39 the words are crowded together, to express the utter destruction of all foes. In the psalm **וְאֶשְׁמְדֵם** is omitted. **וְהִתְחַנְּנֵנִי** in the psalm is not a poetical Syriasm, and still less a "careless solecism" (Hupfeld), but a simple contraction, such as we meet with in many forms: *e.g.* **מִלִּפְנֵי** for **מִלִּפְנֵי** (Job xxxv. 11; cf. Ewald, § 232, *b*). The form **תִּתֶּנָּה** for **נִתְּנָה** (in the psalm) is unusual, and the aphæresis of the **נ** can only be accounted for from the fact that this much-used word constantly drops its **נ** as a radical sound in the imperfect (see Ewald, § 195, *c*). The phrase **תִּתֶּנָּה לִּי עָרָה** is formed after Ex. xxiii. 27. "Giving the enemy to a person's back"

means causing them to turn the back, *i.e.* putting them to flight.

Ver. 42 They look out, but there is no deliverer ;

For Jehovah, but He answereth them not.

43 And I rub in pieces as the dust of the earth,

Like the mire of the streets I crush them and stamp upon them.

The cry of the foe for help is not attended to ; they are annihilated without quarter. *יִשְׁעוּ*, to look out to God for help (with *אֶל* and *עַל* ; *vid.* Isa. xvii. 7, 8), is more poetical than *יִשְׁעוּ*, "they cry" (in the psalm) ; and *כְּעֹפֶר-אֶרֶץ* is more simple than *כְּעֹפֶר עַל-פְּנֵי-רִיחַ* (in the psalm), "I crush them as dust before the wind," for the wind does not crush the dust, but carries it away. In the second clause of ver. 43, *אֶדְרֹם* is used instead of *אֶרִיקֶם* in the psalm, and strengthened by *אֶרְקָעֶם*. *אֶדְרֹם*, from *דָּרַס*, to make thin, to crush ; so that instead of "I pour them out like mire of the streets which is trodden to pieces," the Psalmist simply says, "I crush and stamp upon them like mire of the streets." Through the utter destruction of the foe, God establishes the universal dominion to which the throne of David is to attain.

Ver. 44 And Thou rescuest me out of the strivings of my people,
Preservest me to be the head of the heathen.

People that I knew not serve me.

45 The sons of the stranger dissemble to me,

Upon hearsay they obey me.

46 The sons of the stranger despair,

And tremble out of their castles.

By "*the strivings of my people*" the more indefinite expression in the psalm, "strivings of the people," is explained. The words refer to the domestic conflicts of David, out of which the Lord delivered him, such as the opposition of Ishbosheth and the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba. These deliverances formed the prelude and basis of his dominion over the heathen. Consequently *תִּשְׁמְרֵנִי* (*Thou preservest me* to be the head of the nations) occurs quite appropriately in the second clause ; and *תִּשְׁמְנֵנִי*, "Thou settest me," which occurs in the psalm, is a far less pregnant expression. *עַם* before *יִדְעָתִי* is used indefinitely to signify foreign nations. *Toi* king of Hamath (ch. viii. 10) was an example, and his subjugation was a prelude of the future subjection of all the heathen to the sceptre of the Son

of David, as predicted in Ps. lxxii. In ver. 45 the two clauses of the psalm are very appropriately transposed. The *Hithpael* יִתְכַּחֵשׁ, as compared with יִכְחֵשׁ, is the later form. In the primary passage (Deut. xxxiii. 29) the *Niphal* is used to signify the dissembling of friendship, or of involuntary homage on the part of the vanquished towards the victor. לְשִׁמּוֹעַ אָזְנוֹ, "by the hearing of the ear," i.e. by hearsay, is a simple explanation of לְשִׁמְעַת אָזְנוֹ, at the rumour of the ears (*vid.* Job xlii. 5), i.e. at the mere rumour of David's victories. The foreign nations pine away, i.e. despair of ever being able to resist the victorious power of David. יִתְהַרְרֶי, "they gird themselves," does not yield any appropriate meaning, even if we should take it in the sense of equipping themselves to go out to battle. The word is probably a misspelling of יִתְהַרְרֵי, which occurs in the psalm, הָרִי being a *ἀπ. λεγ.* in the sense of being terrified, or trembling: they tremble out of their castles, i.e. they come trembling out of their castles (for the thought itself, see Micah vii. 17). It is by no means probable that the word קָיַר, which is so frequently met with in Hebrew, is used in this one passage in the sense of "to limp," according to Syriac usage.

In conclusion, the Psalmist returns to the praise of the Lord, who had so highly favoured him.

- Ver. 47 Jehovah liveth, and blessed is my rock,
 And the God of my refuge of salvation is exalted.
 48 The God who giveth me vengeance,
 And bringeth nations under me;
 49 Who leadeth me out from mine enemies,
 And exalteth me above mine adversaries,
 Delivereth me from the man of violence.

The formula הַיְיָ־חַיִּים does not mean "let Jehovah live," for the word יָחַי would be used for that (*vid.* ch. xvi. 16, 1 Sam. x. 24), but is a declaration: "the Lord is living." The declaration itself is to be taken as praise of God, for "praising God is simply ascribing to Him the glorious perfections which belong to him; we have only to give Him what is His own" (Hengstenberg). The following clauses also contain simply declarations; this is evident from the word יָרִים, since the optative יִרָם would be used to denote a wish. The Lord is living or alive when He manifests His life in acts of omnipotence. In the last clause, the expression צִוֵּר (rock) is in-

tensified into אֱלֹהֵי צוּר יִצְעִי (the God of my refuge, or rock, of salvation), i.e. the God who is my saving rock (cf. ver. 3). In the predicates of God in vers. 48, 49, the saving acts depicted by David in vers. 5-20 and 29-46 are summed up briefly. Instead of מוֹרִיד, "He causes to go down under me," i.e. He subjects to me, we find in the psalm יוֹרֵד, "He drives nations under me," and מוֹצִיא instead of מַסְלֵחַ; and lastly, instead of אֱלֹהֵי הַמָּס in the psalm, we have here אֱלֹהֵי הַמָּסִים, as in Ps. cxl. 2. Therefore the praise of the Lord shall be sounded among all nations.

Ver. 50 Therefore will I praise Thee, O Jehovah, among the nations,
And sing praise to Thy name.

51 As He who magnifies the salvation of His king,
And showeth grace to His anointed,
To David, and his seed for ever.

The grace which the Lord had shown to David was so great, that the praise thereof could not be restricted to the narrow limits of Israel. With the dominion of David over the nations, there spread also the knowledge, and with this the praise, of the Lord who had given him the victory. Paul was therefore perfectly justified in quoting the verse before us (ver. 50) in Rom. xvi. 9, along with Deut. xxxii. 43 and Ps. cxvii. 1, as a proof that the salvation of God was intended for the Gentiles also. The king whose salvation the Lord had magnified, was not David as an individual, but David and his seed for ever,—that is to say, the royal family of David which culminated in Christ. David could thus sing praises upon the ground of the promise which he had received (ch. vii. 12-16), and which is repeated almost verbatim in the last clause of ver. 51. The *Chethib* סוֹרֵל is the *Hiphil* participle מוֹרֵד, according to Ps. xviii. 51; and the *Keri* מוֹרֵל, "tower of the fulness of salvation," is a singular conjecture.

DAVID'S LAST WORDS.—CHAP. XXIII. 1-7.

The psalm of thanksgiving, in which David praised the Lord for all the deliverances and benefits that he had experienced throughout the whole of his life, is followed by the prophetic will and testament of the great king, unfolding the importance of his rule in relation to the sacred history of the

future. And whilst the psalm may be regarded (ch. xxii.) as a great hallelujah, with which David passed away from the stage of life, these "last words" contain the divine seal of all that he has sung and prophesied in several psalms concerning the eternal dominion of his seed, on the strength of the divine promise which he received through the prophet Nathan, that his throne should be established for ever (ch. vii.). These words are not merely a lyrical expansion of that promise, but a prophetic declaration uttered by David at the close of his life and by divine inspiration, concerning the true King of the kingdom of God. "The aged monarch, who was not generally endowed with the gift of prophecy, was moved by the Spirit of God at the close of his life, and beheld a *just Ruler in the fear of God*, under whose reign blessing and salvation sprang up for the righteous, and all the wicked were overcome. The pledge of this was the eternal covenant which God had concluded with him" (Tholuck: *die Propheten und ihre Weissagungen*, p. 166). The heading "*these are the last words of David*" serves to attach it to the preceding psalm of thanksgiving.

- Ver. 1 Divine saying of David the son of Jesse,
 Divine saying of the man, the highly exalted,
 Of the anointed of the God of Jacob,
 And of the lovely one in the songs of praise of Israel.
 2 The Spirit of Jehovah speaks through me,
 And His word is upon my tongue.

This introduction to the prophetic announcement rests, both as to form and substance, upon the last sayings of Balaam concerning the future history of Israel (Num. xxiv. 3, 15). This not only shows to what extent David had occupied himself with the utterances of the earlier men of God concerning Israel's future; but indicates, at the same time, that his own prophetic utterance was intended to be a further expansion of Balaam's prophecy concerning the Star out of Jacob and the Sceptre out of Israel. Like Balaam, he calls his prophecy a נְבִיאָה, i.e. a *divine saying* or oracle, as a revelation which he had received directly from God (see at Num. xxiv. 3). But the recipient of this revelation was not, like Balaam the son of Beor, a man with closed eye, whose eyes had been opened by a vision of the Almighty, but "*the man who was raised up on high*" (רָם, adver-

bially "above," is, strictly speaking, a substantive, "height," used in an adverbial sense, as in Hos. xi. 7, and probably also ch. vii. 16), *i.e.* whom God had lifted up out of humiliation to be the ruler of His people, yea, even to be the head of the nations (ch. xxii. 44). Luther's rendering, "who is assured of the Messiah of the God of Jacob," is based upon the Vulgate, "*cui constitutum est de Christo Dei Jacob,*" and cannot be grammatically sustained. David was exalted on the one hand as "*the anointed of the God of Jacob,*" *i.e.* as the one whom the God of Israel had anointed king over His people, and on the other hand as "*the lovely one in Israel's songs of praise,*" *i.e.* the man whom God had enabled to sing lovely songs of praise in celebration of His grace and glory. זָמִיר = זִמְרָה does not mean a song generally, but a song of praise in honour of God (see at Ex. xv. 2), like זִמְרָה in the headings to the psalms. As David on the one hand had firmly established the kingdom of God in an earthly and political respect as the anointed of Jehovah, *i.e.* as king, so had he on the other, as the composer of Israel's songs of praise, promoted the spiritual edification of that kingdom. The idea of אִנְשׁוֹ is explained in ver. 2. The Spirit of Jehovah speaks through him; his words are the inspiration of God. The preterite דִּבֶּר relates to the divine inspiration which preceded the utterance of the divine saying. דִּבֶּר, literally to speak into a person, as in Hos. i. 2. The saying itself commences with ver. 3.

- Ver. 3 The God of Israel saith,
 The Rock of Israel speaketh to me :
 A Ruler over men, just,
 A Ruler in the fear of God.
- 4 And as light of the morning, when the sun rises,
 As morning without clouds :
 From shining out of rain (springeth) green out of the earth.
- 5 For is not my house thus with God ?
 For He hath made me an everlasting covenant,
 Provided with all, and attested ;
 For all my salvation and all good pleasure,
 Should He then not cause it to grow ?

As the prophets generally preface their saying with "thus saith the Lord," so David commences his prophetic saying with "*the God of Israel saith,*" for the purpose of describing it most emphatically as the word of God. He designates God "*the*

God" and "*the Rock*" (as in ch. xxii. 3) of Israel, to indicate that the contents of his prophecy relate to the salvation of the people of Israel, and are guaranteed by the unchangeableness of God. The saying which follows bears the impress of a divine oracle even in its enigmatical brevity. The verbs are wanting in the different sentences of vers. 3b and 4. "*A ruler over men,*" *sc.* "will arise," or there will be. מֶלֶךְ אֲדָמָה does not mean "among men," but "*over men*;" for אֲדָמָה is to be taken as with the verb מָשַׁל, as denoting the object ruled over (cf. Gen. iii. 16, iv. 7, etc.). הָאָדָם does not mean certain men, but the human race, humanity. This ruler is "*just*" in the fullest sense of the word, as in the passages founded upon this, viz. Jer. xxiii. 5, Zech. ix. 9, and Ps. lxxii. 2. The justice of the ruler is founded in his "*fear of God.*" יְרֵאתָ אֱלֹהִים is governed freely by מִשְׁלָל. (On the fact itself, see Isa. xi. 2, 3.) The meaning is, "*A ruler over the human race will arise, a just ruler, and will exercise his dominion in the spirit of the fear of God.*"—Ver. 4 describes the blessing that will proceed from this ruler. The idea that ver. 4 should be connected with ver. 3b so as to form one period, in the sense of "*when one rules justly over men (as I do), it is as when a morning becomes clear,*" must be rejected, for the simple reason that it overlooks Nathan's promise (ch. vii.) altogether, and weakens the force of the saying so solemnly introduced as the word of God. The ruler over men whom David sees in spirit, is not any one who rules righteously over men; nor is the seed of David to be regarded as a collective expression indicating a merely ideal personality, but, according to the Chaldee rendering, the Messiah himself, the righteous Shoot whom the Lord would raise up to David (Jer. xxiii. 5), and who would execute righteousness and judgment upon earth (Jer. xxxiii. 15).—Ver. 4 is to be taken by itself as containing an independent thought, and the connection between it and ver. 3 must be gathered from the words themselves: the appearance (the rise) of this Ruler will be "*as light of the morning, when the sun rises.*" At the same time, the Messiah is not to be regarded as the subject to אֹרֶךְ בֹּקֶר (the light of the morning), as though the ruler over men were compared with the morning light; but the subject compared to the morning light is intentionally left indefinite, according to the view adopted by Luther in his exposition, "*In the time of*"

the Messiah it will be like the light of the morning." We are precluded from regarding the Messiah as the subject, by the fact that the comparison is instituted not with the sun, but with the morning dawn at the rising of the sun, whose vivifying effects upon nature are described in the second clause of the verse. The words *יְהִי כְאֶרְבֶּבֶת* are to be taken relatively, as a more distinct definition of the morning light. The clause which follows, "*morning without clouds*," is parallel to the foregoing, and describes more fully the nature of the morning. The light of the rising sun on a cloudless morning is an image of the coming salvation. The rising sun awakens the germs of life in the bosom of nature, which had been slumbering through the darkness of the night. "The state of things before the coming of the ruler resembles the darkness of the night" (Hengstenberg). The verb is also wanting in the second hemistich. "*From the shining from rain* (is, comes) *fresh green out of the earth*." *נֹרָא* signifies the brightness of the rising sun; but, so far as the actual meaning is concerned, it relates to the salvation which attends the coming of the righteous ruler. *מִמָּטָר* is either subordinate to *נֹרָא*, or co-ordinate with it. In the former case, we should have to render the passage, "from the shining of the sun which proceeds out of rain," or "from the shining after rain;" and the allusion would be to a cloudless morning, when the shining of the sun after a night's rain stimulates the growth of the plants. In the latter case, we should have to render it "from the shining (and) from the rain;" and the reference would be to a cloudless morning, on which the vegetation springs up from the ground through sunshine followed by rain. Grammatically considered, the first view (? the second) is the easier of the two; nevertheless we regard the other (? the first) as the only admissible one, inasmuch as rain is not to be expected when the sun has risen with a cloudless sky. The rays of the sun, as it rises after a night of rain, strengthen the fresh green of the plants. The rain is therefore a figurative representation of blessing generally (cf. Isa. xlv. 3), and the green grass which springs up from the earth after the rain is an image of the blessings of the Messianic salvation (Isa. xlv. 4, xlv. 8).

In Ps. lxxii. 6, Solomon takes these words of David as the basis of his comparison of the effects resulting from the govern-

ment of the true Prince of peace to the coming down of the rain upon the mown grass.

In ver. 5, the prophecy concerning the coming of the just ruler is sustained by being traced back to the original promise in ch. vii., in which David had received a pledge of this. The first and last clauses of this verse can only be made to yield a meaning in harmony with the context, by being taken interrogatively: "*for is not my house so with God?*" The question is only indicated by the tone (לֹא כִי = כִּי הֲלֹא: ch. xix. 23), as is frequently the case, even before clauses commencing with לֹא (e.g. Hos. xi. 5, Mal. ii. 15: cf. Ewald, § 324, a). לֹא כִּי (not so) is explained by the following clause, though the כִּי which follows is not to be taken in the sense of "*that*." Each of the two clauses contains a distinct thought. That of the first is, "Does not my house stand in such a relation to God, that the righteous ruler will spring from it?" This is then explained in the second: "for He hath made an everlasting covenant with me." David calls the promise in ch. vii. 12 sqq., that God would establish his kingdom to his seed for ever, a covenant, because it involved a reciprocal relation,—namely, that Jehovah would first of all found for David a permanent house, and then that the seed of David was to build the house of the Lord. This covenant is עֲרוּכָה בָּכֶל, "*equipped (or provided) with all*" that could help to establish it. This relates more especially to the fact that all eventualities were foreseen, even the falling away of the bearers of the covenant of God, so that such an event as this would not annul the covenant (ch. vii. 14, 15). וְשִׁמְרוּהָ, "*and preserved*," i.e. established by the assurance that even in that case the Lord would not withdraw His grace. David could found upon this the certainty, that God would cause all the salvation to spring forth which had been pledged to his house in the promise referred to. כָּל־יִשְׁעִי, "*all my salvation*," i.e. all the salvation promised to me and to my house. כָּל־חֲפֶצְךָ, not "*all my desire*," but "*all the good pleasure*" of God, i.e. all the saving counsel of God expressed in that covenant. The כִּי before לֹא is an energetic repetition of the כִּי which introduces the explanatory thought, in the sense of a firm assurance: "*for all my salvation and all good pleasure, yea, should He not cause it to spring forth?*"

- Ver. 6 But the worthless, as rejected thorns are they all ;
 For men do not take them in the hand.
 7 And the man who touches them
 Provides himself with iron and spear-shaft,
 And they are utterly burned with fire where they dwell.

The development of salvation under the ruler in righteousness and the fear of God is accompanied by judgment upon the ungodly. The abstract בְּלִיעַל, *worthlessness*, is stronger than אִישׁ בְּלִיעַל, the worthless man, and depicts the godless as personified worthlessness. מִנֶּר, in the *Keri* מִנֶּר, the *Hophal* of נִר or נִיר, literally "scared" or hunted away. This epithet does not apply to the thorns, so well as to the ungodly who are compared to thorns. The reference is to thorns that men root out, not to those which they avoid on account of their prickles. בְּלִיעַל, an antiquated form for בָּלֵם (see Ewald, § 247, *d*). To root them out, or clean the ground of them, men do not lay hold of them with the bare hand; but "*whoever would touch them equips himself (יָמָא, sc. יָד, to 'fill the hand' with anything: 2 Kings ix. 24) with iron, i.e. with iron weapons, and spear-shaft*" (*vid.* 1 Sam. xvii. 7). This expression also relates to the godless rather than to the thorns. They are consumed בְּשִׁבְתָּם, "*at the dwelling,*" *i.e.* as Kimchi explains, at the place of their dwelling, the place where they grow. For בְּשִׁבְתָּם cannot mean "on the spot" in the sense of without delay. The burning of the thorns takes place at the final judgment upon the ungodly (Matt. xiii. 30).

DAVID'S HEROES.—CHAP. XXIII. 8–39.

The following list of David's heroes we also find in 1 Chron. xi. 10–47, and expanded at the end by sixteen names (vers. 41–47), and attached in ver. 10 to the account of the conquest of the fortress of Zion by the introduction of a special heading. According to this heading, the heroes named assisted David greatly in his kingdom, along with all Israel, to make him king, from which it is evident that the chronicler intended by this heading to justify his appending the list to the account of the election of David as king over all the tribes of Israel (1 Chron. xi. 1), and of the conquest of Zion, which followed immediately afterwards. In every other respect the two lists

agree with one another, except that there are a considerable number of errors of the text, more especially in the names, which are frequently corrupt in both texts, so that the true reading cannot be determined with certainty. The heroes enumerated are divided into three classes. The *first* class consists of three, viz. *Jashobeam*, *Eleazar*, and *Shammah*, of whom certain brave deeds are related, by which they reached the first rank among David's heroes (vers. 8-12). They were followed by *Abishai* and *Benaiah*, who were in the *second* class, and who had also distinguished themselves above the rest by their brave deeds, though they did not come up to the first three (vers. 18-23). The others all belonged to the *third* class, which consisted of thirty-two men, of whom no particular heroic deeds are mentioned (vers. 24-39). Twelve of these, viz. the five belonging to the first two classes and seven of the third, were appointed by David commanders of the twelve detachments into which he divided the army, each detachment to serve for one month in the year (1 Chron. xxvii.). These heroes, among whom we do not find Joab the commander-in-chief of the whole of the forces, were the king's aides-de-camp, and are called in this respect הַשָּׁלִישִׁים (ver. 8), though the term הַשָּׁלִישִׁים (the *thirty*, vers. 13, 23, 24) was also a very customary one, as their number amounted to thirty in a round sum. It is possible that at first they may have numbered exactly thirty; for, from the very nature of the case, we may be sure that in the many wars in which David was engaged, other heroes must have arisen at different times, who would be received into the corps already formed. This will explain the addition of sixteen names in the Chronicles, whether the chronicler made use of a different list from that employed by the author of the books before us, and one belonging to a later age, or whether the author of our books merely restricted himself to a description of the corps in its earlier condition.

Vers. 8-12. *Heroes of the first class.*—The short heading to our text, with which the list in the Chronicles also begins (1 Chron. xi. 11), simply gives the names of these heroes. But instead of "the *names* of the mighty men," we have in the Chronicles "the *number* of the mighty men." This variation is all the more striking, from the fact that in the Chronicles the total number is not given at the close of the list as it is in our

text. At the same time, it can hardly be a copyist's error for *מִבְּחַר* (*selection*), as Bertheau supposes, but must be attributable to the fact that, according to vers. 13, 23, and 24, these heroes constituted a corps which was named from the number of which it originally consisted. The first, *Jashobeam*, is called "the chief of the thirty" in the Chronicles. Instead of *יִשְׁבָּעַם* (*Jashobeam*), the reading in the Chronicles, we have here *יִשָּׁב בַּשֶּׁבֶת* (*Josheb-basshebeth*), unquestionably a spurious reading, which probably arose, according to Kennicott's conjecture, from the circumstance that the last two letters of *יִשְׁבָּעַם* were written in one MS. under *בַּשֶּׁבֶת* in the line above (ver. 7), and a copyist took *בַּשֶּׁבֶת* from that line by mistake for *עַם*. The correctness of the reading *Jashobeam* is established by 1 Chron. xxvii. 2. The word *הַחֲכַמִּי* is also faulty, and should be corrected, according to the Chronicles, into *בְּדַחְמֹנִי* (*Ben-hachmoni*); for the statement that Jashobeam was a son (or descendant) of the family of *Hachmon* (1 Chron. xxvii. 32) can easily be reconciled with that in 1 Chron. xxvii. 2, to the effect that he was a son of Zabdiel. Instead of *רֹאשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁים* (*head of the thirty*), the reading in the Chronicles, we have here *רֹאשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי* (*head of the three*). Bertheau would alter our text in accordance with the Chronicles, whilst Thenius proposes to bring the text of the Chronicles into accordance with ours. But although the many unquestionable corruptions in the verse before us may appear to favour Bertheau's assumption, we cannot regard either of the emendations as necessary, or even warrantable. The proposed alteration of *הַשְּׁלִישִׁי* is decidedly precluded by the recurrence of *רֹאשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי* in ver. 18, and the alteration of *הַשְּׁלִישִׁים* in the Chronicles by the repeated allusion to the *שְׁלִישִׁים*, not only in vers. 15, 42, ch. xii. 4, and ch. xxvii. 6 of the Chronicles, but also in vers. 13, 23, and 24 of the chapter before us. The explanation given of *שְׁלִישִׁי* and *שְׁלִישִׁים*, as signifying chariot-warriors, is decidedly erroneous;¹ for the singular *הַשְּׁלִישִׁי* is used in all the passages in which the word occurs to signify the royal aide-de-camp (2 Kings vii. 2, 17, 19, ix. 25,

¹ This explanation, which we find in Gesenius (*Thes.* and *Lex.*) and Bertheau, rests upon no other authority than the testimony of Origen, to the effect that an obscure writer gives this interpretation of *τριπύργης*, the rendering of *שְׁלִישִׁי*, an authority which is completely overthrown by the writer of the gloss in *Octateuch*. (Schleussner, *Lex. in LXX.* t. v. p. 338),

xv. 25), and the plural שְׁלִישִׁים the royal body-guard, not only in 2 Kings x. 25, but even in 1 Kings ix. 22, and Ex. xiv. 7, xv. 4, from which the meaning chariot-warriors has been derived. Consequently ראש השְׁלִישִׁים is the head of the king's aides-de-camp, and the interchange of השְׁלִישִׁים with the שְׁלִישִׁים of the Chronicles may be explained on the simple ground that David's thirty heroes formed his whole body of adjutants. The singular שְׁלִישִׁי is to be explained in the same manner as הַכֹּהֵן (see at ch. viii. 18). Luther expresses the following opinion in his marginal gloss with regard to the words which follow (הוא עָרִינוּ הָעֶצֶן): "We believe the text to have been corrupted by a writer, probably from some book in an unknown character and bad writing, so that *orer* should be substituted for *adino*, and *ha-eznib* for *eth hanitho*;" that is to say, the reading in the Chronicles, "he swung his spear," should be adopted (cf. ver. 18). This supposition is certainly to be preferred to the attempt made by Gesenius (*Lex.*) and v. Dietrich (*s.v.* עָרִין) to find some sense in the words by assuming the existence of a verb עָרַן and a noun עָרֶן, a spear, since these words do not occur anywhere else in Hebrew; and in order to obtain any appropriate sense, it is still necessary to resort to alterations of the text. "*He swung his spear over eight hundred slain at once.*" This is not to be understood as signifying that he killed eight hundred men at one blow, but that in a battle he threw his spear again and again at the foe, until eight hundred men had been slain. The Chronicles give three hundred instead of eight hundred; and as that number occurs again in ver. 18, in the case of Abishai, it probably found its way from that verse into this in the book of Chronicles.—Vers. 9, 10. "After him (*i.e.* next to him in rank) was *Eleazar* the son of *Dodai* the Ahohite, among the three heroes with David when they defied the Philistines, who had assembled there, and the Israelites drew near." The *Chethib* דודי is to be read דודאי, *Dodai*, according to 1 Chron. xxvii. 4, and the form דודו (*Dodo*) in the parallel text (1 Chron. xi. 12) is only a variation in the form of the name. Instead of בְּרֶחֱמֵהוּ (*the son of Ahohi*) we find הָאֲחֹיטִי (*the Ahohite*) in the

who gives this explanation of τριστάτας: τοὺς παρὰ χεῖρα τοῦ βασιλέως ἀριστερὰν τρίτης μοίρας ἄρχοντας. Suidas and Hesychius give the same explanation (*s.v.* τριστάται). Jerome also observes (ad Ezek. xxiii.): "It is the name of the second rank next to the king."

Chronicles; but the בן must not be struck out on that account as spurious, for "the son of an Ahohite" is the same as "the Ahohite." For בְּשִׁלְשָׁה הַנְּבָרִים we must read בְּשִׁלְשָׁה נְבָרִים, according to the *Keri* and the Chronicles. שְׁלֹשָׁה is not to be altered, since the numerals are sometimes attached to substantives in the absolute state (see *Ges.* § 120, 1). "The three heroes" are Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah (ver. 11), who reached the first rank, according to ver. 19, among the heroes of David. Instead of בְּהִרְפָּם בְּפִלִּשְׁתִּים (*when they defied the Philistines*), we find in the Chronicles בְּפִסְם וְהַפִּלִּשְׁתִּים, "at Pas-dammim," i.e. most probably *Ephes-dammim* (1 Sam. xvii. 1), where the Philistines were encamped when Goliath defied the Israelites. Thenius, Bertheau, and Böttcher therefore propose to alter our text so as to make it correspond to that of the Chronicles, and adduce as the reason the fact that in other passages הִרָּף is construed with the accusative, and that שָׁם, which follows, presupposes the previous mention of the place referred to. But the reasons are neither of them decisive. הִרָּף is not construed with the accusative alone, but also with לְ (2 Chron. xxxii. 17), so that the construction with ב is quite a possible one, and is not at variance with the idea of the word. שָׁם again may also be understood as referring to the place, not named, where the Philistines fought with the Israelites. The omission of אָשָׁר before נִאֲסַפּוּ is more difficult to explain; and הַפִּלִּשְׁתִּים, which we find in the Chronicles, has probably dropped out after בְּפִלִּשְׁתִּים. The reading in the Chronicles בְּפִסְם וְהַפִּלִּשְׁתִּים (בְּפִסְם) is probably only a more exact description of the locality, which is but obscurely indicated in our text by בְּהִרְפָּם בְּפִלִּשְׁתִּים; for these words affirm that the battle took place where the Israelites had once been defied by the Philistines (1 Sam. xvii. 10), and where they repaid them for this defiance in a subsequent conflict. The Philistines are at any rate to be regarded as the subject to נִאֲסַפּוּ, and these words are a circumstantial clause: the Philistines had assembled together there to battle, and the Israelites had advanced to the attack. The heroic act of Eleazar is introduced with "he arose." He arose and smote the Philistines till his hand was weary and clave to his sword, i.e. was so cramped as to be stiffened to the sword. Through this Jehovah wrought a great salvation for Israel on that day, "and the people (the soldiers) turned after him only to plunder," *sc.*

because he had put the enemy to flight by himself. *שׁוּב אַחֲרָיו* does not mean to turn back from flight after him, but is the opposite of *שׁוּב מֵאַחֲרָיו*, to turn away from a person (1 Sam. xv. 11, etc.), so that it signifies "to turn to a person and follow behind him." Three lines have dropped out from the parallel text of the Chronicles, in consequence of the eye of a copyist having wandered from *נֶאֱכָפוּ בְּלִשְׁתִּים* in ver. 9 to *וַיֵּאָכְפוּ בְּלִשְׁתִּים* in ver. 11.—Vers. 11, 12. The third leading hero was *Shammah*, the son of *Age* the Hararite (*הָרָרִי* is probably contracted from *הַהָרָרִי*, ver. 33). He also made himself renowned by a great victory over the Philistines. The enemy had gathered together *לְחֵיה*, "as a troop," or in a crowd. This meaning of *לְחֵיה* (here and ver. 13, and possibly also in Ps. lxxviii. 11) is thoroughly established by the Arabic (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 470). But it seems to have fallen into disuse afterwards, and in the Chronicles it is explained in ver. 13 by *מִלְחָמָה*, and in ver. 15 by *מִחָנֶה*. "On a portion of a field of lentils there," *sc.* where the Philistines had gathered together, the people (of Israel) were smitten. Then Shammah stationed himself in the midst of the field, and *וַיִּצִּילָהּ*, "wrested it," from the foe, and smote the Philistines. Instead of *עֲרִשִׁים*, *lentils*, we find in the Chronicles *שְׁעוּרִים*, barley, a very inconsiderable difference.

Vers. 13-17. To this deed there is appended a similar heroic feat performed by three of the thirty heroes whose names are not given. The *Chethib* *שְׁלִשִׁים* is evidently a slip of the pen for *שְׁלִשָּׁה* (*Keri* and Chronicles). The thirty chiefs are the heroes named afterwards (see above at p. 491). As *שְׁלִשָּׁה* has no article either in our text or the Chronicles, the three intended are not the three already mentioned (Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah), but three others out of the number mentioned in vers. 24 sqq. These three came to David in the harvest time unto the cave of Adullam (see at 1 Sam. xxii. 1), when a troop of the Philistines was encamped in the valley of Rephaim, and David was on the mountain fortress, and a Philistian post was then in Bethlehem. And David longed for water, and said, "Oh that one would bring me water to drink out of the well of Bethlehem at the gate!" The encampment of the Philistines in the valley of Rephaim, and the position of David on the mountain fortress (*בְּמַעְרֵהָ*), render it probable that the feat mentioned here took place in the war

with the Philistines described in ch. v. 17 sqq. Robinson could not discover any well in Bethlehem, "especially none 'by the gate,' except one connected with the aqueduct on the south" (*Palestine*, vol. ii. p. 158). מַעְיָן need not be understood, however, as signifying that the well was *in* or *under* the gate; but the well referred to may have been at the gate outside the city. The well to which tradition has given the name of "David's well" (*cisterna David*), is about a quarter of an hour's walk to the north-east of Bethlehem, and, according to Robinson's description, is "merely a deep and wide cistern or cavern now dry, with three or four narrow openings cut in the rock." But Ritter (*Erzk.* xvi. p. 286) describes it as "deep with clear cool water, into which there are three openings from above, which Tobler speaks of as bored;" and again as a cistern "built with peculiar beauty, from seventeen to twenty-one feet deep, whilst a house close by is pointed out to pilgrims as Jesse's house."—Ver. 16. The three heroes then broke through the camp of the Philistines at Bethlehem, *i.e.* the outpost that occupied the space before the gate, fetched water out of the well, and brought it to David. He would not drink it, however, but poured it out upon the ground to the Lord, as a drink-offering for Jehovah. "He poured it out upon the earth, rendering Him thanks for the return of the three brave men" (Clericus). And he said, "Far be it from me, O Jehovah, to do this! The blood of the men who went with their lives (*i.e.* at the risk of their lives)," *sc.* should I drink it? The verb אָשַׁתָּה is wanting in our text, but is not to be inserted according to the Chronicles as though it had fallen out; the sentence is rather to be regarded as an *aposiopesis*. הָלֵלָה לִי after יְהוָה is a vocative, and is not to be altered into מִיְהוָה, according to the מִיְהוָה of the Chronicles. The fact that the vocative does not occur in other passages after הָלֵלָה לִי proves nothing. It is equivalent to the oath הִי יְהוָה (1 Sam. xiv. 45). The chronicler has endeavoured to simplify David's exclamation by completing the sentence. בְּנַפְשֵׁיהֶם, "for the price of their souls," *i.e.* at the risk of their lives. The water drawn and fetched at the risk of their lives is compared to the soul itself, and the soul is in the blood (Lev. xvii. 11). Drinking this water, therefore, would be nothing else than drinking their blood.

Vers. 18–23. *Heroes of the second class.*—Vers. 18, 19.

Abishai, Joab's brother (see 1 Sam. xxvi. 6), was also chief of the body-guard, like Jashobeam (ver. 8: the *Chethib* חֶתִּיב is correct; see at ver. 8). He swung his spear over three hundred slain. "He had a name among the three," i.e. the three principal heroes, Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah. The following words, כִּדְהִשְׁלָשָׁה, make no sense. חֶתֶּשֶׁלֶשֶׁה is an error in writing for חֶשֶׁלֶשֶׁה, as ver. 23 shows in both the texts (ver. 25 of the Chronicles): an error the origin of which may easily be explained from the word חֶשֶׁלֶשֶׁה, which stands immediately before. "He was certainly honoured before the thirty (heroes of David), and became their chief, but he did not come to the three," i.e. he was not equal to Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah. הִנִּי has the force of an energetic assurance: "is it so that," i.e. it is certainly so (as in ch. ix. 1; Gen. xxvii. 36, xxix. 15).—Vers. 20-23. *Benaiah*, the son of Jehoiada, "Jehoiada the priest" according to 1 Chron. xxvii. 5, possibly the one who was "prince for Aaron," i.e. of the family of Aaron, according to 1 Chron. xii. 27, was captain of the Crethi and Plethi according to ch. viii. 18 and xx. 23. He was the son of a brave man, rich in deeds (חִי is evidently an error for חַי in the Chronicles), of Kabzeel in the south of Judah (Josh. xv. 21). "*He smote the two Ariels of Moab.*" The Arabs and Persians call every remarkably brave man *Ariel*, or lion of God (*vid.* Bochart, *Hieroz.* ii. pp. 7, 63). They were therefore two celebrated Moabitish heroes. The supposition that they were sons of the king of the Moabites is merely founded upon the conjecture of Thenius and Bertheau, that the word בְּנֵי (sons of) has dropped out before Ariel. "He also slew the lion in the well on the day of the snow," i.e. a lion which had been driven into the neighbourhood of human habitations by a heavy fall of snow, and had taken refuge in a cistern. The *Chethib* חֶתִּיב and בְּנֵי are the earlier forms for the *Keris* substituted by the Masoretes הֶחָיִי and הַבּוֹר, and consequently are not to be altered. He also slew an Egyptian of distinguished size. According to the *Keri* we should read אִישׁ מְרֹאֶה (instead of מְרֹאֶה), "*a man of appearance*," i.e. a distinguished man, or a man of great size, *ἄνδρα ὀπαρόν* (LXX.); in the Chronicles it is simplified as אִישׁ מְרֹאֶה, a man of measure, i.e. of great height. This man was armed with a spear or javelin, whereas Benaiah was only armed with a stick; nevertheless the latter smote him, took

away his spear, and slew him with his own weapon. According to the Chronicles the Egyptian was five cubits high, and his spear like a weaver's beam. Through these feats Benaiah acquired a name among the three, though he did not equal them (vers. 22, 23, as in vers. 18, 19); and David made him a member of his privy council (see at 1 Sam. xxii. 14).

Vers. 24–39. *Heroes of the third class.*—Ver. 24. "*Asahel*, the brother of Joab, among the thirty," *i.e.* belonging to them. This definition also applies to the following names; we therefore find at the head of the list in the Chronicles, וְגִבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִּל, "and brave heroes (were)." The names which follow are for the most part not further known. *Elhanan*, the son of *Dodo* of Bethlehem, is a different man from the Bethlehemite of that name mentioned in ch. xxi. 19. *Shammah* the Harodite also must not be confounded with the Shammahs mentioned in vers. 11 and 33. In the Chronicles we find *Shammoth*, a different form of the name; whilst הַחֲרָדִי is an error in writing for הַחֲרָדִי, *i.e.* sprung from *Harod* (Judg. vii. 1). This man is called *Shamhut* in 1 Chron. xxvii. 8; he was the leader of the fifth division of David's army. *Elia* of *Harod* is omitted in the Chronicles; it was probably dropped out in consequence of the *homoioteleuton* הַחֲרָדִי.—Ver. 26. *Helez* the Paltite; *i.e.* sprung from *Beth-Pelet* in the south of Judah (Judg. xv. 27). He was chief of the seventh division of the army (compare 1 Chron. xxvii. 10 with 1 Chron. xi. 27, though in both passages הַפָּלְטִי is misspelt הַפָּלְטִי). *Ira* the son of *Ikkesh* of *Tekoah* in the desert of Judah (ch. xiv. 2), chief of the sixth division of the army (1 Chron. xxvii. 9).—Ver. 27. *Abiezer* of *Anathoth* (*Anata*) in Benjamin (see at Josh. xviii. 24), chief of the ninth division of the army (1 Chron. xxvii. 12). *Mebunnai* is a mistake in spelling for *Sibbechai* the Hushathite (compare ch. xxi. 18 and 1 Chron. xi. 29). According to 1 Chron. xxvii. 11, he was chief of the eighth division of the army.—Ver. 28. *Zalmon* the Ahohite, *i.e.* sprung from the Benjaminite family of *Ahoah*, is not further known. Instead of *Zalmon* we find *Ilai* in the Chronicles (ver. 29); but which of the two names is the correct one it is impossible to decide. *Maharai* of *Netophah*: according to Ezra ii. 22 and Neh. vii. 26, *Netophah* was a place in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, but it has not yet been discovered, as *Beit Nattif*, which might be thought of, is

too far from Bethlehem (*vid.* Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 344, and Tobler, *Dritte Wanderung*, pp. 117-8). According to 1 Chron. xxvii. 13, *Maharai* belonged to the Judahite family of Serah, and was chief of the tenth division of the army.—Ver. 29. *Cheleb*, more correctly *Cheled* (1 Chron. xi. 30; or *Cheldai*, 1 Chron. xxvii. 15), also of Netophah, was chief of the twelfth division of the army. *Ittai* (*Ithai* in the Chronicles), the son of Ribai of Gibeah of Benjamin, must be distinguished from *Ittai* the Gathite (ch. xv. 19). Like all that follow, with the exception of Uriah, he is not further known.—Ver. 30. *Benaiah* of *Phir'aton* in the tribe of Ephraim, a place which has been preserved in the village of *Fer'ata*, to the south-west of Nablus (see at Judg. xii. 13). *Hiddai* (wrongly spelt *Hudai* in the Chronicles), out of the valleys of *Gaash*, in the tribe of Ephraim by the mountain of *Gaash*, the situation of which has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xxiv. 30).—Ver. 31. *Abi-Albon* (written incorrectly *Abiel* in the Chronicles) the Arbathite, *i.e.* from the place called *Beth-haarabah* or *Arabah* (Josh. xv. 61 and xviii. 18, 22) in the desert of Judah, on the site of the present *Kasr Hajla* (see at Josh. xv. 6). *Azmaveth* of *Bahurim*: see at ch. xvi. 5.—Vers. 32, 33. *Eliashba* of *Shaalbon* or *Shaalbin*, which may possibly have been preserved in the present *Selbit* (see at Josh. xix. 42). The next two names, *יֵשָׁן הַיְּהוֹנָתָן* and *שָׁמַח הַחֲרָרִי* (*Bneyashen Jehonathan* and *Shammah the Hararite*), are written thus in the Chronicles (ver. 34), *בְּנֵי הַשֵּׁם הַגִּזּוֹנִי יוֹנָתָן בֶּרֶשָׁנָה הַחֲרָרִי*, “*Bnehashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Sage the Hararite.*” The text of the Chronicles is evidently the more correct of the two, as *Bne Jashen Jehonathan* does not make any sense. The only question is whether the form *בְּנֵי הַשֵּׁם* is correct, or whether *בְּנֵי* has not arisen merely through a misspelling. As the name does not occur again, all that can be said is that *Bne hashem* must at any rate be written as one word, and therefore should be pointed differently. The place mentioned, *Gizon*, is unknown. *שָׁמַח* for *בֶּרֶשָׁנָה* probably arose from ver. 11. *Ahiam* the son of *Sharar* or *Sacar* (Chron.) the Ararite (in the Chronicles the Hararite).—Ver. 34. The names in 34a, *Eliphelet ben-Ahasbai ben-Hammaacathi*, read thus in the Chronicles (vers. 35, 36): *Eliphal ben-Ur*; *Hepher hammececerathi*. We see from this that in *ben-Ahasbai ben* two names have been fused together; for the

text as it lies before us is rendered suspicious partly by the fact that the names of both father and grandfather are given, which does not occur in connection with any other name in the whole list, and partly by the circumstance that לִז cannot properly be written with הַפְּעֻכִּי , which is a *Gentile noun*. Consequently the following is probably the correct way of restoring the text, $\text{אֱלִישֶׁלֶט בֶּן־אֹרִי הַפְּעֻכִּי}$, *Eliphelet* (a name which frequently occurs) *the son of Ur*; *Hepher the Maachathite*, i.e. of Maacah in the north-east of Gilead (see at ch. x. 6 and Deut. iii. 14). *Eliam* the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, the clever but treacherous counsellor of David (see at ch. xv. 12). This name is quite corrupt in the Chronicles.—Ver. 35. *Hezro* the Carmelite, i.e. of Carmel in the mountains of Judah (1 Sam. xxv. 2). *Paarai* the Arbite, i.e. of Arab, also in the mountains of Judah (Josh. xv. 52). In the Chronicles we find *Naarai ben-Ezbi*: the latter is evidently an error in writing for *ha-Arbi*; but it is impossible to decide which of the two forms, *Paarai* and *Naarai*, is the correct one.—Ver. 36. *Jigal* the son of Nathan of Zoba (see at ch. viii. 3): in the Chronicles, Joel the brother of Nathan. *Bani* the Gadite: in the Chronicles we have *Mibhar* the son of Hagri. In all probability the names in the Chronicles are corrupt in this instance also.—Ver. 37. *Zelek* the Ammonite, *Nacharai* the Beerothite (of Beeroth: see at ch. iv. 2), the armour-bearer of Joab. Instead of כֶּרִי , the *Keri* and the Chronicles have נִשָּׂא : the latter reading is favoured by the circumstance, that if more than one of the persons named had been Joab's armour-bearers, their names would most probably have been linked together by a copulative *vav*.—Ver. 38. *Ira* and *Gareb*, both of them Jithrites, i.e. sprung from a family in Kirjath-jearim (1 Chron. ii. 53). *Ira* is of course a different man from the *cohen* of that name (ch. xx. 26).—Ver. 39. *Uriah* the Hittite is well known from ch. xi. 3. "*Thirty and seven in all.*" This number is correct, as there were *three* in the first class (vers. 8–12), *two* in the second (vers. 18–23), and *thirty-two* in the third (vers. 24–39), since ver. 34 contains three names according to the amended text.

NUMBERING OF THE PEOPLE, AND PESTILENCE.—CHAP. XXIV.

For the purpose of ascertaining the number of the people, and their fitness for war, David ordered Joab, his commander-

in-chief, to take a census of Israel and Judah. Joab dissuaded him from such a step; but inasmuch as the king paid no attention to his dissuasion, he carried out the command with the help of the military captains (vers. 1-9). David very speedily saw, however, that he had sinned; whereupon the prophet Gad went to him by the command of Jehovah to announce the coming punishment, and give him the choice of three different judgments which he placed before him (vers. 10-13). As David chose rather to fall into the hand of the Lord than into the hand of men, God sent a pestilence, which carried off seventy thousand men in one day throughout the whole land, and had reached Jerusalem, when the Lord stopped the destroying angel in consequence of the penitential prayer of David (vers. 14-17), and sent Gad to the king to direct him to build an altar to the Lord on the spot where the destroying angel had appeared to him (ver. 18). Accordingly David bought the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, built an altar upon it, and sacrificed burnt-offerings and thank-offerings, after which the plague was stayed (vers. 19-25).

This occurrence, which is introduced in the parallel history in 1 Chron. xxi. between David's wars and his arrangements for a more complete organization of the affairs of the nation, belongs undoubtedly to the closing years of David's reign. The mere taking of a census, as a measure that would facilitate the general organization of the kingdom, could not in itself be a sinful act, by which David brought guilt upon himself, or upon the nation, before God. Nevertheless it is not only represented in ver. 1 as a manifestation of the wrath of God against Israel, but in ver. 3 Joab seeks to dissuade the king from it as being a wrong thing; and in ver. 10 David himself admits that it was a grievous sin against God, and as a sin it is punished by the Lord (vers. 12 sqq.). In what, then, did David's sin consist? Certainly not in the fact that, when taking the census, "he neglected to demand the atonement money, which was to be raised, according to Ex. xxx. 12 sqq., from all who were numbered, because the numbering of the people was regarded in itself as an undertaking by which the anger of God might easily be excited," as Josephus and Bertheau maintain; for the Mosaic instructions concerning the atonement money had reference to the incorporation of the people into the army of

Jehovah (see at Ex. xxx. 13, 14), and therefore did not come into consideration at all in connection with the census appointed by David as a purely political measure. Nor can we imagine that David's sin consisted merely in the fact that he "entered upon the whole affair from pride and vain boasting," or that "he commanded the census from vanity, inasmuch as he wanted to have it distinctly set before his own eyes how strong and mighty he was" (Buddeus, Hengstenberg, and others); for although pride and vanity had something to do with it, as the words of Joab especially seem to indicate, David was far too great a man to allow us to attribute to him a childish delight in the mere number of souls in his kingdom. The census had certainly a higher purpose than this. It is very evident from 1 Chron. xxvii. 23, 24, where it is mentioned again that it was connected with the military organization of the people, and probably was to be the completion of it. David wanted to know the number of his subjects, not that he might be able to boast of their multitude, nor that he might be able to impose all kinds of taxes upon every town and village according to their houses and inhabitants, as Ewald maintains; but that he might be fully acquainted with its defensive power, though we can neither attribute to him the definite purpose "of transforming the theocratic sacred state into a conquering world-state" (Kurtz), nor assume that through this numbering the whole nation was to be enrolled for military service, and that thirst for conquest was the motive for the undertaking. The true kernel of David's sin was to be found, no doubt, in self-exaltation, inasmuch as he sought for the strength and glory of his kingdom in the number of the people and their readiness for war. This sin was punished. "Because David was about to boast proudly and to glory in the number of his people, God determined to punish him by reducing their number either by famine, war, or pestilence" (Seb. Schmidt). At the same time, the people themselves had sinned grievously against God and their king, through the two rebellions headed by Absalom and Sheba.

Vers. 1-9. "Again the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel; and He moved David against them, saying, Go, number Israel and Judah." לָחַר וַיִּסָּפֶר . . . points back to the manifestation of the wrath of God, which Israel had ex-

perienced in the three years' famine (ch. xxi.). Just as that plague had burst upon the land on account of the guilt which rested upon the people, so the kindling of the wrath of God against Israel a second time also presupposes guilt on the part of the nation; and as this is not expressly pointed out, we may seek for it generally in the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba against the divinely established government of David. The subject to "moved" is *Jehovah*, and the words "against them" point back to *Israel*. Jehovah instigated David against Israel to the performance of an act which brought down a severe judgment upon the nation. With regard to the idea that God instigates to sin, see the remarks on 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. In the parallel text of the Chronicles, Satan is mentioned as the tempter to evil, through whom Jehovah led David to number the people.—Ver. 2. David entrusted the task to his commander-in-chief Joab. *וַאֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ*, "who was with him:" the meaning is, "when he was with him" (David). We are not warranted in attempting any emendations of the text, either by the expression *וַאֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ*, or by the reading in the Chronicles, *וְאֶל-שָׂרֵי הָעָם* ("and to the rulers of the people"); for whilst the latter reading may easily be seen to be a simplification founded upon ver. 4, it is impossible to show how *וַאֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ*, which is supported by all the ancient versions (with the sole exception of the Arabic), could have originated in *וְאֶל-שָׂרֵי הָעָם*. "Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba (see at Judg. xx. 1), and muster the people." *פָּקֵד*, to muster or number, as in Num. i. 44 sqq. The change from the singular *פָּקֵד* to the plural *פָּקְדוּ* may be explained very simply, from the fact that, as a matter of course, Joab was not expected to take the census by himself, but with the help of several assistants.—Ver. 3. Joab discountenanced the thing: "Jehovah thy God add to the nation, as it is, a hundredfold as many, and may the eyes of my lord the king see it. But why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?" The *ו* before *יֹסֵף* stands at the commencement, when what is said contains a sequel to something that has gone before (*vid.* Ges. § 255, 1, a). The thought to which Joab's words are appended as a sequel, is implied in what David said, "that I may know the number of the people;" and if expressed fully, his words would read somewhat as follows: "If thou hast delight in the greatness of the number of

the people, may Jehovah," etc. Joab evidently saw through the king's intention, and perceived that the numbering of the people could not be of any essential advantage to David's government, and might produce dissatisfaction among the people, and therefore endeavoured to dissuade the king from his purpose. כָּהֵם וְכָהֵם, "as they (the Israelites) just are," i.e. in this connection, "just as many as there are of them." From a grammatical point of view, כָּהֵם is to be taken as the object to יִסְפֶּה, as in the parallel passages, Deut. i. 11, 2 Sam. xii. 8. Not only did he desire that God would multiply the nation a hundredfold, but that He would do it during the lifetime of David, so that his eyes might be delighted with the immense numbers.—Vers. 4, 5. But as the king's word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army, they (Joab and the other captains) went out to number Israel. יָהֲנִי, they encamped, i.e. they fixed their headquarters in the open field, because great crowds assembled together. This is only mentioned here in connection with the place where the numbering commenced; but it is to be understood as applying to the other places as well (Thenius). In order to distinguish *Aroer* from the place of the same name on the Arnon, in the tribe of Reuben (Josh. xii. 2; Num. xxxii. 34, etc.), it is defined more precisely as "the town in the brook-valley of Gad," i.e. *Aroer* of Gad before Rabbah (Josh. xiii. 25; Judg. xi. 33), in the *Wady Nahr Ammân*, to the north-east of *Ammân* (see at Josh. xiii. 25). וְאֶל-יַעֲזֵר (and to *Jazer*): this is a second place of encampment, and the preposition אֶל is to be explained on the supposition that יָבֹאוּ (they came), which follows, was already in the writer's thoughts. *Jazer* is probably to be found in the ruins of *es Szir*, at the source of the *Nahr Szir* (see at Num. xxi. 32).—Ver. 6. "And they came to *Gilead*," i.e. the mountainous district on the two sides of the *Jabbok* (see at Deut. iii. 10). The words which follow, viz. "into the land תַּחְתִּים הָרְחֵשׁ," are quite obscure, and were unintelligible even to the earlier translators. The Septuagint has γῆν Ἐθαῶν Ἀδααί, or γῆν Θαβασῶν (also γῆν χερτιέμ) ἥ ἐστὶν Ἀδααί. Symmachus has τὴν κατωτέραν ὁδόν; Jonathan לְאַרְעָא דְרוֹמָא לְחֻדְשִׁי ("into the southland *Chodshi*"); and the Vulgate in terram inferiorem. The singular form תַּחְתִּים, and the fact that we never read of a land called *Chodshi*, render the conjecture a very probable

one that the text is corrupt. But it is no longer possible to discover the correct reading. Ewald imagines that we should read *Hermon* instead of the unintelligible *Chodshi*; but this is not very probable. Böttcher supposes תחתים to be a mistake in writing for תחת ים, "below the lake," namely the lake of Gennesareth, which might have been called *Chodshi* (the new-moon-like), since it had very much the appearance of a crescent when seen from the northern heights. This is ingenious, but incredible. The order of the places named points to the eastern side of the sea of Galilee; for they went thence to *Dan-Jaan*, i.e. the Dan in northern Peræa, mentioned in Gen. xiv. 14, to the south-west of Damascus, at that time probably the extreme north-eastern boundary of the kingdom of David, in the direction towards Syria (see at Gen. xiv. 14): "and round to *Sidon*," the extreme north-western boundary of the kingdom.—Ver. 7. Thence southwards to the fortress of *Zor*, i.e. Tyre (see at Josh. xix. 29), and "into all the towns of the *Hivites and Canaanites*," i.e. the towns in the tribes of Naphtali, Zebulun, and Issachar, or the (subsequent) province of Galilee, in which the Canaanites had not been exterminated by the Israelites, but had only been made tributary.—Vers. 8, 9. When they had traversed the whole land, they came back to Jerusalem, at the end of nine months and twenty days, and handed over to the king the number of the people mustered: viz. 800,000 men of Israel fit for military service, drawing the sword, and 500,000 men of Judah. According to the Chronicles (ver. 5), there were 1,100,000 Israelites and 470,000 Judæans. The numbers are not given by thousands, and therefore are only approximative statements in round numbers; and the difference in the two texts arose chiefly from the fact, that the statements were merely founded upon oral tradition, since, according to 1 Chron. xxvii. 4, the result of the census was not inserted in the annals of the kingdom. There is no ground, however, for regarding the numbers as exaggerated, if we only bear in mind that the entire population of a land amounts to about four times the number of those who are fit for military service, and therefore 1,300,000, or even a million and a half, would only represent a total population of five or six millions,—a number which could undoubtedly have been sustained in Palestine, according to thoroughly reliable testimony as to its unusual fertility (see

the discussion of this subject at Num. i.-iv., vol. iii. pp. 4-13). Still less can we adduce as a proof of exaggeration the fact, that according to 1 Chron. xxvii. 1-15, David had only an army of 288,000; for it is a well-known fact, that in all lands the army, or number of men in actual service, is, as a rule, much smaller than the total number of those who are capable of bearing arms. According to 1 Chron. xxi. 6, the tribes of Levi and Benjamin were not numbered, because, as the chronicler adds, giving his own subjective view, "the word of the king was an abomination to Joab," or, as it is affirmed in 1 Chron. xxvii. 4, according to the objective facts, "because the numbering was not completed." It is evident from this, that in consequence of Joab's repugnance to the numbering of the people, he had not hurried with the fulfilment of the king's command; so that when David saw his own error, he revoked the command before the census was complete, and so the tribe of Benjamin was not numbered at all, the tribe of Levi being of course *eo ipso* exempt from a census that was taken for the sake of ascertaining the number of men who were capable of bearing arms.

Vers. 10-18. David's heart, *i.e.* his conscience, smote him, after he had numbered the people, or had given orders for the census to be taken. Having now come to a knowledge of his sin, he prayed to the Lord for forgiveness, because he had acted foolishly. The sin consisted chiefly in the self-exaltation which had led to this step (see the introductory remarks).—Vers. 11-13. When he rose up in the morning, after he had calmly reflected upon the matter during the night upon his bed, and had been brought to see the folly of his determination, the prophet Gad came to him by the command of God, pointed out to him his fault, and foretold the punishment that would come from God. "Shall seven years of famine come upon thy land, or three months of flight before thine oppressors that they may pursue thee, or shall there be three days of pestilence in thy land? Now mark and see what answer I shall bring to Him that sendeth me." These three verses form *one* period, in which וַיָּבֹא נָדָב (ver. 13) answers as the consequent to וַיִּקָּם דָּוִד וְיָגֵר in ver. 11, and the words from וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה (ver. 11b) to וַיִּשְׁמָעֵהוּ יְהוָה (ver. 12) form a circumstantial clause inserted between. וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה וְיָגֵר: "and the word of the Lord had taken

place (gone forth) to Gad, David's seer, saying, Go . . . thus saith Jehovah, I lay upon thee three (things or evils); choose thee one of them that I may do it to thee." Instead of *לָקַח*, to lay upon, we find *לָפָה* in the Chronicles, "to turn upon thee." The three things are mentioned first of all in connection with the execution of Gad's commission to the king. Instead of *seven* years of famine, we find *three* years in the Chronicles; the Septuagint has also the number three in the passage before us, and apparently it is more in harmony with the connection, viz. *three* evils to choose from, and each lasting through *three* divisions of time. But this agreement favours the *seven* rather than the *three*, which is open to the suspicion of being intentionally made to conform to the rest. *לָפָה* is an infinitive: "thy fleeing," for that thou fliest before thine enemies. In the Chronicles the last two evils are described more fully, but the thought is not altered in consequence.—Ver. 14. David replied, "I am in great trouble. Let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercy is great; but let me not fall into the hand of men." Thus David chose the third judgment, since pestilence comes directly from God. On the other hand, in flight from the enemy, he would have fallen into the hands of men. It is not easy to see, however, how far this could apply to famine; probably inasmuch as it tends more or less to create dependence upon those who are still in possession of the means of life.—Ver. 15. God then gave (sent) a pestilence into (upon) Israel, "from the morning till the time of the assembly;" and there died of the people in the whole land (from Dan to Beersheba) seventy thousand men. "*From the morning:*" on which Gad had foretold the punishment. The meaning of *וְעַתָּה מִיָּמֶיךָ* is doubtful. The rendering "*to the time appointed,*" i.e. "till the expiration of the three days," in support of which the Vulgate (*ad tempus constitutum*) is wrongly appealed to, is precluded not only by the circumstance that, according to ver. 16, the plague was stayed earlier because God repented Him of the evil, so that it did not last so long as was at first appointed, but also by the grammatical difficulty that *וְעַתָּה מִיָּמֶיךָ* has no article, and can only be rendered "for an (not for the) appointed time." We meet with two different explanations in the ancient versions: one in the Septuagint, *ὥς ὥρας ἀποστροφῆς*, "till the hour of breakfast," i.e.

till the sixth hour of the day, which is the rendering also adopted by the Syriac and Arabic as well as by Kimchi and several of the Rabbins; the other in the Chaldee (Jonathan), "from the time at which the sacrifice is commonly slain until it is consumed." Accordingly Bochart explains עַתָּא מוֹעֵד as signifying "the time at which the people came together for evening prayers, about the ninth hour of the day, *i.e.* the third hour in the afternoon" (*vid.* Acts iii. 1). The same view also lies at the foundation of the Vulgate rendering, according to the express statement of Jerome (*traditt. Hebr. in 2 libr. Regum*): "He calls that the *time appointed*, in which the evening sacrifice was offered." It is true that this meaning of מוֹעֵד cannot be established by precisely analogous passages, but it may be very easily deduced from the frequent employment of the word to denote the meetings and festivals connected with the worship of God, when it generally stands without an article, as for example in the perfectly analogous יוֹם מוֹעֵד (Hos. ix. 5; Lam. ii. 7, 22); whereas it is always written with the article when it is used in the general sense of a fixed time, and some definite period is referred to.¹ We must therefore decide in favour of the latter. But if the pestilence did not last a whole day, the number of persons carried off by it (70,000 men) exceeded very considerably the number destroyed by the most violent pestilential epidemics on record, although they have not unfrequently swept off hundreds of thousands in a very brief space of time. But the pestilence burst upon the people in this instance with supernatural strength and violence, that it might be seen at once to be a direct judgment from God.—Ver. 16. The general statement as to the divine judgment and its terrible effects is followed by a more minute

¹ The objections brought against this have no force in them, *viz.* that, according to this view, the section must have been written a long time after the captivity (Clericus and Thenius), and that "the perfectly general expression '*the time of meeting*' could not stand for the time of the afternoon or evening meeting" (Thenius): for the former rests upon the assumption that the daily sacrifice was introduced after the captivity,—an assumption quite at variance with historical facts; and the latter is overthrown by the simple remark, that the indefinite expression derived its more precise meaning from the legal appointment of the morning and evening sacrifice as times of meeting for the worship of God, inasmuch as the evening meeting was the only one that could be placed in contrast with the morning.

description of the judgment itself, and the arrest of the plague. "When the destroying angel (*'the angel'* is defined immediately afterwards as *'the angel that destroyed the people'*) stretched out his hand towards Jerusalem to destroy it, Jehovah repented of the evil (for this expression, see Ex. xxxii. 14, Jer. xxvi. 13, 19, etc.; and for the repentance of God, the remarks on Gen. vi. 6), and He commanded the angel, Enough! stay now thine hand." This implies that the progress of the pestilence was stayed before Jerusalem, and therefore that Jerusalem itself was spared. "*And the angel of Jehovah was at the threshing-floor of Aravnah the Jebusite.*" These words affirm most distinctly that the destroying angel was visible. According to ver. 17, David saw him there. The visible appearance of the angel was to exclude every thought of a natural land plague. The appearance of the angel is described more minutely in the Chronicles: David saw him standing by the threshing-floor of Aravnah between heaven and earth with a drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem. The drawn sword was a symbolical representation of the purpose of his coming (see at Num. xxii. 23 and Josh. v. 13). The threshing-floor of Aravnah was situated, like all other threshing-floors, outside the city, and upon an eminence, or, according to the more precise statement which follows, to the north-east of Zion, upon Mount Moriah (see at ver. 25). According to the *Chethib* of ver. 16, the name of the owner of the floor was *הַיְאֹרְנָה*, of ver. 18 *אֲרֹנָה*, and of ver. 20 (twice) *אֲרֹנָה*. The last form also occurs in vers. 22, 23, and 24, and has been substituted by the Masoretes as the *Keri* in vers. 16 and 18. In the Chronicles, on the other hand, the name is always written *אֲרָן* (*Ornan*), and hence in the Septuagint we find *Opva* in both texts. "The form *אֲרֹנָה* (*Aravnah*) has not a Hebrew stamp, whereas *Orna* and *Ornan* are true Hebrew formations. But for this very reason *Aravnah* appears to be derived from an ancient tradition" (Bertheau).—Ver. 17. When David saw the angel, he prayed to the Lord (he and the elders being clothed in mourning costume: Chron.): "Behold, *I* have sinned, and *I* have acted perversely; but these, the flock, what have they done? Let Thy hand come upon me and my house." The meaning is: I the shepherd of Thy people have sinned and transgressed, but the nation is innocent; *i.e.* not indeed free from every kind

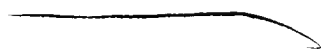
of blame, but only from the sin which God was punishing by the pestilence. It belongs to the very nature of truly penitential prayer, that the person praying takes all the blame upon himself, acknowledges before God that he alone is deserving of punishment, and does not dwell upon the complicity of others for the sake of palliating his own sin in the sight of God. We must not infer, therefore, from this confession on the part of David, that the people, whilst innocent themselves, had had to atone only for an act of transgression on the part of their king.—Ver. 18. David's prayer was heard. The prophet Gad came and said to him by command of Jehovah, "Go up, and erect an altar to the Lord upon the floor of Aravnah the Jebusite." This is all that is communicated here of the word of Jehovah which Gad was to convey to the king; the rest is given afterwards, as is frequently the case, in the course of the subsequent account of the fulfilment of the divine command (ver. 21). David was to build the altar and offer burnt-offerings and supplicatory-offerings upon it, to appease the wrath of Jehovah. The plague would then be averted from Israel.

Vers. 19–25. David went up to Aravnah according to the command of God.—Vers. 20, 21. When Aravnah saw the king coming up to him with his servants (וְהַמְּלֶכֶת, "*he looked out*," viz. from the enclosure of the threshing-floor), he came out, bowed low even to the earth, and asked the king what was the occasion of his coming; whereupon David replied, "To buy the floor from thee, to build an altar to the Lord, that the plague may be turned away from the people."—Ver. 22. Aravnah replied, "Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold (*i.e.* there thou hast) the ox for the burnt-offering, and the threshing-machine, and the harness of the ox for wood" (*i.e.* for fuel). הַבָּקָר, the *pair of oxen* yoked together in front of the threshing-machine. בָּלִי הַבָּקָר, the *wooden yokes*. "*All this giveth Aravnah, O king, to the king.*" הַמֶּלֶךְ is a vocative, and is simply omitted by the LXX., Vulgate, Syriac, and Arabic, because the translators regarded it as a nominative, which is quite unsuitable, as Aravnah was not a king. When Thenius, on the other hand, objects to this, for the purpose of throwing suspicion upon the passage, that the sentence is thus stamped as part of Aravnah's address to

the king, and that in that case the words that follow, "and Aravnah said," would be altogether superfluous; the former remark is correct enough, for the words "all this giveth Aravnah . . . to the king" must form part of what Aravnah said, inasmuch as the remark, "all this gave Aravnah to the king," if taken as the historian's own words, would be in most glaring contradiction to what follows, where the king is said to have bought the floor and the oxen from Aravnah. And the words that follow ("and Aravnah said") are not superfluous on that account, but simply indicate that Aravnah did not proceed to say the rest in the same breath, but added it after a short pause, as a word which did not directly bear upon the question put by the king. וַיֹּאמֶר (and he said) is often repeated, where the same person continues speaking (see for example ch. xv. 4, 25, 27). "Jehovah thy God accept thee graciously," i.e. fulfil the request thou presentest to Him with sacrifice and prayer.—Ver. 24. The king did not accept the offer, however, but said, "No; but I will buy it of thee at a price, and will not offer burnt-offerings to the Lord my God without paying for them." Thus David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. Instead of this, the Chronicles give "shekels of gold, in weight six hundred." This difference cannot be reconciled by assuming that David paid his fifty shekels in gold coin, which would have been worth as much as six hundred shekels of silver, since gold was worth twelve times as much as silver. For there is nothing about gold shekels in our text; and the words of the Chronicles cannot be interpreted as meaning that the shekels of gold were worth six hundred shekels of silver. No other course is left, therefore, than to assume that the number must be corrupt in one of the texts. Apparently the statement in the Chronicles is the more correct of the two: for if we consider that Abraham paid four hundred shekels of silver for the site of a family burial-place, at a time when the land was very thinly populated, and therefore land must certainly have been much cheaper than it was in David's time, the small sum of fifty shekels of silver (about £6) appears much too low a price; and David would certainly pay at least fifty shekels of gold. But we are not warranted in any case in speaking of the statement in the Chronicles, as Thenius does, as "intentionally exaggerated."

This style of criticism, which carries two kinds of weights and measures in its bag, explaining the high numbers in the books of Samuel and Kings as corruptions of the text, and those in the Chronicles as intentional exaggerations on the part of the chronicler, is insufficiently dealt with by the remark of Bertheau, that "this (*i.e.* the charge of exaggeration) could only be sustained if it were perfectly certain that the chronicler had our present text of the books of Samuel before him at the time."—Ver. 25. After acquiring the threshing-floor by purchase, David built an altar to the Lord there, and offered burnt-offerings and supplicatory-offerings (*shelamim*: as in Judg. xx. 26, xxi. 4; 1 Sam. xiii. 9) upon it to the Lord. "So Jehovah was entreated, and the plague was turned away from Israel."

This remark brings to a close not only the account of this particular occurrence, but also the book itself; whereas in the Chronicles it is still further stated that Jehovah answered David with fire from heaven, which fell upon the burnt-offering; and that after his prayer had been answered thus, David not only continued to offer sacrifice upon the floor of Aravnah, but also fixed upon it as the site for the temple which was afterwards to be built (1 Chron. xxi. 27, xxii. 1); and to this there is appended, in ch. xxii. 2 sqq., an account of the preparations which David made for the building of the temple. It is not affirmed in the Chronicles, however, that David fixed upon this place as the site for the future temple in consequence of a revelation from God, but simply that he did this, because he saw that the Lord had answered him there, and because he could not go to Gibeon, where the tabernacle was standing, to seek the Lord there, on account of the sword of the angel, *i.e.* on account of the pestilence. The command of God to build an altar upon the threshing-floor of Aravnah, and offer expiatory sacrifices upon it, when connected with His answering his prayer by turning away the plague, could not fail to be taken as a distinct intimation to David, that the site of this altar was the place where the Lord would henceforth make known His gracious presence to His people; and this hint was quite sufficient to determine the site for the temple which his son Solomon was to build.



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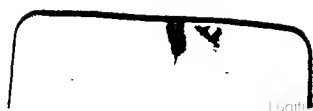
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ON

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY

C. F. KEIL, D.D., AND F. DELITZSCH, D.D.,

PROFESSORS OF THEOLOGY.

THE BOOKS OF THE KINGS,

BY

C. F. KEIL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

THE REV. JAMES MARTIN, B.A.



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BIBLICAL COMMENTARY



ON

THE OLD TESTAMENT.



THE BOOKS OF KINGS.

INTRODUCTION.

CONTENTS AND CHARACTER, ORIGIN AND SOURCES, OF THE BOOKS OF THE KINGS.



HE books of the Kings, which were but one book originally like the books of Samuel, and which, like the latter, were divided into two books by the Alexandrian translators (see the Introduction to the books of Samuel), contain, in accordance with their name (מלכים), the history of the Israelitish theocracy under the kings, from the accession of Solomon to the extinction of the monarchy on the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldæans and the people were carried away into exile in Babylon. They embrace a period of 455 years, from 1015 to 560 B.C., that is to say, to the reign of the Babylonian king Evil-merodach. And as every kingdom culminates in its king, and the government of the kings determines the fate of the kingdom, the contents of the books before us, which are named after the kings of Israel, consist for the most part of a history of those kings; inasmuch as, whilst on the one hand the reigns of the several kings form the historical and chronological framework for the description of the historical development of the people and kingdom, on the other hand the leading phases which the monarchy assumed furnish the basis of the three periods, into which the history of this epoch and the contents of our books are divided.

The *first* period (1015-975 B.C.) embraces the forty years of



Solomon's reign over the undivided kingdom of the twelve tribes of Israel, when the Israelitish kingdom of God stood at the summit of its earthly power and glory; though towards the end of this period it began to decline, inasmuch as the rebellion of Solomon against the Lord in the closing years of his reign prepared the way for the rebellion of the ten tribes against the house of David.—The *second* period commences with the division of the one kingdom into the two kingdoms, Israel (or the ten tribes) and Judah, and stretches over the whole period during which these two kingdoms existed side by side, terminating with the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes by the Assyrians, *i.e.* from 975 to 722 B.C.—The *third* period embraces the still remaining years of the continuance of the kingdom of Judah, until its eventual dissolution by the Chaldeans and the carrying away of the people into exile in Babylon, *viz.* from 722 to 560 B.C.

The *first* part of our books (1 Kings i.–xi.) therefore contains a description of the reign of Solomon, (*a*) in its commencement, *viz.* his ascent of the throne and the consolidation of his power (ch. i. and ii.); (*b*) in the gradual development of the strength and glory of his government, by his marriage, his sacrifice and prayer at Gibeon, his judicial wisdom, and his court (iii. 1–v. 14),—also by the building of the temple and royal palace and the dedication of the temple (v. 15–ix. 9), by the erection of his other edifices and the introduction of navigation and commerce (ix. 10–28), by the spreading abroad of the fame of his wisdom, and by the increase of his wealth (ch. x.); and (*c*) in its eventual decline in consequence of the sin into which the aged monarch fell through his polygamy and idolatry (ch. xi.). The *second* part opens with an account of the falling away of the ten tribes from the royal family of David, and relates in a synchronistic narrative the history of the two kingdoms in the three stages of their development: *viz.* (*a*) the early enmity between the two, from Jeroboam to Omri of Israel (xii. 1–xvi. 28); (*b*) the establishment of friendship and intermarriage between the two royal houses under Ahab and his sons, down to the destruction of the two kings Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah by Jehu (xvi. 29–2 Kings x.); (*c*) the renewal of hostilities between the two kingdoms, from Jehu's ascent of the throne in Israel and Athaliah's usurpation of the throne in Judah to the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign in Judah

(xi.—xvii.). And, lastly, the *third* part contains the history of the kingdom of Judah from Hezekiah to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and carries it down to the thirty-seventh year of the imprisonment of king Jehoiachin in exile (ch. xviii.—xxv.).

Now, although the history of the kings, or the account of both the duration and character of their reigns, and also of their various enterprises, so far as they promoted or hindered the progress of the kingdom of God, forms the principal substance of these books, they do not consist of a mere chronicle of the deeds and fortunes of the several kings, but describe at the same time the ministry of the prophets in the two kingdoms, and that to some extent in so elaborate a manner, that whilst some have discovered in this a peculiarly "prophetico-didactic purpose" (Hävernicks, De Wette, etc.), others regard it as an endeavour "to set forth the history of the Israelitish and Jewish kings in its relation to the demands, the doings, the proclamations, and the predictions of the prophets, from Solomon to the Babylonian exile" (Kern). But however unmistakeable the prophetico-didactic character may be, which the books of Kings have in common with the whole of the historical writings of the Old Testament, a closer investigation of their character will show that there is no ground for the assertion that there is any prophetico-didactic purpose in the mode in which the history is written. For the account of the ministry of the prophets is introduced into the history of the kings as the spiritual leaven which pervaded the Israelitish monarchy from the beginning to the end, and stamped upon its development the character of the theocracy or divine rule in Israel. Jehovah, as the invisible but yet real King of the covenant nation, had created the peculiar instruments of His Spirit in the prophets who maintained His law and right before the kings, standing by their side to advise and direct, or to warn and punish, and, wherever it was necessary, proving their utterances to be words of God by signs and wonders which they did before the people. Thus the Lord directed the prophet Samuel to anoint Saul and David princes over His people, and the prophet Nathan to communicate to David the promise of the everlasting endurance of his throne (2 Sam. vii.). But when at a later period David sinned (2 Sam. xi. and xxiv.), it was the prophets Nathan and Gad who threatened him with punishment from God, and on his confession of sin and repentance announced the forgiveness and

favour of God (2 Sam. xii. 1–15, xxiv. 11–19). Through the medium of the prophet Nathan, Solomon was also appointed the successor of David upon the throne (2 Sam. xii. 25), and not only anointed king, but installed in defiance of the machinations of Adonijah (1 Kings i.). But since the monarchy was transmitted from Solomon in a direct line through his descendants by virtue of the divine promise in 2 Sam. vii., it is only in connection with important enterprises, or when the kingdom is involved in difficulties, that we find the prophets coming forward in after times to help or advise those kings who walked in the ways of the Lord; whereas under the idolatrous and godless rulers they offer, in the power of God, such energetic resistance to idolatry and to everything evil and ungodly, that princes and people are compelled to bow before them and succumb to their divine words. In this way the prophets accompanied the monarchy in all its course from Solomon to the captivity as guardians of the rights of the God-King, and as interpreters of His counsel and will. Under Solomon, indeed, there was apparently a long period, during which prophecy fell into the background; since the Lord Himself not only appeared to this king in a dream at Gibeon shortly after he ascended the throne, but also appeared to him a second time after the dedication of the temple, and promised him the fulfilment of his prayers, and the glorification and eternal continuance of his kingdom, on condition of his faithful observance of the divine commands (1 Kings iii. 5 sqq., ix. 1 sqq.). But towards the end of his reign it rose up again in all the more threatening attitude, against the king who was then disposed to fall away from Jehovah. It was no doubt a prophet who announced to him the separation of ten parts of his kingdom (1 Kings xi. 11 sqq.),—possibly the same Ahijah who promised Jeroboam the government over ten tribes (xi. 29 sqq.). But after the division of the kingdom, when Jeroboam proceeded, in order to fortify his throne, to make the political division into a religious one, and to this end exalted the image-worship into the state religion, the prophets continued to denounce this apostasy and proclaim to the sinful kings the destruction of their dynasties. And when at a still later period Ahab the son of Omri, and his wife Jezebel, endeavoured to make the Phœnician worship of Baal and Asherah into the national religion in Israel, Elijah the Tishbite, “the prophet as fire, whose

words burned as a torch" (Ecclus. xlviii. 1), came forward with the irresistible power of God and maintained a victorious conflict against the prophets and servants of Baal, warding off the utter apostasy of the nation by uniting the prophets into societies, in which the worship of God was maintained, and the godly in Israel were supplied with a substitute for that legal worship in the temple which was enjoyed by the godly in Judah. And in the kingdom of Judah also there were never wanting prophets to announce the judgments of the Lord to idolatrous kings, and to afford a vigorous support to the pious and God-fearing rulers in their endeavours to promote the religious life of the nation, and to exalt the public worship of God in the temple. But since the kingdom of Judah possessed the true sanctuary, with the legal worship and an influential body of priests and Levites; and since, moreover, the monarchy of the house of David was firmly established by divine promises resting upon that house, and among the kings who sat upon the throne, from Rehoboam onwards, there were many godly rulers who were distinguished for their lofty virtues as governors; the labours of the prophets did not assume the same prominent importance here as they did in the kingdom of the ten tribes, where they had to fight against idolatry from the beginning to the end.

This explains the fact that the ministry of the prophets assumes so prominent a position in the books of the Kings, whereas the history of the kings appears sometimes to fall into the background in comparison. Nevertheless the historical development of the monarchy, or, to express it more correctly, of the kingdom of God under the kings, forms the true subject-matter of our books. It was not a prophetic-didactic purpose, but the prophetic-historical point of view, which prevailed throughout the whole work, and determined the reception as well as the treatment of the historical materials. The progressive development of the kingdom was predicted and described by the Lord Himself in the promise communicated to David by the prophet Nathan: "And when thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name; and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his Father, and he shall be my son, that if he go astray, I may chasten him with man's rod, and with stripes of the children of

men; but my mercy will not depart from him, as I caused it to depart from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy kingdom shall be for ever before thee, thy throne will be established for ever" (2 Sam. vii. 12-16). This thoroughly glorious promise forms the red thread which runs through the history of the kings from Solomon to the Babylonian captivity, and constitutes the leading idea in the record of this history in our books. The author's intention is to show in the history of the kings how the Lord fulfilled this gracious word, how He first of all chastised the seed of David for its transgressions, and then cast it off, though not for ever. To this end he shows in the history of Solomon, how, notwithstanding the usurpation of the throne attempted by Adonijah, Solomon received the whole of his father's kingdom, as the seed of David promised by the Lord, and established his power; how the Lord at the very beginning of his reign renewed to him at Gibeon the promise made to his father on the condition of his faithful observance of His law, and in answer to his prayer gave him not only a wise and understanding heart, but also riches and honour, so that his equal was not to be found among all the kings of the earth (1 Kings i. 1-v. 14); how Solomon then carried out the work of building the temple, entrusted to him by his father according to the will of the Lord; and how, after it was finished, the Lord again assured him of the fulfilment of that promise (ch. v. 15-ix. 9); and, lastly, how Solomon, having attained to the highest earthly glory, through the completion of the rest of his build-ings, through the great renown of his wisdom, which had reached to nations afar off, and through his great riches, acquired partly by marine commerce and trade, and partly from tributes and presents, forgot his God, who had bestowed this glory upon him, and in his old age was led astray into unfaithfulness towards the Lord through his numerous foreign wives, and had at last to listen to this sentence from God: "Because thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant: notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake; but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all thy kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen" (ch. ix. 10-xi. 13). Thus, because God had promised to the seed of David the

eternal possession of the throne (2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq.), one portion of the kingdom was to be left to the son of Solomon, with the chosen city of Jerusalem, and his servant (Jeroboam, ch. xi. 26—40) was only to obtain dominion over ten tribes. The historical realization of this prophecy is shown in the history of the two divided kingdoms.

In the synchronistic account of these kingdoms, according to the principle already adopted in the book of Genesis, of disposing of the subordinate lines of the patriarchs before proceeding with the main line (see *Comm. on Pent.* vol. i. p. 37), the reigns of the kings of Israel are described before those of the contemporaneous kings of Judah, and to some extent in a more elaborate manner. The reason of this, however, is, that the history of the kingdom of Israel, in which one dynasty overthrew another, whilst all the rulers walked in the sin of Jeroboam, and Ahab even added the worship of Baal to that sin, supplied the author with more materials for the execution of his plan than that of the kingdom of Judah, which had a much quieter development under the rule of the house of David, and of which, therefore, there was less to relate. Apart from this, all the events of the kingdom of Judah which are of any importance in relation to the progress of the kingdom of God, are just as elaborately described as those connected with the kingdom of Israel; and the author does equal justice to both kingdoms, showing how the Lord manifested Himself equally to both, and bore with them with divine long-suffering and grace. But the proof of this necessarily assumed different forms, according to the different attitudes which they assumed towards the Lord. Jeroboam, the founder of the kingdom of Israel, when told that he would be king over the ten tribes, had received the promise that Jehovah would be with him, and build him a lasting house as He built for David, and give Israel to him, on condition that he would walk in the ways of God (1 Kings xi. 37, 38). This implied that his descendants would rule over Israel (of the ten tribes) so long as this kingdom should stand; for it was not to last for ever, but the separation would come to an end, and therefore he is not promised the everlasting continuance of his kingdom (see at 1 Kings xi. 38). But Jeroboam did not fulfil this condition, nor did any of the rulers of Israel who succeeded him. Nevertheless the Lord had patience with the kings and tribes who were unfaithful to His law, and not only warned

them continually by His prophets, and chastised them by threats of punishment and by the fulfilment of those threats upon the kings and all the people, but repeatedly manifested His favour towards them for the sake of His covenant with Abraham (2 Kings xiii. 23), to lead them to repentance—until the time of grace had expired, when the sinful kingdom fell and the ten tribes were carried away to Media and Assyria.—In the kingdom of David, on the contrary, the succession to the throne was promised to the house of David for all time: therefore, although the Lord caused those who were rebellious to be chastised by hostile nations, yet, for His servant David's sake, He left a light shining to the royal house, since He did not punish the kings who were addicted to idolatry with the extermination of their family (1 Kings xv. 4; 2 Kings viii. 19); and even when the wicked Athaliah destroyed all the royal seed, He caused Joash, the infant son of Ahaziah, to be saved and raised to the throne of his fathers (2 Kings xi.). Consequently this kingdom was able to survive that of the ten tribes for an entire period, just because it possessed a firm political basis in the uninterrupted succession of the Davidic house, as it also possessed a spiritual basis of no less firmness in the temple which the Lord had sanctified as the place where His name was revealed. After it had been brought to the verge of destruction by the godless Ahaz, it received in Hezekiah a king who did what was right in the eyes of Jehovah, as his father David had done, and in the severe oppression which he suffered at the hands of the powerful army of the proud Sennacherib, took refuge in the Lord, who protected and saved Jerusalem, "for His own and His servant David's sake," at the prayer of the pious king of Jerusalem (2 Kings xix. 34, xx. 6). But when at length, throughout the long reign of Manasseh the idolater, apostasy and moral corruption prevailed to such an extent in Judah also, that even the pious Josiah, with the reformation of religion which he carried out with the greatest zeal, could only put down the outward worship of idols, and was unable to effect any thorough conversion of the people to the Lord their God, and the Lord as the Holy One of Israel was obliged to declare His purpose of rejecting Judah from before His face on account of the sins of Manasseh, and to cause that purpose to be executed by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxiii. 26, 27, xxiv. 3, 4); Jehoiachin was led away captive to Babylon, and under Zedekiah the

kingdom was destroyed with the burning of Jerusalem and the temple. Yet the Lord did not suffer the light to be altogether extinguished to His servant David; but when Jehoiachin had pined in captivity at Babylon for thirty-seven years, expiating his own and his fathers' sins, he was liberated from his captivity by Nebuchadnezzar's son, and raised to honour once more (2 Kings xxv. 27-30).—The account of this joyful change in the condition of Jehoiachin, with which the books of the Kings close, forms so essential a part of their author's plan, that without this information the true conclusion to his work would be altogether wanting. For this event shed upon the dark night of the captivity the first ray of a better future, which was to dawn upon the seed of David, and with it upon the whole nation in its eventual redemption from Babylon, and was also a pledge of the certain fulfilment of the promise that the Lord would not for ever withdraw His favour from the seed of David.¹

Thus the books of the Kings bring down the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God, according to the divine plan of the kingdom indicated in 2 Sam. vii., from the close of David's reign to the captivity; and the fact that in 1 Kings i. 1 they are formally attached to the books of Samuel is an indication that they are a continuation of those books. Nevertheless there is no doubt that they formed from the very first a separate work, the independence and internal unity of which are apparent from the uniformity of the treatment of the history as well as from the unity of the language. From beginning to end the author quotes from his original sources, for the

¹ Stähelin makes the following remark in his *Einleitung* (p. 122): "The books of the Kings form an antithesis to the history of David. As the latter shows how obedience to God and to the utterances of His prophets is rewarded, and how, even when Jehovah is obliged to punish, He makes known His grace again in answer to repentance; so do the books of the Kings, which relate the overthrow of both the Hebrew states, teach, through the history of these two kingdoms, how glorious promises are thrown back and dynasties fall in consequence of the conduct of individual men (compare 1 Kings xi. 38 with xiv. 10, and still more with 2 Kings xxi. 10 sqq. and xxiii. 27). The sins of one man like Manasseh are sufficient to neutralize all the promises that have been given to the house of David." There is no need to refute this erroneous statement, since it only rests upon a misinterpretation of 2 Kings xxi. 10 sqq., and completely misses the idea which runs through both books of the Kings; and, moreover, there is no contradiction between the manifestation of divine mercy towards penitent sinners and the punishment of men according to their deeds.

most part with certain standing formulas ; in all important events he gives the chronology carefully (1 Kings vi. 1, 37, 38, vii. 1, ix. 10, xi. 42, xiv. 20, 21, 25, xv. 1, 2, 9, 10, etc.) ; he judges the conduct of the kings throughout according to the standard of the law of Moses (1 Kings ii. 3, iii. 14 ; 2 Kings x. 31, xi. 12, xiv. 6, xvii. 37, xviii. 6, xxi. 8, xxii. 8 sqq., xxiii. 3, 21, etc.) ; and he nearly always employs the same expressions when describing the commencement, the character, and the close of each reign, as well as the death and burial of the kings (compare 1 Kings xi. 43, xiv. 20, 31, xv. 8, 24, xxii. 51 ; 2 Kings viii. 24, xiii. 9, xiv. 29 ; and for the characteristics of the several kings of Judah, 1 Kings xv. 3, 11, xxii. 43 ; 2 Kings xii. 3, xiv. 3, xv. 3, etc. ; and for those of the kings of Israel, 1 Kings xiv. 8, xv. 26, 34, xvi. 19, 26, 30, xxii. 53 ; 2 Kings iii. 2, 3, x. 29, 31, xiii. 2. 11, etc.). And so, again, the language of the books remains uniform in every part of the work, if we except certain variations occasioned by the differences in the sources employed ; since we find throughout isolated expressions and forms of a later date, and words traceable to the Assyrian and Chaldean epoch, such as חָמָר for לָר in 1 Kings v. 2, 25 ; מְרִינֹת in 1 Kings xi. 33 ; רָעִין in 2 Kings xi. 13 ; מְרִינֹת in 1 Kings xx. 14, 15, 17, 19 ; קָבֵל in 2 Kings xv. 10 ; שָׁרֵי הַחַיִּים in 1 Kings xv. 20, 2 Kings xxv. 23, 26 ; רַב טַבָּחִים in 2 Kings xxv. 8 ; פָּתָה in 1 Kings x. 15, xx. 24, 2 Kings xviii. 24 ; and many others, which do not occur in the earlier historical books.—The books of the Kings are essentially distinguished from the books of Samuel through these characteristic peculiarities ; but not so much through the quotations which are so prominent in the historical narrative, for these are common to all the historical books of the Old Testament, and are only more conspicuous in these books, especially in the history of the kings of the two kingdoms, because in the case of all the kings, even of those in relation to whom there was nothing to record of any importance to the kingdom of God except the length and general characteristics of their reign, there are notices of the writings which contain further information concerning their reigns.—The unity of authorship is therefore generally admitted, since, as De Wette himself acknowledges, “you cannot anywhere clearly detect the interpolation or combination of different accounts.” The direct and indirect contradictions, however, which Thenius imagines that he has discovered, prove to

be utterly fallacious on a closer inspection of the passages cited as proofs, and could only have been obtained through misinterpretations occasioned by erroneous assumptions. (See, on the other hand, my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das A. T.* p. 184 sqq.)

All that can be determined with certainty in relation to the *origin* of the books of Kings is, that they were composed in the second half of the Babylonian captivity, and before its close, since they bring the history down to that time, and yet contain no allusion to the deliverance of the people out of Babylon. The author was a prophet living in the Babylonian exile, though not the prophet Jeremiah, as the earlier theologians down to Hävernicks have assumed from the notice in the Talmud (*Baba bathra*, f. 15, 1): *Jeremias scripsit librum suum et librum Regum et Threnos*. For even apart from the fact that Jeremiah ended his days in Egypt, he could hardly have survived the last event recorded in our books, namely, the liberation of Jehoiachin from prison, and his exaltation to royal honours by Evil-merodach. For inasmuch as this event occurred sixty-six years after his call to be a prophet, in the thirteenth year of Josiah, he would have been eighty-six years old in the thirty-seventh year after Jehoiachin had been carried away into exile, even if he had commenced his prophetic career when only a young man of twenty years of age. Now, even if he had reached this great age, he would surely not have composed our books at a later period still. Moreover, all that has been adduced in support of this is seen to be inconclusive on closer inspection. The similarity in the linguistic character of our books and that of the writings of Jeremiah, the sombre view of history which is common to the two, the preference apparent in both for phrases taken from the Pentateuch, and the allusions to earlier prophecies,—all these peculiarities may be explained, so far as they really exist, partly from the fact that they were written in the same age, since all the writers of the time of the captivity and afterwards cling very closely to the Pentateuch and frequently refer to the law of Moses, and partly also from the circumstance that, whilst Jeremiah was well acquainted with the original sources of our books, viz. the annals of the kingdom of Judah, the author of our books was also well acquainted with the prophecies of Jeremiah. But the relation between 2 Kings xxiv. 18 sqq. and Jer. lii. is not of such a nature, that these

two accounts of the destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of the remnant of the people could have emanated from the hand of Jeremiah; on the contrary, a closer inspection clearly shows that they are extracts from a more elaborate description of this catastrophe (see at 2 Kings xxiv. 18 sqq.).

As *sources* from which the author has obtained his accounts, there are mentioned, for the history of Solomon, a סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה, or book of the acts (affairs) of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 41); for the history of the kings of Judah, סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמֶלְכֵי יְהוּדָה, book of the daily occurrences of the kings of Judah (1 Kings xiv. 29, xv. 7, 23, xxii. 46; 2 Kings viii. 23, xii. 20, etc.); and for that of the kings of Israel, סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמֶלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, book of the daily occurrences of the kings of Israel (1 Kings xiv. 19, xv. 31, xvi. 5, 14, 20, 27, xxii. 39; 2 Kings i. 18). These are quoted as writings in which more is written concerning the life, the deeds, and the particular undertakings, buildings and so forth, of the several kings. The two last-named works were evidently general annals of the kingdoms: not, indeed, the national archives of the two kingdoms, or official records made by the מִזְכֵּירִים of the reigns and acts of the kings, as Jahn, Movers, Stähelin, and others suppose; but annals composed by prophets, and compiled partly from the public year-books of the kingdom or the national archives, and partly from prophetic monographs and collections of prophecies, which reached in the kingdom of Israel down to the time of Pekah (2 Kings xv. 31), and in that of Judah to the time of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 5). Moreover, they were not written successively by different prophets, who followed one another, and so carried on the work in uninterrupted succession from the rise of the two kingdoms to the death of the two kings mentioned; but they had been worked out into a "*Book of the history of the times of the Kings*" for each of the two kingdoms, a short time before the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah, by collecting together the most important things that had been written both concerning the reigns of the several kings by annalists and other historians who were contemporaneous with the events, and also concerning the labours of the prophets, which were deeply interwoven with the course of public affairs, whether composed by themselves or by their contemporaries. And in this finished form they lay before the author of our work. This view of the annals of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel follows unquestionably from the

agreement which exists between our books of the Kings and the second book of the Chronicles, in the accounts common to both, and which can only be explained from the fact that they were drawn from one and the same source. But in the Chronicles there are different writings of individual prophets quoted, beside the day-books of the kings of Judah and Israel; and it is expressly stated in relation to some of them that they were received into the annals of the kings (compare 2 Chron. xx. 34 and xxxii. 32, and the Introduction to the books of the Chronicles). Moreover, there are no historical traces of public annalists to be found in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and their existence is by no means probable, on account of the constant change of dynasties. The fact, however, that the frequently recurring formula "to this day" (1 Kings ix. 13, x. 12; 2 Kings ii. 22, x. 27, xiv. 7, xvi. 6, [xvii. 23, 34, 41,] xx. 17, xxi. 15) never refers to the time of the captivity, except in the passages enclosed in brackets, but always to the time of the existing kingdom of Judah, and that it cannot therefore have emanated from the author of our books of the Kings, but can only have been taken from the sources employed, is a proof that these annals of the kingdom were composed towards the close of the kingdom of Judah; and this is placed beyond all doubt, by the fact that this formula is also found in many passages of the books of the Chronicles (compare 1 Kings viii. 8 with 2 Chron. v. 9; 1 Kings ix. 21 with 2 Chron. viii. 8; 1 Kings xii. 19 with 2 Chron. x. 19; and 2 Kings viii. 22 with 2 Chron. xxi. 10).—In a similar manner to this must we explain the origin of the *סִפְרֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְשִׁלְמֹה*, since three prophetic writings are quoted in 1 Chron. xxix. 29 in connection with Solomon's reign, and their account agrees in all essential points with the account in the books of the Kings. Nevertheless this "history of Solomon" never formed a component part of the annals of the two kingdoms, and was certainly written much earlier.—The assumption that there were other sources still, is not only sustained by no historical evidence, but has no certain support in the character or contents of the writings before us. If the annals quoted were works composed by prophets, the elaborate accounts of the working of the prophets Elijah and Elisha might also have been included in them.—Again, in the constant allusion to these annals we have a sure pledge of the historical fidelity of the accounts that have been taken from them. If in his work

the author followed writings which were composed by prophets, and also referred his readers to these writings, which were known and accessible to his contemporaries, for further information, he must have been conscious of the faithful and conscientious employment of them. And this natural conclusion is in harmony with the contents of our books. The life and actions of the kings are judged with unfettered candour and impartiality, according to the standard of the law of God; and there is no more concealment of the idolatry to which the highly renowned Solomon was led astray by his foreign wives, than of that which was right in the eyes of God, when performed by the kings of the ten tribes, which had fallen away from the house of David. Even in the case of the greatest prophet of all, namely Elijah, the weakness of his faith in being afraid of the vain threats of the wicked Jezebel is related just as openly as his courageous resistance, in the strength of the Lord, to Ahab and the prophets of Baal.—Compare my *Einleitung in das Alte Test.* §§ 56–60, where adverse views are examined and the commentaries are also noticed.

EXPOSITION.

FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

I—HISTORY OF SOLOMON'S REIGN.

CHAPS. I.—XI.

DAVID had not only established the monarchy upon a firm basis, but had also exalted the Old Testament kingdom of God to such a height of power, that all the kingdoms round about were obliged to bow before it. This kingdom was transmitted by divine appointment to his son Solomon, in whose reign Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea-shore, and dwelt in security, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree (ch. iv. 20, v. 5). The history of this reign commences with the account of the manner in which Solomon had received the kingdom from his father, and had established his own rule by the fulfilment of his last will and by strict righteousness (ch. i. and ii.). Then follows in ch. iii.—x. the description of the glory of his kingdom, how the Lord, in answer to his prayer at Gibeon, not only gave him an understanding heart to judge his people, but also wisdom, riches, and honour, so that his equal was not to be found among the kings of the earth ; and through his wise rule, more especially through the erection of the house of Jehovah and of a splendid royal palace, he developed the glory of the kingdom of God to such an extent that his fame penetrated to remote nations. The conclusion, in ch. xi., consists of the account of Solomon's sin in his old age, viz. his falling into idolatry, whereby he brought about the decay of the kingdom, which manifested itself during the closing years of his reign in the rising up of opponents, and at his death in the falling away of ten tribes from his son Rehoboam. But notwithstanding this speedy decay, the

glory of Solomon's kingdom is elaborately depicted on account of the typical significance which it possessed in relation to the kingdom of God. Just as, for example, the successful wars of David with all the enemies of Israel were a prelude to the eventual victory of the kingdom of God over all the kingdoms of this world; so was the peaceful rule of Solomon to shadow forth the glory and blessedness which awaited the people of God, after a period of strife and conflict, under the rule of *Shiloh* the Prince of peace, whom Jacob saw in spirit, and who would increase government and peace without end upon the throne of David and in his kingdom (Isa. ix. 5, 6; Ps. lxxii.).

CHAP. I. ANOINTING AND ACCESSION OF SOLOMON.

The attempt of Adonijah to seize upon the throne when David's strength was failing (vers. 1-10), induced the aged king, as soon as it was announced to him by Bathsheba and the prophet Nathan, to order Solomon to be anointed king, and to have the anointing carried out (vers. 11-40); whereupon Adonijah fled to the altar, and received pardon from Solomon on condition that he would keep himself quiet (vers. 41-53).

Vers. 1-4. When king David had become so old that they could no longer warm him by covering him with clothes, his servants advised him to increase his vitality by lying with a young and robust virgin, and selected the beautiful Abishag of Shunem to perform this service. This circumstance, which is a trivial one in itself, is only mentioned on account of what follows,—first, because it shows that David had become too weak from age, and too destitute of energy, to be able to carry on the government any longer; and, secondly, because Adonijah the pretender afterwards forfeited his life through asking for Abishag in marriage.—The opening of our book, וַיִּהְיֶה אַחֲרָיו (*and the King*), may be explained from the fact that the account which follows has been taken from a writing containing the earlier history of David, and that the author of these books retained the *Vav cop.* which he found there, for the purpose of showing at the outset that his work was a continuation of the books of Samuel. וַיִּהְיֶה אַחֲרָיו as in Josh. xiii. 1, xxiii. 1, Gen. xxiv. 1, etc. "*They covered him with clothes, and he did not get warm.*" It follows from this that the king was bedridden, or at least that when lying down he could no longer be kept warm with bed-

clothes. כְּנָדִים does not mean clothes to wear here, but large cloths, which were used as bed-clothes, as in 1 Sam. xix. 13 and Num. iv. 6 sqq. יָדָם is used impersonally, and derived from יָדָם, cf. Ewald, § 193, b, and 138, b. As David was then in his seventieth year, this decrepitude was not the natural result of extreme old age, but the consequence of a sickly constitution, arising out of the hardships which he had endured in his agitated and restless life. The proposal of his servants, to restore the vital warmth which he had lost by bringing a virgin to lie with him, is recommended as an experiment by Galen (*Method. medic.* viii. 7). And it has been an acknowledged fact with physicians of all ages, that departing vitality may be preserved and strengthened by communicating the vital warmth of strong and youthful persons (compare Trusen, *Sitten Gebräuche u. Krankheiten der Hebräer*, p. 257 sqq.). The singular suffix in לְאִשְׁתִּי is to be explained on the ground that one person spoke. נַעֲרָה בְּתוּלָה, a maid who is a virgin. עָמַד לְפָנָי, to stand before a person as servant = to serve (cf. Deut. i. 38 with Ex. xxiv. 13). סֹבֵבֶת, an attendant or nurse, from שָׁבַן = סָבַן, to live with a person, then to be helpful or useful to him. With the words "that she may lie in thy bosom," the passage passes, as is frequently the case, from the third person to a direct address.—Vers. 3, 4. They then looked about for a beautiful girl for this purpose, and found Abishag of Shunem, the present Sulem or Solam, at the south-eastern foot of the Duhy or Little Hermon (see at Josh. xix. 18), who became the king's nurse and waited upon him. The further remark, "and the king knew her not," is not introduced either to indicate the impotence of David or to show that she did not become David's concubine, but simply to explain how it was that it could possibly occur to Adonijah (ch. ii. 17) to ask for her as his wife. Moreover, the whole affair is to be judged according to the circumstances of the times, when there was nothing offensive in polygamy.

Vers. 5-10. Adonijah seized the opportunity of David's decrepitude to make himself king. Although he was David's fourth son (2 Sam. iii. 4), yet after the death of Ammon and Absalom he was probably the eldest, as Chileab, David's second son, had most likely died when a child, since he is never mentioned again. Adonijah therefore thought that he had a claim to the throne (cf. ch. ii. 15), and wanted to secure it before his father's death. But in Israel, Jehovah, the God-King of His

people, had reserved to Himself the choice of the earthly king (Deut. xvii. 15), and this right He exercised not only in the case of Saul and David, but in that of Solomon also. When He gave to David the promise that his seed should rule for ever (2 Sam. vii. 12–16), He did not ensure the establishment of the throne to any one of his existing sons, but to him that would come out of his loins (i.e. to Solomon, who was not yet born); and after his birth He designated him through the prophet Nathan as the beloved of Jehovah (2 Sam. xii. 24, 25). David discerned from this that the Lord had chosen Solomon to be his successor, and he gave to Bathsheba a promise on oath that Solomon should sit upon the throne (vers. 13 and 30). This promise was also acknowledged in the presence of Nathan (vers. 11 sqq.), and certainly came to Adonijah's ears. Adonijah said, "I will be king," and procured chariots and horsemen and fifty runners, as Absalom had done before (2 Sam. xv. 1). רָכֵב, in a collective sense, does not mean fighting or war chariots, but state carriages, like מְרִכְבֵּי in 2 Sam. xv. 1; and מְרִשִּׁים are neither riding nor carriage horses, but riders to form an escort whenever he drove out.—Ver. 6. "And (=for) his father had never troubled him in his life (מִיָּמָיו, *a diebus ejus*, i.e. his whole life long), saying, Why hast thou done this?" Such weak oversight on the part of his father encouraged him to make the present attempt. Moreover, he "was very beautiful," like Absalom (see at 2 Sam. xiv. 25), and born after Absalom, so that after his death he appeared to have the nearest claim to the throne. The subject to יָלֵדָה is left indefinite, because it is implied in the idea of the verb itself: "she bare," i.e. his mother, as in Num. xxvi. 59 (*vid.* Ewald, § 294, b). There was no reason for mentioning the mother expressly by name, as there was nothing depending upon the name here, and it had already been given in ver. 5.—Ver. 7. He conferred (for the expression, compare 2 Sam. iii. 17) with Joab and Abiathar the priest, who supported him. עָזַר, to lend a helping hand to a person, i.e. to support him by either actually joining him or taking his part. Joab joined the pretender, because he had fallen out with David for a considerable time (cf. ii. 5, 6), and hoped to secure his influence with the new king if he helped him to obtain possession of the throne. But what induced Abiathar the high priest (see at 2 Sam. viii. 17) to join in conspiracy with Adonijah, we do not know. Possibly jealousy of Zadok, and the fear that under

Solomon he might be thrown still more into the shade. For although Zadok was only high priest at the tabernacle at Gibeon, he appears to have taken the lead; as we may infer from the fact that he is always mentioned before Abiathar (cf. 2 Sam. viii. 17, xx. 25, and xv. 24 sqq.). For we cannot imagine that Joab and Abiathar had supported Adonijah as having right on his side (Thenius), for the simple reason that Joab did not trouble himself about right, and for his own part shrank from no crime, when he thought that he had lost favour with the king.—Ver. 8. If Adonijah had powerful supporters in Joab the commander-in-chief and the high priest Abiathar, the rest of the leading officers of state, viz. Zadok the high priest (see at 2 Sam. viii. 17), Benaiah, captain of the king's body-guard (see at 2 Sam. viii. 18 and xxiii. 20, 21), the prophet Nathan, Shimei (probably the son of Elah mentioned in ch. iv. 18), and Rei (unknown), and the Gibborim of David (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8 sqq.), were not with him.—Vers. 9 sqq. Adonijah commenced his usurpation, like Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 2), with a solemn sacrificial meal, at which he was proclaimed king, "at the stone of *Zoeleth* by the side of the fountain of *Rogel*," i.e. the spy's fountain, or, according to the Chaldee and Syriac, the fuller's fountain, the present fountain of Job or Nehemiah, below the junction of the valley of Hinnom with the valley of Jehoshaphat (see at 2 Sam. vii. 17 and Josh. xv. 7). E. G. Schultz (*Jerusalem, eine Vorlesung*, p. 79) supposes the stone or rock of *Zoeleth* to be "the steep, rocky corner of the southern slope of the valley of Hinnom, which casts so deep a shade." "This neighbourhood (*Wady el Rubáb*) is still a place of recreation for the inhabitants of Jerusalem." To this festal meal Adonijah invited all his brethren except Solomon, and "all the men of Judah, the king's servants," i.e. all the Judæans who were in the king's service, i.e. were serving at court as being members of his own tribe, with the exception of Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, and the Gibborim. The fact that Solomon and the others mentioned were not included in the invitation, showed very clearly that Adonijah was informed of Solomon's election as successor to the throne, and was also aware of the feelings of Nathan and Benaiah.

Vers. 11-31. Adonijah's attempt was frustrated by the vigilance of the prophet Nathan.—Vers. 11 sqq. Nathan informed Solomon's mother, Bathsheba (see at 2 Sam. xi. 3), that Adonijah

was making himself king (כִּי עָשָׂה, that he had become [as good as] king: Thenius), and advised her, in order to save her life and that of her son Solomon (וְיִשְׁלַם, and save = so that thou mayest save; cf. Ewald, § 347, a), to go to the king and remind him of his promise on oath, that her son Solomon should be king after him, and to inquire why Adonijah had become king. If Adonijah had really got possession of the throne, he would probably have put Solomon and his mother out of the way, according to the barbarous custom of the East, as his political opponents.—Ver. 14. While she was still talking to the king, he (Nathan) would come in after her and confirm her words. כִּי לֹא יִכָּר, to make a word full, i.e. not to supply what is wanting, but to make full, like πληροῦν, either to fill by accomplishing, or (as in this case) to confirm it by similar assertion.—Vers. 15–21. Bathsheba followed this advice, and went to the king into the inner chamber (הַחֲדָרִים), since the very aged king, who was waited upon by Abishag, could not leave his room (כִּשְׁרָתָהּ for כִּשְׁרָתָהּ; cf. Ewald, § 188, b, p. 490), and, bowing low before him, communicated to him what Adonijah had taken in hand in opposition to his will and without his knowledge. The second הִנֵּה is not to be altered into הִנֵּה, inasmuch as it is supported by the oldest codices and the Masora,¹ although about two hundred codd. contain the latter reading. The repetition of הִנֵּה (“And now, behold, Adonijah has become king; and now, my lord king, thou knowest it not”) may be explained from the energy with which Bathsheba speaks. “And Solomon thy servant he hath not invited” (ver. 19). Bathsheba added this, not because she felt herself injured, but as a sign of Adonijah’s feelings towards Solomon, which showed that he had reason to fear the worst if Adonijah should succeed in his usurpation of the throne. In ver. 20, again, many codd. have הִנֵּה in the place of הִנֵּה; and Thenius, after his usual fashion, pronounces the former the “only correct” reading, because it is apparently a better one. But here also the appearance is deceptive. The antithesis to what Adonijah has already done is brought out quite suitably by הִנֵּה: Adonijah has made himself king, etc.; but thou my lord king must decide in the matter. “The eyes of all Israel are turned towards thee,

¹ Kimchi says: “Plures scribæ errant in hoc verbo, scribentes הִנֵּה cum Aleph, quia sensui hoc conformius est; sed constat nobis ex correctis MSS. et masora, scribendum esse הִנֵּה cum Ain.” Hence both Norzi and Bruns have taken הִנֵּה under their protection. Compare de Rossi, *variz lectt. ad h. l.*

to tell them who (whether Adonijah or Solomon) is to sit upon the throne after thee." "The decision of this question is in thy hand, for the people have not yet attached themselves to Adonijah, but are looking to thee, to see what thou wilt do; and they will follow thy judgment, if thou only hastenest to make Solomon king."—Seb. Schmidt. To secure this decision, Bathsheba refers again, in ver. 21, to the fate which would await both herself and her son Solomon after the death of the king. They would be חַיָּיָה, *i.e.* guilty of a capital crime. "We should be punished as though guilty of high treason" (Clericus).—Vers. 22 sqq. While Bathsheba was still speaking, Nathan came. When he was announced to the king, Bathsheba retired, just as afterwards Nathan went away when the king had Bathsheba called in again (cf. ver. 28 with ver. 32). This was done, not to avoid the appearance of a mutual arrangement (Cler., Then., etc.), but for reasons of propriety, inasmuch as, in audiences granted by the king to his wife or one of his counsellors, no third person ought to be present unless the king required his attendance. Nathan confirmed Bathsheba's statement, commencing thus: "My lord king, thou hast really said, Adonijah shall be king after me . . . ? for he has gone down to-day, and has prepared a feast, . . . and they are eating and drinking before him, and saying, Long live king Adonijah!" And he then closed by asking, "Has this taken place on the part of my lord the king, and thou hast not shown thy servants (Nathan, Zadok, Benaiah, and Solomon) who is to sit upon the throne of my lord the king after him?" The indirect question introduced with וְעַתָּה is not merely an expression of modesty, but also of doubt, whether what had occurred had emanated from the king and he had not shown it to his servants.—Vers. 28-30. The king then sent for Bathsheba again, and gave her this promise on oath: "As truly as Jehovah liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all distress (as in 2 Sam. iv. 9), yea, as I swore to thee by Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Solomon thy son shall be king after me, . . . yea, so shall I do this day." The first and third וְעַתָּה serve to give emphasis to the assertion, like *imo*, yea (cf. Ewald, § 330, b). The second merely serves as an introduction to the words.—Ver. 31. Bathsheba then left the king with the deepest prostration and the utterance of a blessing, as an expression of her inmost gratitude. The benedictory formula, "May the king live for ever," was only

used by the Israelites on occasions of special importance; whereas the Babylonians and ancient Persians constantly addressed their kings in this way (cf. Dan. ii. 4, iii. 9, v. 10, vi. 22; Neh. ii. 3. *Aelian* var. *hist.* i. 32, and *Curtius de gestis Alex.* vi. 5).

Vers. 32–40. David then sent for Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, and directed them to fetch the servants of their lord (אֲרִיִּכִם, a *pluralis majestatis*, referring to David alone), and to conduct Solomon to Gihon riding upon the royal mule, and there to anoint him and solemnly proclaim him king. The servants of your lord (עֲבָדֵי אֲרִיִּכִם) are the *Crethi* and *Plethi*, and not the *Gibborim* also (Thenius), as ver. 38 clearly shows, where we find that these alone went down with him to Gihon as the royal body-guard. עַל-הַפָּרָדָה אֲשֶׁר לִי, upon the mule which belongs to me, i.e. upon my (the king's) mule. When the king let any one ride upon the animal on which he generally rode himself, this was a sign that he was his successor upon the throne. Among the ancient Persians riding upon the king's horse was a public honour, which the king conferred upon persons of great merit in the eyes of all the people (cf. Esth. vi. 8, 9). פָּרָדָה, the female mule, which in Kahira is still preferred to the male for riding (see Rosenmüller, *bibl. Althk.* iv. 2, p. 56). *Gihon* (גִּיחֹן) was the name given, according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 30 and xxxiii. 14, to a spring on the western side of Zion, which supplied two basins or pools, viz. the upper watercourse of Gihon (2 Chron. xxxii. 30) or upper pool (2 Kings xviii. 17; Isa. vii. 3, xxxvi. 2), and the lower pool (Isa. xxii. 9). The upper Gihon still exists as a large reservoir built up with hewn stones, though somewhat fallen to decay, which is called by the monks *Gihon*, by the natives *Birket el Mamilla*, about 700 yards W.N.W. from the Joppa gate, in the basin which opens into the valley of Hinnom. The lower pool is probably the present *Birket es Sultan*, on the south-western side of Zion (see Robinson, *Palestine*, i. p. 485 sqq., 512 sqq., and *Biblical Researches*, p. 142 sqq.). The valley between the two was certainly the place where Solomon was anointed, as it is not stated that this took place at the fountain of Gihon. And even the expression הוֹרְדָתָם הוֹרְדָתָם אֵתוֹ עַל גִּיחֹן (take him down to Gihon) agrees with this. For if you go from Zion to Gihon towards the west, you first of all have to descend a slope, and then ascend by a gradual rise; and this slope was probably a more considerable one in ancient

times (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 514, note).¹—Ver. 34. The blowing of the trumpet and the cry “Long live the king” (cf. 1 Sam. x. 24) were to serve as a solemn proclamation after the anointing had taken place.—Ver. 35. After the anointing they were to conduct Solomon up to Zion again; Solomon was then to ascend the throne, as David was about to appoint him prince over Israel and Judah in his own stead. Both the anointing and the appointment of Solomon as prince over the whole of the covenant nation were necessary, because the succession to the throne had been rendered doubtful through Adonijah’s attempt, and the aged king was still alive. In cases where there was no question, and the son followed the father after his death, the unanimous opinion of the Rabbins is, that there was no anointing at all. Israel and Judah are mentioned, because David had been the first to unite all the tribes under his sceptre, and after the death of Solomon Israel fell away from the house of David.—Vers. 36, 37. Benaiah responded to the utterance of the royal will with a confirmatory “Amen, thus saith Jehovah the God of my lord the king;” i.e. may the word of the king become a word of Jehovah his God, who fulfils what He promises (Ps. xxxiii. 9); and added the pious wish, “May Jehovah be with Solomon, as He was with David, and glorify his throne above the throne of David,”—a wish which was not merely “flattery of his paternal vanity” (Thenius), but which had in view the prosperity of the monarchy, and was also fulfilled by God (cf. iii. 11 sqq.).—Vers. 38-40. The anointing of Solomon was carried out immediately, as the king had commanded. On the *Cretli* and *Plethi* see at 2 Sam. viii. 18. “The oil-horn out of the tent” (i.e. a vessel made of horn and containing oil) was no doubt one which held the holy anointing oil, with which the priests and the vessels of the sanctuary were anointed (see Ex. xxx. 22 sqq.). The tent (אֹהֶל), however, is not the tabernacle

¹ The conjecture of Thenius, that מִן הַיָּד should be altered into מִן הַיָּדָה, is hardly worth mentioning; for, apart from the fact that all the ancient versions confirm the correctness of מִן הַיָּד, the objections which Thenius brings against it amount to mere conjectures or groundless assumptions, such as that Zadok took the oil-horn out of the tabernacle at Gibeon, which is not stated in ver. 39. Moreover, Gibeon was a three hours’ journey from Jerusalem, so that it would have been absolutely impossible for the anointing, which was not commanded by David till after Adonijah’s feast had commenced, to be finished so quickly that the procession could return to Jerusalem before it was ended, as is distinctly recorded in ver. 41.

at Gibeon, but the tent set up by David for the ark of the covenant upon Mount Zion (2 Sam. vi. 17). For even though Zadok was appointed high priest at the tabernacle at Gibeon, and Abiathar, who held with Adonijah, at the ark of the covenant, the two high priests were not so unfriendly towards one another, that Zadok could not have obtained admission to the ark of the covenant in Abiathar's absence to fetch away the anointing oil.—Ver. 40. All the people, *i.e.* the crowd which was present at the anointing, went up after him, *i.e.* accompanied Solomon to the citadel of Zion, with flutes and loud acclamation, so that the earth nearly burst with their shouting. *וַתִּפְּצֶנּוּ*, “to burst in pieces” (as in 2 Chron. xxv. 12), is a hyperbolical expression for quaking.

Vers. 41–53. The noise of this shouting reached the ears of Adonijah and his guests, when the feast was just drawing to a close. The music, therefore, and the joyful acclamations of the people must have been heard as far off as the fountain of Rogel. When Joab observed the sound of the trumpet, knowing what these tones must signify, he asked “wherefore the sound of the city in an uproar” (*i.e.* what does it mean)? At that moment Jonathan the son of Abiathar arrived (see 2 Sam. xv. 27, xvii. 17 sqq.). Adonijah called out to him: “Come, for thou art a brave man and bringest good tidings,” suppressing all anxiety with these words, as he knew his father's will with regard to the succession to the throne, and the powerful and influential friends of Solomon (see vers. 5, 19, 26).—Vers. 43 sqq. Jonathan replied: *אֲבָל*, “yea but,” corresponding to the Latin *imo vero*, an expression of assurance with a slight doubt, and then related that Solomon had been anointed king by David's command, and the city was in a joyous state of excitement in consequence (*וַתִּשְׂמְחוּ* as in Ruth i. 19), and that he had even ascended the throne, that the servants of the king had blessed David for it, and that David himself had worshipped and praised Jehovah the God of Israel that he had lived to see his son ascend the throne. The repetition of *וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ* three times (vers. 46–48) gives emphasis to the words, since every new point which is introduced with *וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ* raises the thing higher and higher towards absolute certainty. The fact related in ver. 47 refers to the words of Benaiah in vers. 36 and 37. The *Chethib* *וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ* is the correct reading, and the *Keri* *וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ* an unnecessary emendation. The prayer to God, with thanksgiving for the favour granted to him, was offered by David after the

return of his anointed son Solomon to the royal palace ; so that it ought strictly to have been mentioned after ver. 40. The worship of the grey-headed David upon the bed recalls to mind the worship of the patriarch Jacob after making known his last will (Gen. xlvii. 31).—Vers. 49, 50. The news spread terror. All the guests of Adonijah fled, every man his way. Adonijah himself sought refuge from Solomon at the horns of the altar. The altar was regarded from time immemorial and among all nations as a place of refuge for criminals deserving of death ; but, according to Ex. xxi. 14, in Israel it was only allowed to afford protection in cases of unintentional slaying, and for these special cities of refuge were afterwards provided (Num. xxxv.). In the horns of the altar, as symbols of power and strength, there was concentrated the true significance of the altar as a divine place, from which there emanated both life and health (see at Ex. xxvii. 19). By grasping the horns of the altar the culprit placed himself under the protection of the saving and helping grace of God, which wipes away sin, and thereby abolishes punishment (see Bähr, *Symbolik des Mos. Cult.* i. p. 474). The question to what altar Adonijah fled, whether to the altar at the ark of the covenant in Zion, or to the one at the tabernacle at Gibeon, or to the one built by David on the threshing-floor of Araunah, cannot be determined with certainty. It was probably to the first of these, however, as nothing is said about a flight to Gibeon, and with regard to the altar of Araunah it is not certain that it was provided with horns like the altars of the two sanctuaries.—Vers. 51, 52. When this was reported to Solomon, together with the prayer of Adonijah that the king would swear to him that he would not put him to death with the sword (אֶפְרַיִם before אִמִּית, a particle used in an oath), he promised him conditional impunity : “ If he shall be brave (בָּרָא, *vir probus*), none of his hair shall fall to the earth,” equivalent to not a hair of his head shall be injured (cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 45) ; “ but if evil be found in him,” i.e. if he render himself guilty of a fresh crime, “ he shall die.”—Ver. 53. He then had him fetched down from the altar (הוֹרֵד, inasmuch as the altar stood upon an eminence) ; and when he fell down before the king, i.e. did homage to him as king, he gave him his life and freedom in the words, “ Go to thy house.” The expression לֵךְ לְבֵיתְךָ does not imply his banishment from the court (compare ch. ii. 13 and 2 Sam. xiv. 24). Solomon did not wish to commence his own ascent of the throne by

infliction of punishment, and therefore presented the usurper with his life on the condition that he kept himself quiet.

CHAP. II. DAVID'S LAST INSTRUCTIONS AND DEATH. SOLOMON ASCENDS THE THRONE AND FORTIFIES HIS GOVERNMENT.

The anointing of Solomon as king, which was effected by David's command (ch. i), is only briefly mentioned in 1 Chron. xxiii. 1 in the words, "When David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel;" which serve as an introduction to the account of the arrangements made by David during the closing days of his life. After these arrangements have been described, there follow in 1 Chron. xxviii. and xxix. his last instructions and his death. The aged king gathered together the tribe-princes and the rest of the dignitaries and superior officers to a diet at Jerusalem, and having introduced Solomon to them as the successor chosen by God, exhorted them to keep the commandments of God, and urged upon Solomon and the whole assembly the building of the temple, gave his son the model of the temple and all the materials which he had collected towards its erection, called upon the great men of the kingdom to contribute to this work, which they willingly agreed to, and closed this last act of his reign with praise and thanksgiving to God and a great sacrificial festival, at which the assembled states of the realm made Solomon king a second time, and anointed him prince in the presence of Jehovah (1 Chron. xxix. 22).—A repetition of the anointing of the new king at the instigation of the states of the realm, accompanied by their solemn homage, had also taken place in the case of both Saul (1 Sam. xi.) and David (2 Sam. ii. 4 and v. 3), and appears to have been an essential requirement to secure the general recognition of the king on the part of the nation, at any rate in those cases in which the succession to the throne was not undisputed. In order, therefore, to preclude any rebellion after his death, David summoned this national assembly again after Solomon's first anointing and ascent of the throne, that the representatives of the whole nation might pay the requisite homage to king Solomon, who had been installed as his successor according to the will of God.—To this national assembly, which is only reported in the Chronicles, there are appended the last instructions which David gave, according to vers. 1–9 of our

chapter, to his successor Solomon immediately before his death. Just as in the Chronicles, according to the peculiar plan of that work, there is no detailed description of the installation of David on the throne; so here the author of our books has omitted the account of this national diet, and the homage paid by the estates of the realm to the new king, as not being required by the purpose of his work, and has communicated the last personal admonitions and instructions of the dying king David instead.¹

Vers. 1-11. DAVID'S LAST INSTRUCTIONS AND DEATH.—Vers. 1-4. When David saw that his life was drawing to a close, he first of all admonished his son Solomon to be valiant in the observance of the commandments of God. "I go the way of all the world" (as in Josh. xxiii. 14), *i.e.* the way of death; "be strong and be a man,"—not "bear my departure bravely," as Thenius supposes, but prove thyself brave (cf. 1 Sam. iv. 9) to keep the commandments of the Lord. Just as in 1 Sam. iv. 9 the object in which the bravery is to show itself is appended simply by the copula *Vāv*; so is it here also with *וְיָשַׁרְתָּהוּ*. The phrase *לְשָׁמַר אֶת־מִשְׁפָּטָהוּ*, to keep the keeping of Jehovah, which so frequently occurs in the *Thorah*, *i.e.* to observe or obey whatever is to be observed in relation to Jehovah (cf. Gen. xxvi. 5, Lev. viii. 35, xviii. 30, etc.), always receives its more precise definition from the context, and is used here, as in Gen. xxvi. 5, to denote obedience to the law of God in all its extent, or, according to the first definition, to walk in the ways of Jehovah. This is afterwards more fully expanded in the expression *לְשָׁמַר חֻקָּיו וְדִבְרֵי*, to keep the ordinances, commandments, rights, and

¹ To refute the assertion of De Wette, Gramberg, and Thenius, that this account of the Chronicles arises from a free mode of dealing with the history, and an intention to suppress everything that did not contribute to the honour of David and his house,—an assertion which can only be attributed to their completely overlooking, not to say studiously ignoring, the different plans of the two works (the books of Kings on the one hand, and those of Chronicles on the other),—it will be sufficient to quote the unprejudiced and thoughtful decision of Bertheau, who says, in his Comm. on 1 Chron. xxiii. 1: "These few words (1 Chron. xxiii. 1) give in a condensed form the substance of the account in 1 Kings i., which is intimately bound up with the account of the family affairs of David in the books of Samuel and Kings, and therefore, according to the whole plan of our historical work, would have been out of place in the Chronicles."

testimonies of Jehovah. These four words were applied to the different precepts of the law, the first three of which are connected together in Gen. xxvi. 5, Deut. v. 28, viii. 11, and served to individualize the rich and manifold substance of the demands of the Lord to His people as laid down in the *Thorah*. לִמְעַן תִּשְׁכַּל, that thou mayest act wisely and execute well, as in Deut. xxix. 8, Josh. i. 7.—Ver. 4. Solomon would then experience still further this blessing of walking in the ways of the Lord, since the Lord would fulfil to him His promise of the everlasting possession of the throne. לִמְעַן יָקִים וְנָתַן is grammatically subordinate to לִמְעַן תִּשְׁכַּל in ver. 3. The word which Jehovah has spoken concerning David (דָּוִד עָלָיו) is the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq., the substance of which is quoted here by David with a negative turn, לֹא יִכָּרֵת וְנָתַן, and with express allusion to the condition on which God would assuredly fulfil His promise, viz. if the descendants of David preserve their ways, to walk before the Lord in truth. בְּאֵמֶת is more precisely defined by נִמְשָׁם . . . בָּכָל. For the fact itself see Deut. v. 5, xi. 13, 18. The formula לֹא יִכָּרֵת וְנָתַן is formed after 1 Sam. ii. 33 (compare also 2 Sam. iii. 29 and Josh. ix. 23). "There shall not be cut off to thee a man from upon the throne of Israel," i.e. there shall never be wanting to thee a descendant to take the throne; in other words, the sovereignty shall always remain in thy family. This promise, which reads thus in 2 Sam. vii. 16, "Thy house and thy kingdom shall be continual for ever before thee, and thy throne stand fast for ever," and which was confirmed to Solomon by the Lord Himself after his prayer at the consecration of the temple (ch. viii. 25, ix. 5), is not to be understood as implying that no king of the Davidic house would be thrust away from the throne, but simply affirms that the posterity of David was not to be cut off, so as to leave no offshoot which could take possession of the throne. Its ultimate fulfilment it received in Christ (see at 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq.). The second לֹא יִכָּרֵת in ver. 4 is not to be erased as suspicious, as being merely a repetition of the first in consequence of the long conditional clause, even though it is wanting in the Vulgate, the Arabic, and a Hebrew codex.

After a general admonition David communicated to his successor a few more special instructions; viz., first of all (vers. 5, 6), to punish *Joab* for his wickedness. "What *Joab* did to me:"—of this David mentions only the two principal crimes of *Joab*,

by which he had already twice deserved death, namely, his killing the two generals, Abner (2 Sam. iii. 27) and Amasa the son of Jether (2 Sam. xx. 10). The name יִתְרִי is written יִתְרָא in 2 Sam. xvii. 25. Joab had murdered both of them out of jealousy in a treacherous and malicious manner; and thereby he had not only grievously displeased David and bidden defiance to his royal authority, but by the murder of Abner had exposed the king to the suspicion in the eyes of the people of having instigated the crime (see at 2 Sam. iii. 28, 37). 'וַיִּשְׂפֹּךְ דָּמַי בְּשָׁלוֹם, "and he made war-blood in peace," i.e. he shed in the time of peace blood that ought only to flow in war (שָׁלוֹם in the sense of making, as in Deut. xiv. 1, Ex. x. 2, etc.), "and brought war-blood upon his girdle which was about his loins, and upon his shoes under his feet," sc. in the time of peace. This was the crime therefore: that Joab had murdered the two generals in a time of peace, as one ought only to slay his opponent in time of war. *Girdle and shoes*, the principal features in oriental attire when a man is preparing himself for any business, were covered with blood, since Joab, while saluting them, had treacherously stabbed both of them with the sword. David ought to have punished these two crimes; but when Abner was murdered, he felt himself too weak to visit a man like Joab with the punishment he deserved, as he had only just been anointed king, and consequently he did nothing more than invoke divine retribution upon his head (2 Sam. iii. 29). And when Amasa was slain, the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba had crippled the power of David too much, for him to visit the deed with the punishment that was due. But as king of the nation of God, it was not right for him to allow such crimes to pass unpunished: he therefore transferred the punishment, for which he had wanted the requisite power, to his son and successor.—Ver. 6. "Do according to thy wisdom ("mark the proper opportunity of punishing him"—Seb. Schmidt), and let not his grey hair go down into hell (the region of the dead) in peace (i.e. unpunished)." The punishment of so powerful a man as Joab the commander-in-chief was, required great wisdom, to avoid occasioning a rebellion in the army, which was devoted to him.—Ver. 7. If the demands of justice required that Joab should be punished, the duty of gratitude was no less holy to the dying king. And Solomon was to show this to the sons of *Barzillai* the Gileadite, and make them companions of his table; because Barzillai had

supplied David with provisions on his flight from Absalom (2 Sam. xvii. 27 sqq., xix. 32 sqq.). *וְהָיוּ בְּאֶמְלֵי שֻׁלְחָנְךָ*, "let them be among those eating of thy table;" i.e. not, "let them draw their food from the royal table,"—for there was no particular distinction in this, as all the royal attendants at the court received their food from the royal kitchen, as an equivalent for the pay that was owing,—but, "let them join in the meals at the royal table." The fact that in 2 Sam. ix. 10, 11, 13, we have *אָכַל עַל־שֻׁלְחָן* to express this, makes no material difference. According to 2 Sam. xix. 38, Barzillai had, it is true, allowed only one son to follow the king to his court. "For so they drew near to me," i.e. they showed the kindness to me of supplying me with food; compare 2 Sam. xvii. 27, where Barzillai alone is named, though, as he was a man of eighty years old, he was certainly supported by his sons.—Ver. 8. On the other hand, *Shimei* the Benjamite had shown great hostility to David (cf. 2 Sam. xvi. 5–8). He had cursed him with a vehement curse as he fled from Absalom (*נִמְרָצָה*, vehement, violent, not ill, *heillos*, from the primary meaning to be sick or ill, as Thenius supposes, since it cannot be shown that *נִרְצָה* has any such meaning); and when David returned to Jerusalem and Shimei fell at his feet, he had promised to spare his life, because he did not want to mar the joy at his reinstatement in his kingdom by an act of punishment (2 Sam. xix. 19–24), and therefore had personally forgiven him. But the insult which Shimei had offered in his person to the anointed of the Lord, as king and representative of the rights of God, he could not forgive. The instruction given to his successor (*אֲלֵהֶנְךָ*, let him not be guiltless) did not spring from personal revenge, but was the duty of the king as judge and administrator of the divine right.¹ It follows from the expression *עִמָּךְ*, with thee, i.e. in thy neighbourhood, that Shimei was living at that time in Jerusalem (cf. ver. 36).—Vers. 10, 11. After these instructions David died, and was buried in the

¹ "Shimei is and remains rather a proof of David's magnanimity than of vengeance. It was not a little thing to tolerate the miscreant in his immediate neighbourhood for his whole life long (not even banishment being thought of). And if under the following reign also he had been allowed to end his days in peace (which had never been promised him), this would have been a kindness which would have furnished an example of unpunished crimes that might easily have been abused." This is the verdict of J. J. Hess in his *Geschichte Davids*, ii. p. 221.

city of David, *i.e.* upon Mount Zion, where the sepulchre of David still existed in the time of Christ (Acts ii. 29).¹ On the length of his reign see 2 Sam. v. 5.

Vers. 12-46. ACCESSION OF SOLOMON AND ESTABLISHMENT OF HIS GOVERNMENT.—Ver. 12 is a heading embracing the substance of what follows, and is more fully expanded in 1 Chron. xxix. 23-25. Solomon established his monarchy first of all by punishing the rebels, Adonijah (vers. 13-25) and his adherents (vers. 26-35), and by carrying out the final instructions of his father (vers. 36-46).

Vers. 13-25. *Adonijah forfeits his life.*—Vers. 13-18. Adonijah came to Bathsheba with the request that she would apply to king Solomon to give him Abishag of Shunem as his wife. Bathsheba asked him, "Is peace thy coming?" *i.e.* comest thou with a peaceable intention? (as in 1 Sam. xvi. 4), because after what had occurred (ch. i. 5 sqq.) she suspected an evil intention. He introduced his petition with these words: "Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and all Israel had set its face upon me that I should be king, then the kingdom turned about and became my brother's; for it became his from the Lord." The throne was his, not because he had usurped it, but because it belonged to him as the eldest son at that time, according to the right of primogeniture. Moreover it might have been the case that many of the people wished him to be king, and the fact that he had found adherents in Joab, Abiathar, and others, confirms this; but his assertion, that all Israel had set its eyes upon him as the future king, went beyond the bounds of truth. At the same time, he knew how to cover over the dangerous sentiment implied in his words in a very skilful manner by adding the further remark, that the transfer of the kingdom to his brother had come from Jehovah; so that Bathsheba did not detect the artifice, and pro-

¹ The situation of the tombs of the kings of Judah upon Zion, Thenius has attempted to trace minutely in a separate article in Illgen's *Zeitschrift für die histor. Theol.* 1844, i. p. 1 sqq., and more especially to show that the entrance to these tombs must have been on the eastern slope of Mount Zion, which falls into the valley of *Tyropæon*, and obliquely opposite to the spring of Siloah. This is in harmony with the statement of Theodore^t, (*quest.* 6 in iii. Reg.), to the effect that Josephus says, τὸ δὲ μνήμα (τῆς ταφῆς) παρὰ τὴν Σιλοάμ εἶναι ἀντροειδὲς ἔχον τὸ σχῆμα, καὶ τὴν βασιλικὴν δαλοῦν πολυτίλειαν; although this statement does not occur in any passage of his works as they have come down to us.

mised to fulfil his request (vers. 16 sqq.) to intercede with king Solomon for Abishag to be given him to wife. אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה, "do not turn back my face," i. e. do not refuse my request.—Ver. 19. When Bathsheba came to Solomon, he received her with the reverence due to the queen-mother: "he rose up to meet her" (a pregnant expression for "he rose up and went to meet her"), made a low bow, then sat upon his throne again, and bade her sit upon a throne at his right hand. The seat at the right hand of the king was the place of honour among the Israelites (cf. Ps. cx. 1), also with the ancient Arabian kings (cf. Eichhorn, *Monumenta Antiq. Hist. Arab.* p. 220), as well as among the Greeks and Romans.—Vers. 20 sqq. To her request, "Let Abishag of Shunem be given to Adonijah thy brother for a wife" (אֶת־אֲבִישָׁג, cf. Ges. § 143, 1, α), which she regarded in her womanly simplicity as a very small one (הַמִּצֵּט), he replied with indignation, detecting at once the intrigues of Adonijah: "And why dost thou ask Abishag of Shunem for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom, for he is my elder brother; and indeed for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah." The repetition of הֵן in הֵן (ver. 22), for the purpose of linking on another clause, answers entirely to the emotional character of the words. "For him, and for Abiathar and Joab:" Solomon said this, because these two men of high rank had supported Adonijah's rebellion and wished to rule under his name. There is no ground for any such alterations of the text as Thenius proposes.—Although Abishag had been only David's nurse, in the eyes of the people she passed as his concubine; and among the Israelites, just as with the ancient Persians (Herod. iii. 68), taking possession of the harem of a deceased king was equivalent to an establishment of the claim to the throne (see at 2 Sam. xii. 8 and iii. 7, 8). According to 2 Sam. xvi. 21, this cannot have been unknown even to Bathsheba; but as Adonijah's wily words had disarmed all suspicion, she may not have thought of this, or may perhaps have thought that Abishag was not to be reckoned as one of David's concubines, because David had not known her (ch. i. 4).—Vers. 23 sqq. Solomon thereupon solemnly swore (the formula of an oath, and the וְ introducing the oath, as in 1 Sam. xiv. 44, etc.), "Adonijah has spoken this word against his own life." בְּנַפְשׁוֹ, at the cost of his life, as in 2 Sam. xxiii. 17, i. e. at the hazard of his life, or to his destruction. Ver. 24. "And now, as truly as Jehovah liveth, who hath established me

and set me on the throne of my father David, and hath made me a house, as He said (*verbatim*, 2 Sam. vii. 11): yea, to-day shall Adonijah be put to death." Jehovah established Solomon, or founded him firmly, by raising him to the throne in spite of Adonijah's usurpation. In יוֹשִׁיעִי the central ' has got into the text through a copyist's error. קָשָׁה לִי בֵית, *i.e.* He has bestowed upon me a family or posterity. Solomon had already one son, viz. Rehoboam, about a year old (compare xi. 42 with ch. xiv. 21 and 2 Chron. xii. 13).¹—Ver. 25. Solomon had this sentence immediately executed upon Adonijah by Benaiah, the chief of the body-guard, according to the oriental custom of both ancient and modern times. The king was perfectly just in doing this. For since Adonijah, even after his first attempt to seize upon the throne had been forgiven by Solomon, endeavoured to secure his end by fresh machinations, duty to God, who had exalted Solomon to the throne, demanded that the rebel should be punished with all the severity of the law, without regard to blood-relationship.

Vers. 26, 27. *Deposition of Abiathar*.—The conduct of Solomon towards the high priest Abiathar is a proof how free his actions were from personal revenge or too great severity. Abiathar had also forfeited his life through the part he took in Adonijah's conspiracy; but Solomon simply sent him to Anathoth (*i.e.* Anata; see at Josh. xviii. 24), to his own fields, *i.e.* to his property there, telling him, "Thou art indeed a man of death," *i.e.* thou hast deserved to die, "but I will not put thee to death to-day, because thou hast borne the ark of Jehovah," namely, both on the occasion of its solemn conveyance to Jerusalem (1 Chron. xv. 11 sqq.) and also on David's flight from Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 24, 29), that is to say, because of his high-priestly dignity, and because thou didst endure all that my father endured, *i.e.* thou didst share all his afflictions and sufferings, both in the period of Saul's persecution (1 Sam. xxii. 20 sqq., xxiii. 8 sqq.), and during the rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 24 sqq.). כִּיּוֹם הַזֶּה (to-day) puts a limit upon the pardon, because Solomon could not foresee whether Abiathar would

¹ When Thcnius denies this, and maintains that Rehoboam cannot have been 41 years old when he began to reign, referring to his discussion at ch. xiv. 21, he answers himself, inasmuch as at ch. xiv. 21 he demonstrates the fallacy of the objections which Cappellus has raised against the correctness of the reading "41 years."

always keep quiet, and not forfeit his life again by fresh crimes.¹—Ver. 27. The banishment of Abiathar to his own private possession involved his deposition from the priesthood. And, as the historian adds, thus was the word of the Lord concerning the house of Eli fulfilled (1 Sam. ii. 30–33). אֲבִיָּאֲתָר corresponds to the New Testament *Ἰνα πλῆρωθῇ*. For further remarks on this prophecy and its fulfilment, see at 1 Sam. ii. 30 sqq.² Thus was the high-priesthood of the house of Eli extinguished, and henceforth this dignity passed through Zadok into the sole possession of the line of Eleazar.

Vers. 28–34. *Execution of Joab*.—When the report (of the execution of Adonijah and the deposition of Abiathar) came to Joab, he fled to the tent of Jehovah (not to the tabernacle, but to the holy tent upon Zion) to seek protection at the altar (see at ch. i. 50). The words כִּי יֹאב . . . לֹא נָתַק are introduced as a parenthesis to explain Joab's flight: "for Joab had leaned after Adonijah," i.e. taken his side (נָתַק אַחֲרָיו), as in Ex. xxiii. 2, Judg. ix. 3), "but not after Absalom."³ There is

¹ There is no meaning in the objection of Thenius, that Abiathar did not carry the ark himself, since this was not the duty of the high priest. For, in the first place, it is questionable whether Abiathar did not lend a helping hand at the removal of the ark during Absalom's conspiracy. And, secondly, the duty binding upon the high priest, to superintend and conduct the removal of the ark, might very well be called carrying the ark. The conjecture, that for אָרֶן we should read אֲפֹר, founders on the preterite אָנָּה; for Abiathar had not only worn the ephod once before, but he wore it till the very hour in which Solomon deposed him from his office.

² Nothing is related concerning the subsequent fate of Abiathar, since the death of a high priest who had been deprived of his office was a matter of no importance to the history of the kingdom of God. At any rate, he would not survive his deposition very long, as he was certainly eighty years old already (see *Comm. on Sam.* p. 267).—The inference which Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. pp. 269, 270) draws from 1 Sam. ii. 31–36 as to the manner of his death, namely, that he fell by the sword, is one of the numerous fictions founded upon naturalistic assumptions with which this scholar has ornamented the biblical history.

³ Instead of אֲחֵרֶיךָ the LXX. (Cod. Vat.), Vulgate, Syr., and Arab. have adopted the reading אֲחֵרֶיךָ, and both Thenius and Ewald propose to alter the text accordingly. But whatever plausibility this reading may have, especially if we alter the preterite נָתַק into the participle נֹתֵק after the ἡ κατακλιπύς of the LXX., as Thenius does, it has no other foundation than an arbitrary rendering of the LXX., who thought, but quite erroneously, that the allusion to Absalom was inapplicable here. For נָתַק אַחֲרָיו, to take a

no foundation in the biblical text for the conjecture, that Joab had given Adonijah the advice to ask for Abishag as his wife, just as Ahithophel had given similar advice to Absalom (2 Sam. xvi. 21). For not only is there no intimation of anything of the kind, but Solomon punished Joab solely because of his crimes in the case of Abner and Amasa. Moreover, Abiathar was also deposed, without having any fresh machinations in favour of Adonijah laid to his charge. The punishment of Adonijah and Abiathar was quite sufficient to warn Joab of his approaching fate, and lead him to seek to save his life by fleeing to the altar. It is true that, according to Ex. xxi. 13, 14, the altar could afford no protection to a man who had committed two murders. But he probably thought no more of these crimes, which had been committed a long time before, but simply of his participation in Adonijah's usurpation; and he might very well hope that religious awe would keep Solomon from putting him to death in a holy place for such a crime as that. And it is very evident that this hope was not altogether a visionary one, from the fact that, according to ver. 30, when Joab refused to leave the altar at the summons addressed to him in the name of the king, Benaiah did not give him the death-blow at once, but informed Solomon of the fact and received his further commands. Solomon, however, did not arrest the course of justice, but ordered him to be put to death there and afterwards buried. The burial of the persons executed was a matter of course, as, according to Deut. xxi. 23, even a person who had been hanged was to be buried before sunset. When, therefore, Solomon gives special orders for the burial of Joab, the meaning is that Benaiah is to provide for the burial with distinct reference to the services which Joab had rendered to his father. "And take away the blood, which Joab shed without cause, from me and my father's house." So long as Joab remained unpunished for the double murder, the blood-guiltiness rested upon the king and his house, on whom the duty of punishment devolved (cf. Num. xxxv. 30, 31; Deut. xix. 13). דם בלי עוון, blood without cause, i.e. blood shed in innocence. On the connection of the adverb with the substantive, at which Thenius takes offence, comp. Ges. § 151, 1, and Ewald, § 287, d.

person's side, would suit very well in the case of Adonijah and Absalom, but not in that of Solomon, whose claim to the throne was not a party affair, but had been previously determined by God.

—For ver. 32, compare ver. 5. The words of Solomon in ver. 33a point back to the curse which David uttered upon Joab and his descendants after the murder of Abner (2 Sam. iii. 28, 29). “But to David, and his seed, and his house, and his throne, let there be salvation for ever from Jehovah.” This wish sprang from a conviction, based upon 2 Sam. vii. 14, that the Lord would not fulfil His promise to David unless his successors upon the throne exercised right and justice according to the command of the Lord.—Ver. 34. Benaiah went up (לָאֵל), inasmuch as the altar by the ark of the covenant stood higher up Mount Zion than Solomon’s house. Joab was buried “in his house” (i.e. in the tomb prepared in his house, either in the court or in the garden: cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 1), “in the desert,” probably the wilderness of Judah, as Joab’s mother was a step-sister of David, and therefore probably dwelt in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem.—Ver. 35. Solomon appointed Benaiah commander-in-chief in the place of Joab, and put Zadok in Abiathar’s place (cf. ch. i. 8, 9).

Vers. 36–46. *Punishment of Shimei*.—Solomon thereupon ordered Shimei to come, probably from Bahurim, where his home was (2 Sam. xvi. 5), and commanded him to build himself a house in Jerusalem to dwell in, and not to leave the city “any whither” (אֵינֶה וְאֵינֶה), threatening him with death if ever he should cross the brook Kidron. The valley of Kidron is mentioned as the eastern boundary of the city with an allusion to the fact, that Bahurim was to the east of Jerusalem towards the desert.—Ver. 38. Shimei vowed obedience, and that on oath, as is supplementarily observed in ver. 42, though it has been arbitrarily interpolated by the LXX. here; and he kept his word a considerable time.—Vers. 39, 40. But after the lapse of three years, when two slaves fled to Gath to king Achish, with whom David had also sought and found refuge (1 Sam. xxvii. 2, compare ch. xxi. 11 sqq.), he started for Gath as soon as he knew this, and fetched them back.—Vers. 41 sqq. When this was reported to Solomon, he sent for Shimei and charged him with the breach of his command: “Did I not swear to thee by Jehovah, and testify to thee, etc.? Why hast thou not kept the oath of Jehovah (the oath sworn by Jehovah) . . .?”—Ver. 44. He then reminded him of the evil which he had done to his father: “Thou knowest all the evil, which thy heart knoweth (i.e. which thy conscience must tell thee); and now Jehovah

returns the evil upon thy head," namely, by decreeing the punishment of death, which he deserved for blaspheming the anointed of the Lord (2 Sam. xvi. 9).—Ver. 45. "And king Solomon will be blessed, and the throne of David be established before Jehovah for ever," namely, because the king does justice (compare the remark on ver. 33).—Ver. 46. Solomon then ordered him to be executed by Benaiah. This punishment was also just. As Solomon had put Shimei's life in his own hand by imposing upon him confinement in Jerusalem, and Shimei had promised on oath to obey the king's command, the breach of his oath was a crime for which he had no excuse. There is no force at all in the excuses which some commentators adduce in his favour, founded upon the money which his slaves had cost him, and the wish to recover possession of them, which was a right one in itself. If Shimei had wished to remain faithful to his oath, he might have informed the king of the flight of his slaves, have entreated the king that they might be brought back, and have awaited the king's decision; but he had no right thus lightly to break the promise given on oath. By the breach of his oath he had forfeited his life. And this is the first thing with which Solomon charges him, without his being able to offer any excuse; and it is not till afterwards that he adduces as a second fact in confirmation of the justice of his procedure, the wickedness that he practised towards his father.—The last clause, "and the kingdom was established by (וְיָסָד) Solomon," is attached to the following chapter in the Cod. Al. of the LXX. (in the Cod. Vat. it is wanting, or rather its place is supplied by a long interpolation), in the Vulgate, and in the Syriac; and indeed rightly so, as Thenius has shown, not merely because of the וְ in ch. iii. 2, but also because of its form as a circumstantial clause, to which the following account (ch. iii. 1 sqq.) is appended.

CHAP. III. SOLOMON'S MARRIAGE; WORSHIP AND SACRIFICE AT GIBEON; AND WISE JUDICIAL SENTENCE.

The establishment of the government in the hands of Solomon having been noticed in ch. ii., the history of his reign commences with an account of his marriage to an Egyptian princess, and with a remark concerning the state of the kingdom at the beginning of his reign (vers. 1-3). There then follows a de-

scription of the solemn sacrifice and prayer at Gibeon, by which Solomon sought to give a religious consecration to his government, and to secure the assistance of the Lord and His blessing upon it, and obtained the fulfilment of his desire (vers. 4-15). And then, as a practical proof of the spirit of his government, we have the sentence through which he displayed the wisdom of his judicial decisions in the sight of all the people (vers. 16-28).

Vers. 1-3. *Solomon's marriage and the religious state of the kingdom.*—Ver. 1. When Solomon had well secured his possession of the throne (ch. ii. 46), he entered into alliance with Pharaoh, by taking his daughter as his wife. This Pharaoh of Egypt is supposed by Winer, Ewald, and others to have been *Psusennes*, the last king of the twenty-first (Tanitic) dynasty, who reigned thirty-five years; since the first king of the twenty-second (Bubastic) dynasty, *Sesonchis* or *Sheshonk*, was certainly the Shishak who conquered Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign (ch. xiv. 25, 26). The alliance by marriage with the royal family of Egypt presupposes that Egypt was desirous of cultivating friendly relations with the kingdom of Israel, which had grown into a power to be dreaded; although, as we know nothing more of the history of Egypt at that time than the mere names of the kings (as given by Manetho), it is impossible to determine what may have been the more precise grounds which led the reigning king of Egypt to seek the friendship of Israel. There is, at any rate, greater probability in this supposition than in that of Thenius, who conjectures that Solomon contracted this marriage because he saw the necessity of entering into a closer relationship with this powerful neighbour, who had a perfectly free access to Palestine. The conclusion of this marriage took place in the first year of Solomon's reign, though probably not at the very beginning of the reign, but not till after his buildings had been begun, as we may infer from the expression עַד בָּנָהוּ לְבָנֹתָו (until he had made an end of building). Moreover, Solomon had already married Naamah the Ammonitess before ascending the throne, and had had a son by her (compare ch. xiv. 21 with xi. 42, 43).—Marriage with an Egyptian princess was not a transgression of the law, as it was only marriages with Canaanitish women that were expressly prohibited (Ex. xxxiv. 16; Deut. vii. 3), whereas it was allowable to marry even foreign women taken in war (Deut. xxi. 10

sq.)). At the same time, it was only when the foreign wives renounced idolatry and confessed their faith in Jehovah, that such marriages were in accordance with the spirit of the law. And we may assume that this was the case even with Pharaoh's daughter; because Solomon adhered so faithfully to the Lord during the first years of his reign, that he would not have tolerated any idolatry in his neighbourhood, and we cannot find any trace of Egyptian idolatry in Israel in the time of Solomon, and, lastly, the daughter of Pharaoh is expressly distinguished in ch. xi. 1 from the foreign wives who tempted Solomon to idolatry in his old age. The assertion of Seb. Schmidt and Thenius to the contrary rests upon a false interpretation of ch. xi. 1.—“And he brought her into the city of David, till he had finished the building of his palace,” etc. Into the city of David: *i.e.* not into the palace in which his father had dwelt, as Thenius arbitrarily interprets it in opposition to 2 Chron. viii. 11, but into a house in the city of David or Jerusalem, from which he brought her up into the house appointed for her after the building of his own palace was finished (ch. ix. 24). The building of the house of Jehovah is mentioned as well, because the sacred tent for the ark of the covenant was set up in the palace of David until the temple was finished, and the temple was not consecrated till after the completion of the building of the palace (see at ch. viii. 1). By the building of “the wall of Jerusalem” we are to understand a stronger fortification, and possibly also the extension of the city wall (see at ch. xi. 27).—Ver. 2. “Only the people sacrificed upon high places, because there was not yet a house built for the name of Jehovah until those days.” The limiting *¶*, *only*, by which this general account of the existing condition of the religious worship is appended to what precedes, may be accounted for from the antithesis to the strengthening of the kingdom by Solomon mentioned in ch. ii. 46. The train of thought is the following: It is true that Solomon's authority was firmly established by the punishment of the rebels, so that he was able to ally himself by marriage with the king of Egypt; but just as he was obliged to bring his Egyptian wife into the city of David, because the building of his palace was not yet finished, so the people, and (according to ver. 3) even Solomon himself, were only able to sacrifice to the Lord at that time upon altars on the high places, because the temple was not yet built. The participle *מִזְבְּחֵיהֶם* denotes the continuation of this religious

condition (see Ewald, § 168, c). The *בָּמֹת*, or high places,¹ were places of sacrifice and prayer, which were built upon eminences or hills, because men thought they were nearer the Deity there, and which consisted in some cases probably of an altar only, though as a rule there was an altar with a sanctuary built by the side (*בַּיִת בְּמֹת*, ch. xiii. 32; 2 Kings xvii. 29, 32, xxiii. 19), so that *בָּמֹת* frequently stands for *בַּיִת בְּמֹת* (e.g. ch. xi. 7, xiv. 23; 2 Kings xxi. 3, xxiii. 8), and the *בָּמֹת* is also distinguished from the *מִזְבֵּחַ* (2 Kings xxiii. 15; 2 Chron. xiv. 2). These *high places* were consecrated to the worship of Jehovah, and essentially different from the high places of the Canaanites which were consecrated to Baal. Nevertheless sacrificing upon these high places was opposed to the law, according to which the place which the Lord Himself had chosen for the revelation of His name was the only place where sacrifices were to be offered (Lev. xvii. 3 sqq.); and therefore it is excused here on the ground that no house (temple) had yet been built to the name of the Lord.—Ver. 3. Even Solomon, although he loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, *i.e.* according to ch. ii. 3, in the commandments of the Lord as they are written in the law of Moses, sacrificed and burnt incense upon high places. Before the building of the temple, more especially since the tabernacle had lost its significance as the central place of the gracious presence of God among His people, through the removal of the ark of the covenant, the worship of the high places was unavoidable; although even afterwards it still continued as a forbidden *cultus*, and could not be thoroughly exterminated even by the most righteous kings (ch. xxii. 24; 2 Kings xii. 4, xiv. 4, xv. 4, 35).

¹ The opinion of Böttcher and Thenius, that *בָּמֹת* signifies a "sacred coppice," is only based upon untenable etymological combinations, and cannot be proved. And Ewald's view is equally unfounded, *viz.* that "high places were an old Canaanite species of sanctuary, which at that time had become common in Israel also, and consisted of a tall stone of a conical shape, as the symbol of the Holy One, and of the real high place, *viz.* an altar, a sacred tree or grove, or even an image of the one God as well" (*Gesch.* iii. p. 390). For, on the one hand, it cannot be shown that the tall stone of a conical shape existed even in the case of the Canaanite *bamoth*, and, on the other hand, it is impossible to adduce a shadow of a proof that the Israelite *bamoth*, which were dedicated to Jehovah, were constructed precisely after the pattern of the Baal's-*bamoth* of the Canaanites.

Vers. 4-15. SOLOMON'S SACRIFICE AND DREAM AT GIBEON (cf. 2 Chron. i. 1-13).—To implore the divine blessing upon his reign, Solomon offered to the Lord at Gibeon a great sacrifice—a thousand burnt-offerings; and, according to 2 Chron. i. 2, the representatives of the whole nation took part in this sacrificial festival. At that time the great or principal *bamah* was at Gibeon (the present *el Jib*; see at Josh. ix. 3), namely, the Mosaic tabernacle (2 Chron. i. 3), which is called *הַבְּמִזְבֵּחַ*, because the ark of the covenant, with which Jehovah had bound up His gracious presence, was not there now. "Upon that altar," i.e. upon the altar of the great *bamah* at Gibeon, the brazen altar of burnt-offering in the tabernacle (2 Chron. i. 6).—Vers. 5 sqq. The one thing wanting in the place of sacrifice at Gibeon, viz. the ark of the covenant with the gracious presence of Jehovah, was supplied by the Lord in the case of this sacrifice by a direct revelation in a dream, which Solomon received in the night following the sacrifice. There is a connection between the question which God addressed to Solomon in the dream, "What shall I give thee?" and the object of the sacrifice, viz. to seek the help of God for his reign. Solomon commences his prayer in ver. 6 with an acknowledgment of the great favour which the Lord had shown to his father David, and had continued till now by raising his son to his throne (*בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה*, as it is this day: cf. 1 Sam. xxii. 8, Deut. viii. 18, etc.); and then, in vers. 7-9, in the consciousness of his incapacity for the right administration of government over so numerous a people, he asks the Lord for an obedient heart and for wisdom to rule His people. *וַתִּשְׁמַע* introduces the petition, the reasons assigned for which are, (1) his youth and inexperience, and (2) the greatness or multitude of the nation to be governed. I am, says he, *נָעַר קָטָן*, i.e. an inexperienced youth (Solomon was only about twenty years old); "I know not to go out and in," i.e. how to behave myself as king, or govern the people (for *יָצֵאת וּבֵאת* compare the note on Num. xxvii. 17). At ver. 8 he describes the magnitude of the nation in words which recall to mind the divine promises in Gen. xiii. 16 and xxxii. 13, to indicate how gloriously the Lord has fulfilled the promises which He made to the patriarchs.—Ver. 9. *וְנָתַתָּ*, therefore give. The prayer (commencing with *וַתִּשְׁמַע* in ver. 7) is appended in the form of an apodosis to the circumstantial clauses *וְאֵלֵינוּ* and *וְעַבְדְּךָ*, which contain the grounds of the petition. *לֵב שֹׁמֵעַ*, a hearing heart, i.e. a heart

giving heed to the law and right of God, "to judge Thy people, (namely) to distinguish between good and evil (*i.e.* right and wrong)." "For who could judge this Thy numerous people," *sc.* unless Thou gavest him intelligence? כָּבֵד, *heavy* in multitude: in the Chronicles this is explained by נָדָר.—Vers. 10 sqq. This prayer pleased God well. "Because thou hast asked this, and hast not asked for thyself long life, nor riches, nor the life (*i.e.* the destruction) of thy foes," all of them good things, which the world seeks to obtain as the greatest prize, "but intelligence to hear judgment (*i.e.* to foster it, inasmuch as the administration of justice rests upon a conscientious hearing of the parties), behold I have done according to thy word" (*i.e.* fulfilled thy request: the perfect is used, inasmuch as the hearkening has already begun; for הִנֵּה in this connection compare Ewald, § 307, e), "and given thee a wise and understanding heart." The words which follow, "so that there has been none like thee before thee," etc., are not to be restricted to the kings of Israel, as Clericus supposes, but are to be understood quite universally as applying to all mankind (cf. ch. v. 9–11).—Vers. 13, 14. In addition to this, according to the promise that to him who seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness all other things shall be added (Matt. vi. 33), God will also give him the earthly blessings, for which he has not asked, and that in great abundance, viz. riches and honour such as no king of the earth has had before him; and if he adhere faithfully to God's commandments, long life also (וַיִּאָּרְכֵהוּ, in this case I have lengthened). This last promise was not fulfilled, because Solomon did not observe the condition (cf. ch. xi. 42).—Ver. 15. Then Solomon awoke, and behold it was a dream; *i.e.* a dream produced by God, a revelation by dream, or a divine appearance in a dream. הָלֹאִם as in Num. xii. 6.—Solomon thanked the Lord again for this promise after his return to Jerusalem, by offering burnt-offerings and thank-offerings before the ark of the covenant, *i.e.* upon the altar at the tent erected for the ark upon Zion, and prepared a meal for all his servants (viz. his court-servants), *i.e.* a sacrificial meal of the שְׁלָמִים.—This sacrificial festival upon Zion is omitted in the Chronicles, as well as the following account in vers. 16–28; not, however, because in the chronicler's opinion no sacrifices had any legal validity but such as were offered upon the altar of the Mosaic tabernacle, as Thenius fancies, though without observing the account in 1 Chron. xxi.

26 sqq., which overthrows this assertion, but because this sacrificial festival had no essential significance in relation to Solomon's reign.

Vers. 16-28. SOLOMON'S JUDICIAL WISDOM.—As a proof that the Lord had bestowed upon Solomon unusual judicial wisdom, there is appended a decision of his in a very difficult case, in which Solomon had shown extraordinary intelligence. Two harlots living together in one house had each given birth to a child, and one of them had "overlaid" her child in the night while asleep (אִשָּׁר אֶשְׁכְּבָה עָלָיו), because she had lain upon it), and had then placed her dead child in the other one's bosom and taken her living child away. When the other woman looked the next morning at the child lying in her bosom, she saw that it was not her own but the other woman's child, whereas the latter maintained the opposite. As they eventually referred the matter in dispute to the king, and each one declared that the living child was her own, the king ordered a sword to be brought, and the living child to be cut in two, and a half given to each. Then the mother of the living child, "because her bowels yearned upon her son," *i.e.* her maternal love was excited, cried out, "Give her (the other) the living child, but do not slay it;" whereas the latter said, "It shall be neither mine nor thine, cut it in pieces."—Ver. 27. Solomon saw from this which was the mother of the living child, and handed it over to her.¹—Ver. 28. This judicial decision convinced all the people that Solomon was endowed with divine wisdom for the administration of justice.

CHAP. IV.-V. 14. SOLOMON'S MINISTERS OF STATE. HIS REGAL SPLENDOUR AND WISDOM.

Ch. iv. contains a list of the chief ministers of state (vers. 2-6), and of the twelve officers placed over the land (vers. 7-20), which is inserted here to give an idea of the might and glory of

¹ Grotius observes on this: "The *αγχινοια* of Solomon was shown by this to be very great. There is a certain similarity in the account of Ariopharnis, king of the Thracians, who, when three persons claimed to be the sons of the king of the Cimmerii, decided that he was the son who would not obey the command to cast javelins at his father's corpse. The account is given by Diodorus Siculus."

the kingdom of Israel under Solomon's reign. So far as the contents are concerned, this list belongs to the middle portion of the reign of Solomon, as we may see from the fact that two of the officers named had daughters of Solomon for their wives (vers. 11, 15), whom they could not possibly have married till the later years of Solomon's life.

Vers. 1-6. THE CHIEF MINISTERS OF STATE.—The list is introduced in ver. 1 by the general remark, that "king Solomon was king over all Israel."—Ver. 2. The first of the אֲדָרִי, princes, *i.e.* chief ministers of state or dignitaries, mentioned here is not the commander-in-chief, as under the warlike reign of David (2 Sam. viii. 16, xx. 23), but, in accordance with the peaceful rule of Solomon, the administrator of the kingdom (or prime minister): "*Azariah* the son of Zadok was בֵּיתֵהוּ," *i.e.* not the priest, but the administrator of the kingdom, the representative of the king before the people; like בֵּיתֵהוּ in ver. 5, where this word is interpreted by רִעֵה הַמֶּלֶךְ, with this difference, however, arising from the article before בֵּיתֵהוּ, that *Azariah* was the *Kohen par excellence*, that is to say, held the first place among the confidential counsellors of the king, so that his dignity was such as befitted the office of an administrator of the kingdom. Compare the explanation of בֵּיתֵהוּ at 2 Sam. viii. 18. The view of the Vulgate, Luther, and others, which has been revived by Thenius, namely, that בֵּיתֵהוּ is to be connected as a genitive with בֶּן־צָדוֹק in opposition to the accents, "*Azariah* the son of Zadok the priest," is incorrect, and does not even yield any sense, since the connection of these words with the following *Elichoreph*, etc., is precluded by the absence of the copula *Vav*, which would be indispensable if *Azariah* had held the same office as the two brothers *Elichoreph* and *Achijah*.¹ Moreover, *Azariah* the son of Zadok cannot be a grandson of Zadok the high priest, *i.e.* a son of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, as many infer from 1 Chron. v. 34, 35 (vi. 8, 9); for, apart from the fact that Zadok's grandson can hardly have been old enough at the time for Solomon to invest him with

¹ The objection by which Thenius tries to set aside this argument, which has been already advanced by *Houbigant*, viz. that "if the first (*Azariah*) was not also a state scribe, the copula would be inserted, as it is everywhere else from ver. 4 onwards when a new office is mentioned," proves nothing at all, because the copula is also omitted in ver. 3, where the new office of מְזִכִּיר is introduced.

the chief dignity in the kingdom, which would surely be conferred upon none but men of mature years, we can see no reason why the *Azariah* mentioned here should not be called the son of *Ahimaaz*. If the *Zadok* referred to here was the high priest of that name, *Azariah* can only have been a brother of *Ahimaaz*. And there is no real difficulty in the way, since the name *Azariah* occurs three times in the line of high priests (1 Chron. v. 36, 39), and therefore was by no means rare.—Ver. 3. *Elihoresh* and *Achijah*, sons of *Shisha*, who had held the same office under David, were secretaries of state (ספרים: see at 2 Sam. viii. 17 and xx. 25, where the different names אֲשַׁשׁ = אֲשַׁשׁ and אֲחִיָּה are also discussed).—*Jehoshaphat* the son of *Ahilud* was the chancellor, as he had already been in the time of David (2 Sam. viii. 17 and xx. 24). The rendering of *Thenius*, "whilst *Jehoshaphat* was chancellor," is grammatically impossible.—Ver. 4. On *Benaiah*, compare ch. ii. 35 and the Commentary on 2 Sam. xxiii. 20. On *Zadok* and *Abiathar*, see at 2 Sam. viii. 17. It appears strange that *Abiathar* should be named as priest, i.e. as high priest, along with *Zadok*, since *Solomon* had deposed him from the priestly office (ch. ii. 27, 35), and we cannot imagine any subsequent pardon. The only possible explanation is that proposed by *Theodoret*, namely, that *Solomon* had only deprived him of the ἀρχή, i.e. of the priest's office, but not of the ἱερωσύνη or priestly dignity, because this was hereditary.¹—Ver. 5. *Azariah* the son of *Nathan* was over the סגרים, i.e. the twelve officers named in vers. 7 sqq. *Zabud* the son of *Nathan* was סגן (not the son of "Nathan the priest," as *Luther* and many others render it). סגן is explained by the epithet appended, סגן המלך: privy councillor, i.e. confidential adviser of the king. *Nathan* is not the prophet of that name, as *Thenius* supposes, but the son of *David* mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 14. *Azariah* and *Zabud* were therefore nephews of *Solomon*.—Ver. 6. *Ahishar* was על הבית, over the palace, i.e. governor of the palace, or minister of the king's household (compare ch. xvi. 9, 2 Kings xviii. 18, and Isa. xxii. 15), an office met with for the first time under *Solomon*. *Adoniram*, probably the same person as *Adoram* in 2 Sam. xx. 24, was chief overseer of the tributary service. He was so in the time of *David* also.

¹ Τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀφείλατο, οὐ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἐγύμνασεν· τὴν γὰρ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἀξίαν οὐκ ἐκ χειροτονίας, ἀλλ' ἐκ γονικῆς εἶχον διαδοχῆς.—THEODORET.

VERS. 7-19. SOLOMON'S OFFICIAL PERSONS AND THEIR DISTRICTS.—Ver. 7. Solomon had (appointed) twelve מְכַלִּים over all Israel, who provided (מְכַלִּים) for the king and his house, i.e. supplied provisions for the necessities of the court. These prefects are not to be regarded as “chamberlains,” or administrators of the royal domains (Michaelis and Ewald), for these are mentioned in 1 Chron. xxvii. 25 sqq. under a different title. They are “general receivers of taxes,” or “chief tax-collectors,” as Rosenmüller expresses it, who levied the king's duties or taxes, which consisted in the East, as they still do to the present time, for the most part of natural productions, or the produce of the land, and not of money payments as in the West, and delivered them at the royal kitchen (Rosenmüller, *A. und N. Morgenland*, iii. p. 166). It cannot be inferred from the explanation given by Josephus, ἡγεμόνες καὶ στρατηγοί, that they exercised a kind of government, as Thenius supposes, since this explanation is nothing but a subjective conjecture. “One month in the year was it every one's duty (יָהִיָה עַל אֶחָד) to provide.” The districts assigned to the twelve prefects coincide only partially with the territories of the tribes, because the land was probably divided among them according to its greater or smaller productiveness. Moreover, the order in which the districts are enumerated is not a geographical one, but probably follows the order in which the different prefects had to send the natural productions month by month for the maintenance of the king's court. The description begins with Ephraim in ver. 8, then passes over in ver. 9 to the territory of Dan to the west of it, in ver. 10 to the territory of Judah and Simeon on the south, in vers. 11 and 12 to the territory of Manasseh on this side from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, then in vers. 13 and 14 to the territory of Manasseh on the other side of the Jordan, thence back again in vers. 15 and 16 to the northern parts of the land on this side, viz. the territories of Naphtali and Asher, and thence farther south to Issachar in ver. 17, and Benjamin in ver. 18, closing at last in ver. 19 with Gilead.—Vers. 8 sqq. In the names of the prefects we are struck with the fact, that in the case of five of them the names given are not their own but their fathers' names. It is very improbable that the proper names should have dropped out five times (as Clericus, Michaelis, and others suppose); and consequently there is simply the assumption left, that the persons in question bore their fathers' names with *Ben*

prefixed as their own proper names: *Benhur*, *Bendeker*, etc., after the analogy of *Benchanan* in 1 Chron. iv. 20 and others, although such a proper name as *Ben-Abinadab* (ver. 11) appears very strange. *Benhur* was stationed on the mountains of Ephraim. These mountains, here only the mountainous district of the tribe of Ephraim, were among the most fruitful portions of Palestine (see at Josh. xvii. 14, 15).—Ver. 9. *Bendeker* was in *Makaz*, a city only mentioned here, the situation of which is unknown, but which is at any rate to be sought for in the tribe of Dan, to which the other cities of this district belong. *Shaalbim* has probably been preserved in the present *Selbit*, to the north-west of *Yálo* (see at Josh. xix. 42). *Bethshemesh*, the present *Ain-Shems* (see at Josh. xv. 10). *Elon* (עֵלֹן), which is distinguished from *Ajalón* (Josh. xix. 42 and 43) by the epithet *Bethchanan*, and belonged to the tribe of Dan, has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xix. 43). The LXX. have arbitrarily interpolated εως before *Bethchanan*, and Thenius naturally takes this under his 'protection, and consequently traces *Bethchanan* in the village of *Beit Hunún* (Rob. Pal. ii. p. 371), but without considering that εως yields no reasonable sense unless preceded by πρὸς, ἐκ (from; cf. ver. 12).—Ver. 10. *Benhesed* was in *Arubboth*, which does not occur again, so that its situation, even if it should be identical with *Arab* in Josh. xv. 52, as Böttcher conjectures, can only be approximatively inferred from the localities which follow. To him (בֶּן־הֶסֶד), i.e. to his district, belonged *Sochoh* and all the land of *Hepher*. From *Sochoh* we may see that *Benhesed's* district was in the tribe of Judah. Of the two *Sochohs* in Judah, that still exist under the name of *Shuweikeh*, it is impossible to determine with certainty which is intended here, whether the one upon the mountains (Josh. xv. 48) or the one in the plain (Josh. xv. 35). The fact that it is associated with the land of *Hepher* rather favours the latter. The land of *Hepher*, which must not be confounded with the city of *Gath-Hepher* in the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. xix. 13; 2 Kings xiv. 25), but was the territory of one of the Canaanitish kings who were defeated by Joshua, was probably situated in the plain (see at Josh. xii. 17).—Ver. 11. *Ben-Abinadab* had the whole of the high range of *Dor* (דּוֹר, Josh. xii. 23), i.e. the strip of coast on the Mediterranean Sea below the promontory of Carmel, where the city of *Dor*, which has been preserved in the village of *Tantura* or *Tortura*, nine miles to the north of Cæsarea, was situated (see

at Josh. xi. 2). Whether this district embraced the fruitful plain of Sharon is not so clearly made out as Thenius supposes. **בְּרֶאֱבִינָדָב** stands at the head absolutely, without any grammatical connection with **כָּל־דֹּר**: "Abinadab: the whole of the high range of Dor," etc. The person named was probably a son of David's eldest brother but one (1 Sam. xvi. 8, xvii. 13), and therefore Solomon's cousin; and he had married Solomon's daughter.—Ver. 12. *Baana* the son of Ahilud was most likely a brother of Jehoshaphat the chancellor (ver. 3). This district embraced the cities on the southern edge of the plain of Jezreel, and extended to the Jordan. *Taanach* and *Megiddo*, which have been preserved in the villages of *Taanuk* and *Lejun*, were situated on the south-western border of this plain, and belonged to the Manassites (see at Josh. xii. 21, xvii. 11). "And all Bethshean," in other words, the whole of the district of Bethshean, *i.e.* Beisan, at the eastern end of the valley of Jezreel, where it opens into the Jordan valley (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 740 sqq.), "which (district was situated) by the side of Zarthan below Jezreel, from (the town of) Bethshean (see at Josh. xvii. 11) to Abel-Mecholah, on the other side of Jokmeam." *Zarthan*, also called *Zereda* (compare ch. vii. 46 with 2 Chron. iv. 17), has probably been preserved, so far as the name is concerned, in *Kurn Sartabeh*, in the neighbourhood of which the old city probably stood, about five miles to the south of Beisan, at a point where the Jordan valley contracts (see at Josh. iii. 16). The expression "below Jezreel" refers to "all Bethshean," and may be explained from the elevated situation of Jezreel, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. xix. 18). According to Rob. iii. p. 163, this is "comparatively high, and commands a wide and noble view, extending down the broad low valley on the east of Beisan and to the mountains of Ajlun beyond the Jordan." The following words, "from Bethshean to Abel-Mecholah," give a more precise definition of the boundary. The LXX. have erroneously inserted *καὶ* before **מִבֵּית־שֶׁאֲנַן**, and Thenius and Böttcher defend it on the strength of their erroneous interpretations of the preceding statements. *Abel-Mecholah* was in the Jordan valley, according to the *Onomast.*, ten Roman miles to the south of Beisan (see at Judg. vii. 22). The last clause is not quite intelligible to us, as the situation of the Levitical city *Jokmeam* (1 Chron. vi. 53, or *Kibzaim*, a different place from the *Jokneam* on Carmel, Josh. xii. 22, xxi. 34) has not yet been discovered

(see at Josh. xxi. 22). According to this, Baanah's district in the Jordan valley did not extend so far as *Kurn Sartabeh*, but simply to the neighbourhood of Zarthan, and embraced the whole of the tribe-territory of Manasseh on this side of the Jordan.—Ver. 13. Bengeber was in *Ramoth* of Gilead in the tribe of Gad (Josh. xx. 8), probably on the site of the modern *Szalt* (see at Deut. iv. 43). "To him belonged the *Havvoth Jair* (Jair's-lives) in Gilead, to him the region of *Argob* in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and brazen bolts." If we look at this passage alone, the region of Argob in Bashan appears to be distinct from the Havvoth Jair in Gilead. But if we compare it with Num. xxxii. 40, 41, Deut. iii. 4, 5, and 13, 14, and Josh. xiii. 30, it is evident from these passages that the Jair's-lives are identical with the sixty large and fortified cities of the region of Argob. For, according to Deut. iii. 4, these sixty fortified cities, with high walls, gates, and bars, were all fortified cities of the kingdom of Og of Bashan, which the Israelites conquered under Moses, and to which, according to Num. xxxii. 41, Jair the Manassite, who had conquered them, gave the name of *Havvoth Jair*. Hence it is stated in Josh. xiii. 30, that the sixty Jair-towns were situated in Bashan. Consequently the 'חָקֵל אֵיִר in our verse is to be taken as a more precise definition of 'לֹא הָיָה יָאִיר וְנֹו', or a clearer description of the district superintended by *Bengeber*, so that *Gilead* is used, as is frequently the case, in the broader sense of *Peræa*. Compare with this the Commentary on Deut. iii. 4 and 13, 14, where the names אֵיִר and הָיָה are explained, and the imaginary discrepancy between the sixty Jair's-towns in the passages cited, and the twenty-three and thirty cities of Jair in 1 Chron. ii. 22 and Judg. x. 4, is discussed and solved. And when Thenius objects to this explanation on the ground that the villages of Jair cannot be identical with the sixty fortified cities, because villages of nomads and strongly fortified cities could not be one and the same, this objection falls to the ground with the untenable interpretation of הָיָה as applying to nomad villages.—Ver. 14. *Ahinadab* the son of Iddo received as his district *Mahanaim*, a fortified and probably also a very important city to the north of the Jabbok, on the border of the tribe of Gad, which may perhaps have been preserved in the ruin of *Mahneh* (see at Josh. xiii. 26 and Gen. xxxii. 3). מַחֲנֵימָה, to Mahanaim (cf. Ewald, § 216, a, note), with ה local, probably referring to the fact that Ahinadab

was sent away to Mahanaim.—Ver. 15. *Ahimaaz*, possibly Zadok's son (2 Sam. xv. 27, xvii. 17 sqq.), in *Naphtali*. This does not denote generally "the most northern portion of the land, say from the northern end of the lake of Gennesaret into Cœle-Syria," as Thenius supposes; for the tribe-territory of Asher, which had a prefect of its own, was not situated to the south-west of Naphtali, but ran along the west of Naphtali to the northern boundary of Canaan (see at Josh. xix. 24–31). He also (like Ben-Abinadab, ver. 11) had a daughter of Solomon, Basmath, as his wife.—Ver. 16. *Baanah* the son of *Hushai*, probably the faithful friend and wise counsellor of David (2 Sam. xv. 32 sqq., xvii. 5 sqq.), was in *Asher* and נִבְיָא, a name quite unknown. If א forms part of the word (*Baaloth*, according to the LXX., Vulg., Syr., and Arab.), we must take it as a district, since the preposition א would necessarily have been repeated if a district (*Asher*) had been connected with a town (*Baaloth*). In any case, it is not the city of Baaloth in the Negeb of Judah (Josh. xv. 24) that is intended.—Ver. 17. *Jehoshaphat* the son of Paruach, in *Issachar*; i.e. over the whole of the territory of that tribe in the plain of Jezreel, with the exception of the cities of Taanach, Megiddo, and Bethshean, which were in the southern portion of it, and were allotted to the Manassites, and, according to ver. 12, were put under the care of Baanah; and not merely in the northern part of Issachar, "with the exception of the plain of Jezreel," as Thenius erroneously maintains. Zebulun may possibly have also formed part of his district, if not entirely, yet in its southern portion, provided that the northern portion was assigned to Ahimaaz in Naphtali, since Zebulun had no prefect of its own.—Ver. 18. *Shimei* the son of Elah, possibly the one mentioned in ch. i. 8, in *Benjamin*.—Ver. 19. *Geber* the son of Uri, in the land of *Gilead*, i.e., as the apposition "the land of Sihon . . . and of Og . . ." clearly shows, the whole of the Israelitish land on the east of the Jordan, as in Deut. xxxiv. 1, Judg. xx. 1, etc., with the simple exception of the districts placed under Bengeber and Ahinadab (vers. 13 and 14). גִּבֵּיר, "one president was it who (was) in the land (of Gilead)." גִּבֵּיר cannot signify a military post or a garrison here, as in 1 Sam. x. 5, xiii. 3, etc., but is equivalent to גִּבֵּיר, the president (ver. 7). The meaning is, that notwithstanding the great extent of this district, it had only one prefect.

In ver. 20 the account of Solomon's officers is closed by a general remark as to the prosperous condition of the whole nation; though we miss the copula *Vav* at the commencement. The words, "Judah and Israel were numerous as the sand by the sea," indicate that the promise given to the patriarchs (Gen. xxii. 17, cf. xxxii. 13) had been fulfilled. To this there is appended in ch. v. 1 the remark concerning the extent of Solomon's sway, which prepares the way for what follows, and shows how the other portion of the promise, "thy seed will possess the gates of its enemies," had been fulfilled.—The first fourteen verses of ch. v. are therefore connected by the LXX., Vulg., Luther, and others with ch. iv. It is not till ch. v. 15 that a new section begins.

CHAP. IV. 21-28 (v. 1-8). SOLOMON'S REGAL SPLENDOUR.—Ver. 21. "Solomon was ruler over all the kingdoms from the river (Euphrates) onwards, over the land of the Philistines to the border of Egypt, who brought presents and were subject to Solomon his whole life long." Most of the commentators supply *וְעַד* before *אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים* (even to the land of the Philistines) after the parallel passage 2 Chron. ix. 26, so that the following *וְעַד נָהָר* would give a more precise definition of the *terminus ad quem*. But it is by no means probable that *וְעַד*, which appears to be indispensable, should have dropped out through the oversight of a copyist, and it is not absolutely necessary to supply it, inasmuch as *וְ* may be repeated in thought before *אֶרֶץ פְּ* from the preceding clause. The participle *מְבִישִׁים* is construed *ad sensum* with *מְבִישִׁים*. Bringing presents is equivalent to paying tribute, as in 2 Sam. viii. 2, etc.—Vers. 22 sqq. The splendour of the court, the consumption in the royal kitchen (vers. 22-25), and the well-filled stables (vers. 26-28), were such as befitted the ruler of so large a kingdom.—Vers. 22, 23. The daily consumption of *לֶחֶם* (food or provisions) amounted to thirty *cors* of fine meal (*סֶלֶת הָרִמִּים* = *סֶלֶת הָרִמִּים*, fine sifted meal, Ex. xxix. 2; for *סֶלֶת* see also Lev. ii. 1) and sixty *cors* of *קֶמַח*, ordinary meal, ten fattened oxen, twenty pasture oxen, which were brought directly from the pasture and slaughtered, and a hundred sheep, beside different kinds of game. *בֵּר*, *κορός*, the later name for *חֹמֶר*, the largest dry and also liquid (ch. v. 11) measure of capacity, contained ten ephahs or baths, *i.e.*, according to the calculation made by Thenius, 15,300 cubic inches (Dresden) = about

1 $\frac{7}{8}$ *scheffel*;¹ so that ninety cors would amount to 171 *scheffel*, from which 28,000 lbs. of bread could be baked (*Theol. Stud. und Krit.* 1846, pp. 132, 133). And "if we reckon 2 lbs. of bread to each person, there would be 14,000 persons in Solomon's court." The consumption of flesh would be quite in proportion to that of bread; for ten fattened oxen, twenty oxen from the pasture, and a hundred sheep, yield more than 21,000 lbs. of meat, that is to say, a pound and a half for each person, "assuming, according to the statements of those who are acquainted with the matter, that the edible meat of a fat ox amounts to 600 lbs., that of an ox from the pasture to 400 lbs., and that of a sheep to 70 lbs." (*Thenius ut sup.*). This daily consumption of Solomon's court will not appear too great, if, on the one hand, we compare it with the quantity consumed at other oriental courts both of ancient and modern times,² and if, on the other hand, we bear in mind that not only the numerous attendants upon the king and his harem, but also the royal adjutants and the large number of officers employed about the court, were supplied from the king's table, and that their families had also to be fed, inasmuch as the wages in oriental courts are all paid in kind. In addition to this, game was also supplied to the king's table: viz. אֵיל stags, צִי גazelles, יְחִמִּיר fallow-deer, and בְּרִבְרִים אֲנָסִים "fattened fowl." The meaning of בְּרִבְרִים is doubtful. The earlier translators render it birds or fowl. Kimchi adopts the rendering "capons;" *Tanch. Hieros.* "geese," so called from their pure (בָּרִי) white feathers; and both Gesenius and Dietrich (*Lex.*) decide in favour of the latter. The word must denote some special kind of fowl, since edible birds in general were called צִפְרִים (*Neh.* v. 18).—Vers. 24, 25. Solomon was able to appropriate all this to his court, because (רָבִי) he had dominion, etc.; . . . and (ver. 25) Israel and Judah enjoyed the blessings of peace during the whole of his reign. בְּכָל-עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר "over all the other side of the river (Euphrates)," i.e. not the land on the east, but that on the west of the river. This usage of speech is to be explained from the fact that the author of our books, who was living in exile on the other side of the Euphrates, describes the

¹ The *scheffel* is about an English sack (*vid.* Flügel's *Dict.*).—Tr.

² According to Athen. *Deipnos.* iv. 10, the kings of Persia required a thousand oxen a day; and according to Tavernier, in Rosenmüller's *A. u. N. Morgenland*, iii. pp. 166, 167, five hundred sheep and lambs were slaughtered daily for the Sultan's court.

extent of Solomon's kingdom taking that as his starting-point. Solomon's power only extended to the Euphrates, from *Tiphscach* in the north-east to *Gaza* in the south-west. תִּפְסַח (crossing, from תָּפַס) is *Thapsacus*, a large and wealthy city on the western bank of the Euphrates, at which the armies of the younger Cyrus and Alexander crossed the river (Xen. *Anab.* i 4; Arrian, *Exped. Alex.* iii. 7). *Gaza*, the southernmost city of the Philistines, the present *Guzzeh*; see at Josh. xiii. 3. The מְלֻכֵי עֵבֶר הַנִּזְכָּר are the kings of Syria who were subjugated by David (2 Sam. viii. 6 and x. 19), and of the Philistines (2 Sam. viii. 1). "And he had peace on all sides round about." This statement does not "most decidedly contradict ch. xi. 23 sqq.," as Thenius maintains; for it cannot be proved that according to this passage the revolt of Damascus had taken place before Solomon's reign (Ewald and others; see at ch. xi. 23 sqq.).—Ver. 25. "Judah and Israel sat in safety, every one under his vine and his fig-tree." This expresses the undisturbed enjoyment of the costly productions of the land (2 Kings xviii. 31), and is therefore used by the prophets as a figure denoting the happiness of the Messianic age (Mic. iv. 4; Zech. iii. 10). "From Dan to Beersheba," as in Judg. xx. 1, etc.—Ver. 26. This verse is not to be regarded "as a parenthesis according to the intention of the editor," but gives a further proof of the peace and prosperity which the kingdom and people enjoyed under Solomon. Solomon had a strong force of war chariots and cavalry, that he might be able to suppress every attempt on the part of the tributary kings of Syria and Philistia to revolt and disturb the peace. "Solomon had 4000 racks of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 riding horses," which were kept partly in Jerusalem and partly in cities specially built for the purpose (ch. ix. 19, x. 26; 2 Chron. i. 14, ix. 25). אֲרָבָעִים (40) is an old copyist's error for אֲרָבָעָה (4), which we find in the parallel passage 2 Chron. ix. 25, and as we may also infer from ch. x. 26 and 2 Chron. i. 14, since according to these passages Solomon had 1400 רֶכֶב or war chariots. For 4000 horses are a very suitable number for 1400 chariots, though not 40,000, since two draught horses were required for every war chariot, and one horse may have been kept as a reserve. אֲרוֹנָה does not mean a team (Ges.), but a rack or box in a stable, from אָרַן, *carpere*. According to Vegetius, i. 56, in Bochart (*Hieroz.* i. p. 112, ed. Ros.), even in ancient times every horse had its own

crib in the stable just as it has now. Böttcher (*n. ex. Krit. Aehrenl.* ii. p. 27) is wrong in supposing that there were several horses, say at least ten, to one rack. מִרְכָּב is used collectively for "chariots."—Ver. 27. "And" = a still further proof of the blessings of peace—"those prefects (vers. 7 sqq.) provided for king Solomon, and all who came to the king's table, i.e. who were fed from the royal table, every one his month (see at ver. 7), so that nothing was wanting (ver. 28), and conveyed the barley (the ordinary food of cattle in Palestine and the southern lands, where oats are not cultivated) and the straw for the horses and coursers to the place where it ought to be. To אֵשֶׁר שָׁם יְהִיָּה the LXX., Vulg., and others supply וְהָיָה as the subject: wherever the king might stay. This is certainly more in harmony with the imperfect יְהִיָּה than it would be to supply הָרָכֶשׁ, as Bochart and others propose; still it is hardly correct. For in that case לְפוֹסִים וְלָרָכֶשׁ could only be understood as referring to the chariot horses and riding horses, which Solomon kept for the necessities of his court, and not to the whole of the cavalry; since we cannot possibly assume that even if Solomon changed his residence according to the season and to suit his pleasure, or on political grounds, as Thenius supposes, though this cannot by any means be inferred from ch. ix. 18 and 19, he took 16,000 horses about with him. But this limitation of the clause is evidently at variance with the context, since לְפוֹסִים וְלָרָכֶשׁ too plainly refer back to ver. 6. Moreover, "if the king were intended, he would certainly have been mentioned by name, as so many other subjects and objects have come between." For these reasons we agree with Böttcher in taking יְהִיָּה indefinitely: "where it (barley and straw) was wanted, according to the distribution of the horses." רָכֶשׁ probably denotes a very superior kind of horse, like the German *Renner* (a courser or race-horse). אִישׁ כְּמִשְׁפָּתוֹ, every one according to his right, i.e. whatever was appointed for him as right.

Vers. 29–34. SOLOMON'S WISDOM.—Ver. 29. According to His promise in ch. iii. 12, God gave Solomon wisdom and very much insight and רֵחַב לֵב, "breadth of heart," i.e. a comprehensive understanding, as sand by the sea-shore,—a proverbial expression for an innumerable multitude, or great abundance (cf. ch. iv. 20, Gen. xli. 49, Josh. xi. 4, etc.). חָכְמָה signifies rather practical wisdom, ability to decide what is the judicious

and useful course to pursue ; תְּבוּנָה, rather keenness of understanding to arrive at the correct solution of difficult and complicated problems ; יָדָב לֵב, mental capacity to embrace the most diverse departments of knowledge.—Ver. 30. His wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the sons of the East, and all the wisdom of the Egyptians. בְּנֵי קְרָם (sons of the East) are generally the Arabian tribes dwelling in the east of Canaan, who spread as far as to the Euphrates (cf. Judg. vi. 3, 33, vii. 12, viii. 10, Job i. 3, Isa. xi. 14, etc.). Hence we find אֶרֶץ קְרָם used in Gen. xxv. 6 to denote Arabia in the widest sense, on the east and south-east of Palestine ; whereas in Gen. xxix. 1 אֶרֶץ בְּנֵי קְרָם signifies the land beyond the Euphrates, viz. Mesopotamia, and in Num. xxiii. 7, הַרְרֵי קְרָם, the mountains of Mesopotamia. Consequently by “the sons of the East” we are to understand here primarily the Arabians, who were celebrated for their gnomic wisdom, more especially the Sabæans (see at ch. x.), including the Idumæans, particularly the Temanites (Jer. xlix. 7 ; Obad. 8) ; but also, as לֵב requires, the Chaldæans, who were celebrated both for their astronomy and astrology. “All the wisdom of the Egyptians,” because the wisdom of the Egyptians, which was so greatly renowned as almost to have become proverbial (cf. Isa. xix. 11, xxxi. 2, and Acts vii. 22 ; Joseph. *Ant.* viii. 2, 5 ; Herod. ii. 160), extended over the most diverse branches of knowledge, such as geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and astrology (Diod. Sic. i. 73 and 81), and as their skill in the preparation of ointments from vegetable and animal sources, and their extensive acquaintance with medicine, clearly prove, embraced natural science as well, in which Solomon, according to ver. 33, was very learned.—Ver. 31. “He was wiser than all men (of his time), than Ethan the Ezrachite and Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Machol.” These four persons are most probably the same as the “sons of Zerach” (Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara) mentioned in 1 Chron. ii. 6, since the names perfectly agree, with the exception of יִרְעֵה for יִרְדֵּעַ, where the difference is no doubt attributable to a copyist's error ; although, as the name does not occur again, it cannot be decided whether *Dara* or *Darda* is the correct form. *Heman* and *Ethan* are also called Ezrachites (הַזְרַחִי) in Ps. lxxxviii. 1 and lxxxix. 1 ; and אֶזְרָחִי is another form of יִרְדֵּעַ, the name of the family of *Zerach* the son of Judah (Num. xxvi. 13, 20), lengthened by *s* *prosthet.* But they were both Levites—*Heman* a Korahite of the line of

Kohath and a grandson of Samuel (1 Chron. vi. 18, 19), and *Ethan* a Merarite (1 Chron. vi. 29–32, xv. 17) and the president of the Levitical vocal choirs in the time of David (1 Chron. xv. 19); and *Heman* was also “the king’s seer in the words of God” (1 Chron. xxv. 5). Their Levitical descent is not at variance with the epithet *Ezrachite*. For as the Levite in Judg. xvii. 7 is spoken of as belonging to the family of Judah, because he dwelt in Bethlehem of Judah, and as Samuel’s father, Elkanah the Levite, is called an Ephraimite in 1 Sam. i. 1, because in his civil capacity he was incorporated into the tribe of Ephraim, so *Heman* and *Ethan* are called *Ezrachites* because they were incorporated into the Judæan family of *Zerach*. It by no means follows from 1 Chron. ii. 6 that they were lineal descendants of *Zerach*. The whole character of the genealogical fragment contained in 1 Chron. ii. 6 sqq. shows very clearly that it does not give the lineal posterity of *Zerach* with genealogical exactness, but that certain persons and households of that family who had gained historical renown are grouped together without any more precise account of their lineal descent. *Calcol* and *Darda* (or *Dara*) are never met with again. It is no doubt to these two that the expression בְּנֵי דָרָה refers, though it cannot be determined whether דָּרָה is a proper name or an appellative noun. In support of the appellative meaning, “sons of the dance,” in the sense of *sacras choreas ducendi periti*, Hiller (in the *Onomast.* p. 872) appeals to Eccles. xii. 4, “daughters of song.”—“And his name was,” i.e. he was celebrated, “among all the nations round about” (cf. ch. x. 1, 23, 24).—Ver. 32. “He spoke three thousand proverbs, and there were a thousand and five of his songs.” Of these proverbs we possess a comparatively small portion in the book of Proverbs, probably a selection of the best of his proverbs; but of the songs, besides the Song of Songs, we have only two psalms, viz. Ps. lxxii. and cxxvii., which have his name, and justly bear it.—Ver. 33. “And he spoke of trees, from the cedar on Lebanon to the hyssop which grows upon the wall.” The cedar and hyssop are placed in antithesis, the former as the largest and most glorious of trees, the latter as the smallest and most insignificant of plants, to embrace the whole of the vegetable kingdom. Thenius maintains that by צִיִּי we are not to understand the true hyssop, nor the *Wohlgemuth* or *Dosten* (ὀφύραρον), according to the ordinary view (see at Ex. xii. 22), because they are neither of them such small

plants as we should expect in antithesis to the cedar, but "one of the wall-mosses growing in tufts, more especially the *orthotrichum saxatile* (Oken), which forms a miniature hyssop with its lancet-shaped leaves, and from its extreme minuteness furnishes a perfect antithesis to the cedar." There is much to favour this view, since we can easily imagine that the Hebrews may have reckoned a moss, which resembled the hyssop in its leaves, as being itself a species of hyssop.—"And of beasts and birds, of creeping things and fishes;" the four principal classes into which the Hebrews divided the animal kingdom. *Speaking* of plants and animals presupposes observations and researches in natural science, or botanical and zoological studies.—Ver. 34. The widespread fame of his wisdom brought many strangers to Jerusalem, and all the more because of its rarity at that time, especially among princes. The coming of the queen of Sheba to Jerusalem (ch. x.) furnishes a historical proof of this.¹

CHAP. V. (v. 15–32). PREPARATIONS FOR BUILDING THE TEMPLE.

Immediately after the consolidation of his kingdom, Solomon commenced the preparations for the building of a temple, first of all by entering into negotiations with king Hiram of Tyre, to procure from him not only the building materials requisite, viz. cedars, cypresses, and hewn stones, but also a skilled workman for the artistic work of the temple (vers. 1–12); and, secondly, by causing the number of workmen required for this great work to be raised out of his own kingdom, and sending them to Lebanon to prepare the materials for the building in connection with the Tyrian builders (vers. 13–18).—We have

¹ Greatly as the fame of Solomon's wisdom is extolled in these verses, it was far outdone in subsequent times. Even Josephus has considerably adorned the biblical accounts in his *Antiqq.* viii. 2, 5. He makes Solomon the author not only of 1005 βιβλία περί ᾠδῶν καὶ μελῶν, and 300 βιβλον; παραβολῶν καὶ σιγῶων, but also of magical books with marvellous contents. Compare the extracts from *Eupolemus* in Eusebii *præp. Ev.* ix. 31 sqq., the remnants of Solomon's apocryphal writings in Fabricii *Cod. apocr. V. T.* i. pp. 914 sqq. and 1014 sq., the collection of the Talmudical Sagas in Othonis *Lex. rabb. philol.* pp. 668 sq., and G. Weil, *bibl. Legenden der Mussulmänner*, pp. 225–279. According to the Koran (*Sure* xxvii. vers. 17 sqq.), Solomon understood the languages not only of men and demons, but also of birds and ants. The Turkish literature contains a "Book of Solomon," *Suleimanname*, consisting of seventy volumes, from which v. Hammer (*Rosenöl*, i. p. 147 sqq.) has given extracts.

a parallel passage to this in 2 Chron. ii, which agrees with the account before us in all the leading points, but differs in many of the details, omitting several things which were not essential to the main fact, and communicating others which are passed over in our account, *e.g.* Solomon's request that a Tyrian workman might be sent. This shows that the two accounts are extracts from a common and more elaborate source, the historical materials being worked up in a free and independent manner according to the particular plan adopted by each of the two authors. (For further remarks on the mutual relation of the two narratives, see my *apologetischer Versuch über die Bücher der Chronik*, pp. 216 sqq.)

Vers. 1-12. *Solomon's negotiations with Hiram of Tyre.*—Ver. 1. When king Hiram of Tyre heard that Solomon had been anointed king in the place of David, he sent his servants, *i.e.* an embassy, to Solomon, to congratulate him (as the Syriac correctly explains) on his ascent of the throne, because he had been a friend of David the whole time (כָּל־הַיָּמִים, *i.e.* as long as both of them (David and Hiram) were kings). On *Hiram* and the length of his reign, see the remarks on 2 Sam. v. 11. This is passed over in the Chronicles as having no essential bearing upon the building of the temple.—Vers. 2-6. Solomon thereupon communicated to Hiram, by means of an embassy, his intention to carry out the building of the temple which his father projected, and asked him for building wood from Lebanon for the purpose. From the words, "Thou knowest that my father David could not build," etc., it is evident that David had not only been busily occupied for a long time with the plan for building a temple, but that he had already commenced negotiations with Hiram on the matter; and with this 1 Chron. xxii. 4 agrees. "To the name of Jehovah:" this expression is based upon Deut. xii. 5 and 11: "the place which the Lord shall choose to put His name there, or that His name may dwell there." The name of Jehovah is the manifestation of the divine nature in a visible sign as a real pledge of His presence (see at xii. 5), and not merely *numen Jovæ quatenus ab hominibus cognoscitur, colitur, celebratur* (Winer, Thenius). Hence in 2 Sam. vii, to which Solomon refers, בָּנָה לִי בַיִת (vers. 5 and 7) alternates with בָּנָה בַּיִת לְשֵׁנִי (ver. 13). On the obstacle which prevented it, "because of the war, with which they (the enemies) had surrounded me," see at 2 Sam. vii. 9 sqq. On the construction,

קָבַב with a double accusative, compare the very similar passage, Ps. cix. 3, which fully establishes the rendering we have given, so that there is no necessity to assume that מִלְחָמָה, war, stands for enemies (Ewald, § 317, b).—Ver. 4. “And now Jehovah my God has given me rest round about,” such as David never enjoyed for a permanency (cf. 2 Sam. vii. 1). “No adversary is there.” This is not at variance with ch. xi. 14, for Hadad’s enterprise belonged to a later period (see the comm. on that passage). “And no evil occurrence:” such as the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba, the pestilence at the numbering of the people, and other events which took place in David’s reign.—Ver. 5. “Behold, I intend to build.” בָּנֵה followed by an infinitive, as in Ex. ii. 14, 2 Sam. xxi. 16. “As Jehovah spake to David;” viz. 2 Sam. vii. 12 and 13.—Ver. 6. “And now command that they fell me cedars from Lebanon.” We may see from ver. 8 that Solomon had also asked for cypresses; and according to the parallel passage 2 Chron. ii. 6 sqq., he had asked for a skilful artist, which is passed over here, so that it is only in ch. vii. 13, 14 that we find a supplementary notice that Hiram had sent one. It is evident from this request, that that portion of Lebanon on which the cedars suitable for building wood grew, belonged to the kingdom of Hiram. The cedar forest, which has been celebrated from very ancient times, was situated at least two days’ journey to the north of Beirut, near the northernmost and loftiest summits of the range, by the village of *Bjerreh*, to the north of the road which leads to Baalbek and not far to the east of the convent of *Canobin*, the seat of the patriarch of the Maronites, although Seetzen, the American missionaries, and Professor Ehrenberg found cedars and cedar groves in other places on northern Lebanon (see Rob. *Pal.* iii. 440, 441, and *Bibl. Res.* pp. 588 sqq.). The northern frontier of Canaan did not reach as far as *Bjerreh* (see at Num. xxxiv. 8, 9). “My servants shall be with thy servants,” i. e. shall help them in the felling of the wood (see at vers. 28, 29). “And the wages of thy servants will I give to thee altogether as thou sayest” (see at vers. 25, 26). “For thou knowest that no one among us is skilful in felling trees like the Sidonians.” This refers to the knowledge of the most suitable trees, of the right time for felling, and of the proper treatment of the wood. The expression *Sidonians* stands for Phœnicians generally, since Sidon was formerly more powerful than Tyre, and that portion of Lebanon

which produced the cedars belonged to the district of Sidon. The inhabitants of Sidon were celebrated from time immemorial as skilful builders, and well versed in mechanical arts (compare Rob. *Pal.* iii. 421 sqq., and Movers, *Phœnizier*, ii. 1, pp. 86 sqq.).

Hiram rejoiced exceedingly at this proposal on the part of Solomon, and praised Jehovah for having given David so wise a son as his successor (ver. 21). It must have been a matter of great importance to the king of Tyre to remain on good terms with Israel, because the land of Israel was a granary for the Phœnicians, and friendship with such a neighbour would necessarily tend greatly to promote the interests of the Phœnician commerce. The praise of Jehovah on the part of Hiram does not presuppose a full recognition of Jehovah as the only true God, but simply that Hiram regarded the God of Israel as being as real a God as his own deities. Hiram expresses a fuller acknowledgment of Jehovah in 2 Chron. ii. 11, where he calls Jehovah the Creator of heaven and earth; which may be explained, however, from Hiram's entering into the religious notions of the Israelites, and does not necessarily involve his own personal belief in the true deity of Jehovah.—Vers. 8, 9. Hiram then sent to Solomon, and promised in writing (בְּכֶתֶב, 2 Chron. ii. 10) to comply with his wishes. אֵת אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַחַת אֵלַי, “that which thou hast sent to me,” i.e. hast asked of me by messenger. בְּרִשִׁים are not firs, but cypresses. “My servants shall bring down (the trees) from Lebanon to the sea, and I will make them into rafts (i.e. bind them into rafts and have them floated) upon the sea to the place which thou shalt send (word) to me, and will take them (the rafts) to pieces there, and thou wilt take (i.e. fetch them thence).” The Chronicles give *Yafō*, i.e. Joppa, Jaffa, the nearest harbour to Jerusalem on the Mediterranean Sea, as the landing-place (see at Josh. xix. 46). “And thou wilt do all my desire to give bread for my house,” i.e. provisions to supply the wants of the king's court. “The שֶׁכֶר mentioned in ver. 6 was also to be paid” (Thenius). This is quite correct; but Thenius is wrong when he proceeds still further to assert, that the chronicler erroneously supposed this to refer to the servants of Hiram who were employed in working the wood. There is not a word of this kind in the Chronicles; but simply Solomon's promise to Hiram (ver. 9): “with regard to the hewers (the fellers of the trees), I give thy servants wheat 20,000 cors, and barley 20,000 cors, and wine

20,000 baths, and oil 20,000 baths." This is omitted in our account, in which the wages promised in ver. 6 to the Sidonian fellers of wood are not more minutely defined. On the other hand, the payment for the wood delivered by Solomon to Hiram, which is not mentioned in the Chronicles, is stated here in ver. 11. "Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 cors of wheat as food (מַכְלֵל, a contraction of מַאֲכָלָה, from אָכַל; cf. Ewald, § 79, δ) for his house (the maintenance of his royal court), and 20 cors of beaten oil; this gave Solomon to Hiram year by year," probably as long as the delivery of the wood or the erection of Solomon's buildings lasted. These two accounts are so clear, that Jac. Capp., Gramb., Mov., Thenius, and Bertheau, who have been led by critical prejudices to confound them with one another, and therefore to attempt to emend the one from the other, are left quite alone. For the circumstance that the quantity of wheat, which Solomon supplied to Hiram for his court, was just the same as that which he gave to the Sidonian workmen, does not warrant our identifying the two accounts. The fellers of the trees also received barley, wine, and oil in considerable quantities; whereas the only other thing which Hiram received for his court was oil, and that not common oil, but the finest olive oil, namely 20 cors of זֶשֶׁן בְּחִית, i.e. beaten oil, the finest kind of oil, which was obtained from the olives when not quite ripe by pounding them in mortars, and which had not only a whiter colour, but also a purer flavour than the common oil obtained by pressing from the ripe olives (cf. Celsii *Hierobot.* ii. pp. 349 sq., and Bähr, *Symbolik*, i. p. 419). Twenty cors were 200 baths, i.e., according to the calculations of Thenius, about ten casks (1 cask = 6 pails; 1 pail = 72 cans). If we bear in mind that this was the finest kind of oil, we cannot speak of disproportion to the quantity of wheat delivered. Thenius reckons that 20,000 cors of wheat were about 38,250 Dresden *scheffeln* (? sacks).—Ver. 12. The remark that "the Lord gave Solomon wisdom" refers not merely to the treaty which Solomon made with Hiram, through which he obtained materials and skilled workmen for the erection of the house of God (Thenius), but also to the wise use which he made of the capacities of his own subjects for this work. For this verse not only brings to a close the section relating to Solomon's negotiations with Hiram, but it also forms an introduction to the following verses, in which the intimation given by Solomon in ver. 6, concerning the labourers who were to fell

wood upon Lebanon in company with Hiram's men, is more minutely defined.

Vers. 13–18. *The tributary labourers out of Israel.*—Vers. 13, 14. Solomon raised a tribute (סם, tribute-labourers, as in ch. iv. 6) out of all Israel, i.e. out of the whole nation (not “out of the whole territory of Israel,” as Ewald supposes), 30,000 men, and sent them up to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in rotation; one month they were on Lebanon (doing tribute work), two months at home (looking after the cultivation of their own ground). וַיַּעַל, from הָעָלָה, does not mean *in tabulas referre*, in support of which appeal is made to 1 Chron. xxvii. 24, though on insufficient ground, but *ascendere fecit*, corresponding to the German *ausheben* (to raise). He raised them out of the nation, to send them up Lebanon (cf. ch. ix. 25). These 30,000 Israelitish labourers must be distinguished from the remnants of the Canaanites who were made into tribute-slaves (ver. 15 and ch. ix. 20). The latter are called סם עֶבֶר, tribute-slaves, in ch. ix. 21 as in Josh. xvi. 10. That the Israelites were not to render the service of bondsmen is evident from the fact, that they only rendered tribute for four months of the year, and were at home for eight months; and the use of the epithet סם is not at variance with this. For even if this word is applied elsewhere to the Canaanitish bondsmen (e.g. Josh. xvii. 13, Judg. i. 28, 30, and 2 Chron. viii. 8), a distinction is decidedly made in our account of Solomon between סם and סם עֶבֶר, inasmuch as in ch. ix. 22, after the Canaanitish bondsmen have been mentioned, it is expressly stated that “of Israel Solomon made no one a slave” (עֶבֶר). The 30,000 Israelitish tribute-servants are “to be thought of as free Israelites, who simply performed the less severe work of felling trees in fellowship with and under the direction of the subjects of Hiram (see at ver. 6), according to the command of the king, and probably not even that without remuneration” (Thenius). For *Adoniram* see at ch. iv. 6.—Ver. 15. And Solomon had 70,000 bearers of burdens and 80,000 hewers of stone on the mountains (of Lebanon). הָצִיב is understood by the older translators as referring simply to hewers of stone. This is favoured both by the context, since ver. 18 speaks of stone-mason's work, and also by the usage of the language, inasmuch as הָצִיב is mostly applied to the quarrying and cutting of stones (Deut. vi. 11; Isa. v. 2; Prov. ix. 1; 2 Kings xii. 13), and only occurs in Isa. x. 15 in

connection with the cutting of wood. The hewing and preparing of the wood were amply provided for by 30,000 Israelites. That the 150,000 bearers of burdens and hewers of stone were not taken from the Israelites, is evident from the fact that they are distinguished from the latter, or at all events are not described as Israelites. We obtain certainty on this point from the parallel passages, ch. ix. 20, 21, 2 Chron. ii. 16, 17, and 2 Chron. viii. 1-9, according to which Solomon pressed the Canaanites who were left in the land to this bond-service.—Ver. 16. “Beside (לְבִד), i.e. without reckoning, the princes, Solomon’s officers, who were over the work (i.e. the chiefs appointed by Solomon as overlookers of the work), 3300, who ruled over the people who laboured at the work.” שָׂרֵי הַנְּצָבִים, as Thenius correctly observes, cannot be the chief of the overlookers, i.e. the head inspectors, as there is no allusion made to subordinate inspectors, and the number given is much too large for head inspectors. נְצָבִים, which is governed by שָׂרֵי in the construct state, is to be taken as defining the substantive: *principes qui præfecti erant* (Vatabl.; cf. Ewald, § 287, a). Moreover, at the close of the account of the whole of Solomon’s buildings (ch. ix. 23), 550 more שָׂרֵי הַנְּצָבִים are mentioned as presiding over the people who did the work. The accounts in the Chronicles differ from these in a very peculiar manner, the number of overseers being given in 2 Chron. ii. 17 as 3600, and in 2 Chron. viii. 10 as 250. Now, however natural it may be, with the multiplicity of errors occurring in numerical statements, to assume that these differences have arisen from copyists’ errors through the confounding together of numerical letters resembling one another, this explanation is overthrown as an improbable one, by the fact that the sum-total of the overseers is the same in both accounts ($3300 + 550 = 3850$ in the books of Kings, and $3600 + 250 = 3850$ in the Chronicles); and we must therefore follow J. H. Michaelis, and explain the differences as resulting from a different method of classification, namely, from the fact that in the Chronicles the Canaanitish overseers are distinguished from the Israelitish (viz. 3600 Canaanites and 250 Israelites), whereas in the books of Kings the *inferiores et superiores præfecti* are distinguished. Consequently Solomon had 3300 inferior overseers and 550 superior (or superintendents), of whom 250 were selected from the Israelites and 300 from the Canaanites. In 2 Chron. ii. 16, 17,

it is expressly stated that the 3600 were taken from the גֵּרִים, i.e. the Canaanites who were left in the land of Israel. And it is equally certain that the number given in ch. ix. 23 and 2 Chron. viii. 10 (550 and 250) simply comprises the superintendents over the whole body of builders, notwithstanding the fact that in both passages (ch. v. 16 and ch. ix. 23) the same epithet שָׂרֵי הַמְּצָרִים is used. If, then, the number of overseers is given in ch. ix. 23 as 550, i.e. 300 more than in the parallel passage of the Chronicles, there can hardly be any doubt that the number 550 includes the 300, in which the number given in our chapter falls short of that in the Chronicles, and that in the 3300 of our chapter the superintendents of Canaanitish descent are not included.¹—Ver. 17. And the king had large, costly stones broken, “to lay the foundation of the house with hewn stones.” יָקָרוֹת does not mean heavy (Thenius), for this would be a perfectly superfluous remark, inasmuch as large stones are always heavy, but costly, valuable stones, *qui multa pecunia constabant* (Cler.); compare ch. x. 2, where the word stands for precious stones. לִיָּסֵד, i.e. to lay the foundation for the temple, by which we are to understand not merely the foundation for the temple-house, but the magnificent substructions for the whole of the temple area, even though the strong walls which surrounded the temple mountain, and which Josephus describes in his *Antiquities*, viii. 3, 9, and xv. 11, 3, and in his *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, may not have been all completed by Solomon, but may have been a work of centuries. For further remarks on this subject, see at ch. vi. 38. אֲבָנֵי נֵזֶיֶת are squared stones, according to ch. vii. 10, of ten and eight cubits.

With ver. 18 the account of the preparations for the building of the temple, which were the object of Solomon's negotiations with Hiram, is brought to a close. “Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders, even the Giblites, hewed and prepared the wood and the stones for the building of the house.” The object to יָסְדוּ is not the square stones mentioned before, but the trees

¹ Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 292) assumes that “by the 550 (1 Kings ix. 23) we are to understand the actual superintendents, whereas the 3300 (1 Kings v. 30) include inferior inspectors as well; and of the 550 superintendents, 300 were taken from the Canaanæans, so that only 250 (2 Chron. viii. 10) were native Hebrews;” though he pronounces the number 3600 (2 Chron. ii. 17) erroneous. Bertheau, on the other hand, in his notes on 2 Chron. viii. 10, has rather complicated than elucidated the relation in which the two accounts stand to one another.

(beams) and stones mentioned after **וְהַגְבִּלִים**. **וְהַגְבִּלִים** is to be taken as explanatory, "even the Giblites," giving a more precise definition of "Hiram's builders." The Giblites are the inhabitants of the town of *Gebal*, called Byblos by the Greeks, to the north of Beirut (see at Josh. xiii. 5), which was the nearest to the celebrated cedar forest of the larger Phœnician towns. According to Ezek. xxvii. 9, the Giblites (Byblians) were experienced in the art of shipbuilding, and therefore were probably skilful builders generally, and as such the most suitable of Hiram's subjects to superintend the working of the wood and stone for Solomon's buildings. For it was in the very nature of the case that the number of the Phœnician builders was only a small one, and that they were merely the foremen; and this may also be inferred from the large number of his own subjects whom Solomon appointed to the work.¹

CHAP. VI. BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

The account of the building of the temple commences with a statement of the date of the building (ver. 1); and this is followed by a description of the plan and size of the temple-house (vers. 2-10), to which there is also appended the divine promise made to Solomon during the erection of the building (vers. 11-13). After this we have a further account of the internal fittings and

¹ Without any satisfactory ground Thenius has taken offence at the word **וְהַגְבִּלִים**, and on the strength of the critically unattested *καὶ ἔβαλον αὐτοῦς* of the LXX. and the paraphrastic *ἀρμίσαντας καὶ συνδήσαντας* of Josephus, which is only introduced to fill in the picture, has altered it into **וְהַגְבִּלִים**, "they bordered them (the stones)." This he explains as relating to the "bevelling" of the stones, upon the erroneous assumption that the grooving of the stones in the old walls encircling the temple area, which Robinson (*Pal.* i. 423) was the first to notice and describe, "occurs nowhere else in precisely the same form;" whereas Robinson found them in the ancient remains of the foundations of walls in different places throughout the land, not only in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, viz. at Bethany, but also at Carmel on the mountains of Judah, at Hebron, Semna (Esthemoa), Beit Nusib (Nezib), on Tabor, and especially in the north, in the old remains of the walls of the fortifications *es Shukif, Hunin, Baniyas, Tyrus, Jebail* (Byblus), *Baalbek*, on the island of *Ruwad* (the ancient *Aradus*), and in different temples on Lebanon (see *Rob. Pal.* ii. 101, 198, 434, 627; iii. 12, 213, 214; and *Bibl. Researches*, p. 229). Böttcher (*n. ex. Krit. Aehrenl.* ii. p. 32) has therefore properly rejected this conjecture as "ill-founded," though only to put in its place another which is altogether unfounded, namely, that before **וְהַגְבִּלִים** the word

decorations of the sanctuary (vers. 14-36), and in ch. vii. 1-12 a description of the royal palace which was built after the temple; and, finally, a description of the pillars of the court which were executed in metal by the Tyrian artist, and of the different vessels of the temple (ch. vii. 13-51).¹ We have a parallel to this in 2 Chron. iii. and iv., though here the description is differently arranged. In the Chronicles the external building of the temple-house is not separated from the internal decoration and furnishing; but after the period of erection and the size of the temple-house have been given in ch. iii. 1-3, there follows a description, *a.* of the court (ver. 4); *b.* of the Holy Place with its internal decorations (vers. 5-7); *c.* of the Most Holy Place, with special reference to its size and decorations, also of the colossal cherubim placed therein and the curtain in front of it, which is not mentioned in our account (vers. 8-14); *d.* of the brazen pillars in front of the court (vers. 15-17); *e.* of the altar of burnt-offering (ch. iv. 1), which is passed over in the account before us; *f.* of the brazen sea (vers. 2-5); *g.* of the brazen lavers, the golden candlesticks, the tables of shew-bread, and the golden basins (vers. 6-8); and *h.* of the courts (ver. 9). The account is then closed with a summary enumeration of the different vessels of the temple (vers. 10-22), which agrees almost word for word with 1 Kings vii. 40-50.

Vers. 1-10. THE OUTSIDE OF THE BUILDING.—Ver. 1. The building of the temple, a fixed and splendid house of Jehovah as

הַתִּירָאִים ("the Tyrians") has dropped out. For this has nothing further in its favour than the most improbable assumption, that king Hiram gathered together the subjects of his whole kingdom to take part in Solomon's buildings.—The addition of *τρία ἔτη*, which is added by the LXX. at the end of the verse, does not warrant the assumption of Thenius and Böttcher, that שְׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים has dropped out of the text. For it is obvious that the LXX. have merely made their addition *e conjectura*, and indeed have concluded that, as the foundation for the temple was laid in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, the preliminary work must have occupied the first three years of his reign.

¹ Of the special works on the subject of the temple, see my pamphlet, *Der Tempel Salomo's, eine archäologische Untersuchung* (Dorp. 1839); and Carl Chr. W. F. Bähr, *Der Salomonische Tempel mit Berücksichtigung seines Verhältnisses zur heil. Architectur überhaupt* (Karlsr. 1848). In both of these there are critical notices of the earlier investigations and monographs on this subject, which have now simply a historical interest. See also the short description of the temple in my *Bibl. Archäologie*, i. § 23 sqq., with sketches of the temple building and the principal vessels on Plates 2 and 3, and the most recent notice by H. Merz in Herzog's *Cyclopædia* (Art. Temple).

the dwelling-place of His name in the midst of His people, formed an important epoch so far as the Old Testament kingdom of God was concerned, inasmuch as, according to the declaration of God made through the prophet Nathan, an end would thereby be put to the provisional condition of the people of Israel in the land of Canaan, since the temple was to become a substantial pledge of the permanent possession of the inheritance promised by the Lord. The importance of this epoch is indicated by the fact, that the time when the temple was built is defined not merely in relation to the year of Solomon's reign, but also in relation to the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt. "In the 480th year after the exodus of the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, in the second month of the year, Solomon built the house of the Lord." The correctness of the number 480, as contrasted with the 440th year of the LXX. and the different statements made by Josephus, is now pretty generally admitted; and we have already proved at Judg. iii. 7 that it agrees with the duration of the period of the Judges when rightly estimated.¹ The name of the month *Ziv*, brilliancy, splendour, probably so called from the splendour of the flowers, is explained by the clause, "that is, the second month," because the months had no fixed names before the captivity, and received different names after the captivity. The second month was called *Jyar* after the captivity.—The place where the temple was built is not given in our account, as having been sufficiently well known; though it is given in the parallel

¹ In opposition to the hypothesis of Böttcher, which has been repeated by Bertheau, viz. that the number 480 merely rests upon the computation of 12×40 years, or twelve generations of forty years each, Thenius himself has observed with perfect justice, that "where both the year and the month of the reign of the king in question are given, the principal number will certainly rest upon something more than mere computation; and if this had not been the case, the person making such a computation, if only for the purpose of obtaining the appearance of an exact statement, would have made a particular calculation of the years of Solomon's reign, and would have added them to the round number obtained, and written 'in the year 484.' Moreover, the introduction to our chapter has something annalistic in its tone; and at this early period it would be undoubtedly well known, and in a case like the present a careful calculation would be made, how long a time had elapsed since the most memorable period of the Israelitish nation had passed by." Compare with this Ed. Preuss (*Die Zeitrechnung der LXX.*, p. 74 sqq.), who has endeavoured with much greater probability to show that the alteration made by the LXX. into 440 rests upon nothing more than a genealogical combination.

text, 2 Chron. iii. 1, namely, "Mount *Moriah*, where the Lord had appeared to David" at the time of the pestilence, and where David had built an altar of burnt-offering by divine command (see at 2 Sam. xxiv. 25).

Vers. 2-4. *Plan and dimensions of the temple-house.*—The measures of the temple-house and its several subdivisions are all given in the clear, *i.e.* as the spaces were seen. The *house*, *i.e.* the main building of the temple (lit. as for the house, or shell of the building), its length was sixty cubits, its breadth twenty cubits, and its height thirty cubits, and that, according to 2 Chron. iii. 3, "after the earlier measure," *i.e.* after the old Mosaic or sacred cubit, which was a hand-breadth longer, according to Ezek. xl. 5 and xliii. 13, than the civil cubit of the time of the captivity. The Mosaic cubit, according to the investigations of Thenius, was 214,512 Parisian lines long, *i.e.* $20\frac{1}{2}$ Dresden inches, or $18\frac{1}{2}$ Rhenish inches (see at Gen. vi. 10).—Ver. 3. The *porch* (lit. *hall*) in the face of (פָּנֵי־לְפָנֵי, *i.e.* before) the Holy Place of the house was twenty cubits long, before (פָּנֵי־לְפָנֵי) the breadth of the house, *i.e.* it was just the same breadth as the house. The longer line, which ran parallel to the breadth of the house, is called here פָּנֵי־לְפָנֵי, the length, though from our point of view we should call it the width. And ten cubits was its breadth, *i.e.* its depth in front of the house. The height of the court is not given in our text; but in 2 Chron. iii. 4 it is said to have been 120 cubits. This is certainly an error, although Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 300) still joins with Stieglitz (*Baukunst*, p. 126, and *Beitr. zur Gesch. der Bauk.* i. p. 70) in defending its correctness. For an erection of such a height as this could not possibly have been designated as פָּנֵי־לְפָנֵי (a hall or porch), but would have been called מִגְדָּל, a *tower*. But even a tower of 120 cubits in height in front of a temple which was only thirty cubits high, would have shown a greater disproportion than our loftiest church towers;¹ and such a funnel-like erection with a base of only ten

¹ In the Strasburg cathedral and that at Freiburg in Breisgau the proportion between the height of the tower and that of the church, together with the roof, is about $3\frac{1}{4}$ to 1; it is only in the cathedral at Rouen that the proportion would have been almost 4 to 1 if it had been carried out to the very top. At the same time, in making this comparison it must be borne in mind that these Gothic towers taper off into slender points, whereas in the case of Solomon's temple we must assume that if the porch was carried up to the height supposed, it finished in a flat truncated tower; and it is this which would chiefly occasion the disproportion.

cubits in breadth or depth would hardly have possessed sufficient stability. We cannot certainly think of an intentional exaggeration of the height in the Chronicles, since the other measures agree with the account before us; but the assumption that there has been a corruption of the text is rendered natural enough by many other errors in the numerical statements. This still leaves it undecided whether the true height was twenty or thirty cubits; for whereas the Syriac, Arabic, and LXX. (Cod. Al.) have twenty cubits, the height of thirty cubits is favoured partly by the omission of any statement of the height from our text, which is much easier to explain if the porch was of the same height as the temple-house than if the heights were different, and partly by the circumstance that the side building had an external height of twenty cubits, and therefore the porch would not have stood out with any especial prominence if its elevation had been just the same.—Ver. 4. After the account of the proportionate spaces in the temple-house, the windows through which it received light and air are mentioned. חַלּוֹנֵי שָׁקִים אֲחֻמִּים does not mean *fenestræ intus latæ, foris angustæ* (Chald., Ar., Rabb., Luther, and others), but windows with closed beams, i.e. windows the lattice-work of which could not be opened and closed at pleasure, as in ordinary dwelling-houses (2 Kings xiii. 17; Dan. vi. 11). For שָׁקִים signifies beams overlaid in ch. vii. 4, and אֲחֻמִּים beams in ch. vii. 5. The opening of the windows was probably narrower without than within, as in the older Egyptian buildings, as the walls were very strong; and in that case such windows would more thoroughly answer their purpose, viz. to admit light and air, and let out the smoke, so that the interpretation given by the Chaldee is most likely founded upon an ancient tradition, and is in accordance with the fact, though not with the words. It is a disputed point among the commentators where the windows were placed: whether merely in the front over the porch, provided, that is to say, that this was ten cubits lower than the temple-house, or on the side walls above the side stories, which were at the most about twenty cubits high, in which case the Most Holy Place, which was only twenty cubits high, remained quite dark, according to ch. viii. 12. We regard the latter view as the correct one, inasmuch as the objections to it rest upon assumptions which can be proved to be false.

Vers. 5-8. *The side building.*—Ver. 5. "He built against the wall of the house an outwork round about (i.e. against the two

longer sides and against the hinder wall, and not against the front also, where the porch was built), against the walls of the house round about, against the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, and he made side chambers round about." חֲזָז (written constantly חֲזָז in the *Keri*) signifies literally *stratum*, here the lower building or outwork erected against the rooms mentioned. The word is *gen. comm.*, but so construed that the masculine is used in a collective sense to denote the whole of the outworks, consisting as they did of three stories, whereas the feminine is used for one single story of the building (ver. 6). On this use of the masculine and feminine genders to distinguish the whole mass and the individual parts, which is very common in Arabic, though it is rare in Hebrew, in which the distinction is generally expressed by a peculiar feminine form, as for example חֲזָזֹת a fleet, and חֲזָזִית a single ship, compare Ewald, *Lehrbuch der hebr. Spr.* § 175, *d*, and 176, *a*, and *gramm. crit. ling. arab.* i. § 295. חֲזָזֹת does not mean *cum parietibus* (Seb. Schmidt and J. H. Michaelis), but חֲזָז is a sign of the accusative, "as for the walls," and introduces the more precise definition. חֲזָזֹת signifies, both here and in Ezek. xli. 6 sqq., side chambers or side stories, from חָזַז, to incline to one side, hence to limp, *i.e.* to lean constantly to one side. From this there were derived for חָזַז the meanings side, side piece or side wall, *e.g.* of the ark, Ex. xxv. 12, 14, etc., of the dwelling, Ex. xxvi. 20, 26, etc., of the altar, Ex. xxvii. 7, 30, etc., the side wall or slope of a mountain, 2 Sam. xvi. 13, the side portion of the human body, *i.e.* the rib, Gen. ii. 21, 22, the sides or leaves of a door in ver. 34 of the present chapter, and when used of buildings, the side pieces or portions built out which lean against the main building; and lastly, the idea of a piece which shows a large side, *i.e.* a broad plank (ch. vi. 15, 16). The meaning planks or beams, as it were ribs or rib-work, is unfounded.—Ver. 6. The (internal) breadth of the lower side story was five cubits, that of the middle one six, and that of the third seven cubits; "for he (they) had made shortenings (*i.e.* rebates) against the house round about on the outside, that (there might be) no insertion into the walls of the (temple-) house." The meaning is that rebates were attached against the temple wall, at the point where the lower beams of the different side stories were to be placed, so that the heads of these beams rested upon the rebates and were not inserted in the actual wall of the temple-

house. These rebates are called very descriptively *מַנְדִּיחַ*, deductions or contractions of the thickness of the wall. We may assume that there were four such rebates: three for the three floors of the side stories, and one for the roof. It still remains doubtful, however, whether these rebates were merely laid along the temple wall, or along the outer wall of the side building as well, so as to ensure symmetry and make each of the two walls half a cubit thinner or weaker at every rebate. The former is the more probable. And accordingly the temple wall was one cubit weaker at each rebate, that is to say, in four places. If, therefore, it still remained two cubits thick at the top, it must have been six cubits thick below. This extraordinary thickness, however, would be quite in keeping with the remains of buildings of great antiquity, the walls of which have generally a colossal thickness, and also with the size of the square stones of which the wall was constructed, as described in ch. vii. 10. —Ver. 7 contains a circumstantial clause, inserted as an explanation of ver. 6: "The house, (namely) when building, was built of perfectly finished stones of the quarry, and hammer and axe; no kind of instrument whatever was heard at the house when it was building." *אֲבָן שְׁלֵמָה כֶּסֶּס* (on the construction see Ges. § 114, 1, Erl. and Ewald, § 339, b) does not mean stones quite unhewn, which God had so caused to grow that they did not require to be hewn (Theodoret); for although *אֲבָנִים מְלֵאִים* is used in Deut. xxvii. 6 (compare with Ex. xx. 25) to signify uninjured, i.e. unhewn stones, yet this meaning is precluded here by the context (cf. v. 32). *שְׁלֵם* signifies finished here, that is to say, stones which were so perfectly tooled and prepared when first broken in the quarry, that when the temple walls were built no iron instruments were required to prepare them any further. *אֵל*, an axe, here a stone-mason's cutting tool corresponding to the axe.—In ver. 8 the description of the side building is continued. "A door (*פֶּתַח*, an opening for the entrance) to the middle side chamber (of the lower story) was on the right side (the southern side) of the house, and a winding staircase led up into the middle (room of the middle story) and out of the middle into the third rooms," i.e. the rooms of the third story. This is the rendering according to the Masoretic text; and the only thing that appears strange is the use of *הַמִּיָּתְכָנָה* first of all for the middle room of the lower story and then for the middle story; and the conjecture is a very natural

one, that the first *הַחִיצוֹנָה* may have been an error of the pen for *הַתְּחִתָּיָה*, in which case *הַחִיצוֹנָה* does not signify the side room, but is used in a collective sense for the row of side rooms in one story, as in Ezek. xli. 5, 9, 11. That this door was made from the outside, *i.e.* in the outer wall of the side building, and did not lead into the side rooms "from the interior of the Holy Place," would hardly need a remark, if Böttcher (*Proben alttestl. Schrifterkl.* p. 339) and Schnaase (*Gesch. der bildenden Künste*, Bd. 1) had not really supported this view, which is so thoroughly irreconcilable with the dignity of the sanctuary.¹ The only question is, whether it was made in the middle of the right side or in the front by the side of the porch. If the Masoretic text is correct, there is no doubt about the former. But if we read *הַתְּחִתָּיָה*, the text leaves the question undecided. The winding staircase was not constructed in the outer wall itself, because this was not thick enough for the purpose, and the text states pretty clearly that it led from the lower story into the middle one, and thence still higher, so that it was in the centre of the building.

In vers. 9 and 10 the description of the exterior of the temple building is brought to a close. "So he built the house, and finished it, and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar." *בַּלֵּבָנוֹת* is not to be understood as relating to the internal panelling of the temple-house, for this is spoken of first in the section which follows (ver. 15), but to the roofing; *כִּסֶּה* means to conceal (Deut. xxxiii. 21) and cover in all the other passages, even in Hag. i. 4 and Jer. xxii. 14, where *כִּסֶּה* is generally, though incorrectly, translated "panelled." As a verb signifying clothing, it is construed with the accusative. *בַּלֵּבָנוֹת* does not mean boards, but beams, though not "an arched covering" (Thenius), because beams cut in the form of an arch would have been too weak in the middle, nor yet rafters (Böttcher), because the roofs of oriental buildings are flat. *שְׂדֵרוֹת בָּאֲרָזִים*, "rows, *i.e.* tablets (consisting) of cedars," *i.e.* cedar tablets, which were inserted in rows between the beams. This cedar-work was certainly provided with a strong covering to protect the roof and the building itself against rain; and at the sides it had no doubt a parapet, as in the case of dwelling-houses (Deut. xxii. 8).—

¹ The perfectly groundless assumption of Thenius, that the outer building had most probably an inner door as well, which connected it with the temple, does just as much violence to the decorum of the Holy Place.

Ver. 10. "And he built the outbuildings to the whole house (*i.e.* all round the temple-house, with the exception of the front: see ver. 5); five cubits was its height," *i.e.* the height of each story, the suffix in *קִמָּה* being made to agree with *בָּנָה* through an inaccuracy which has arisen from condensation, although, as in ver. 5, it denotes the whole of the side buildings, which consisted of three stories. The height given must also be understood as referring to the height within. Consequently the side buildings had an internal height of 3×5 cubits, and reckoning the floorings and the roof of the whole building an external height of 18 or 20 cubits; so that the temple-house, which was thirty cubits high within and about thirty-two without, rose about twelve or fourteen cubits above the side building, and there was plenty of room for the windows in the side walls. *וַיִּתְּכֵהוּ*: "and it (the side building) held to the house with cedar beams." The meaning is, that the building was fastened to the house by the joists of the cedar beams belonging to the different stories, which rested upon rebates of the temple wall, so that it was firmly attached to the temple-house, without any injurious insertions into the sanctuary itself. This is apparently the only explanation, that can be grammatically sustained, of words that have received such different interpretations. For the translation given by Thenius, which coincides with this,—*viz.* "he fastened it (each separate story of the building) to the temple-house with cedar wood, namely, with the cedar beams which formed the flooring and roofing of the three stories,"—is exposed to this grammatical objection, that the suffix is wanting in *וַיִּתְּכֵהוּ*, and that *וַיִּתְּכֵהוּ* is never followed by *אֵל* in the sense of *with*. All the other explanations are unsuitable. *וַיִּתְּכֵהוּ* signifies neither "he covered the house" (Chald., Vulg., Luther), nor "he overlaid the house;" moreover, the roofing of the house has been already mentioned in ver. 9, and there is no trace to be found of any overlaying or covering of the outside with cedar wood.

If, therefore, we reckon the thickness of the temple wall at six cubits, and that of the outer wall of the side building and the front wall of the porch at three cubits each, the whole building would be ninety-three cubits long (externally) and forty-eight cubits broad. The height of the temple-house was about thirty-two cubits externally, and that of the side stories from eighteen to twenty cubits, without the socle upon which the whole building rested. This is not mentioned indeed, as being a subordinate

matter, but would certainly not be omitted.¹ The number of rooms in the side buildings is not given, but may be set down at thirty in each story, if their length corresponded to their breadth in the lower story. These rooms had of course windows, although they are not mentioned in the account, but each one would have only a small window sufficient to give it the requisite light. And as to the number of the temple windows also, we can simply make conjectures. We can hardly assume that there were more than six on each side, and there were probably none at the back.

VERS. 11-13. PROMISE OF GOD DURING THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.—In what way this promise was communicated to Solomon is not more precisely stated. But the expression "And the word of Jehovah came" seems to point to a prophetic medium. And this is in harmony with ch. ix. 2, according to which Jehovah only revealed Himself to Solomon twice by an actual appearance.—Ver. 12. הִנְיִיתִי נִי is placed at the head absolutely: "As for the house which thou art building (בִּנְיָ, a participle), if thou walkest in my statutes, . . . I will set up my word, which I spake to thy father David." The reference is to the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq. of the everlasting establishment of his throne. God would fulfil this for Solomon if he would walk in the commandments of the Lord, as his father had already urged upon him when he handed over the kingdom (ch. ii. 3). The promise in ver. 13, "I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel," does not contain a second promise added to the one given in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq., but simply a special application of it to the building of the temple which had already been commenced. The eternal establishment

¹ Thenius, on the other hand, reckons the length of the whole building at a hundred cubits and its breadth at fifty-two, because, on the unfounded assumption that the temple in Ezekiel's vision was simply a copy of Solomon's temple, he sets down the thickness of the temple wall in front and along the two sides at six cubits, and that of the hinder wall at seven. Moreover, he not only reckons the internal length of the house at sixty-two cubits, in opposition to the statement in the text, that the length of the house (which was divided into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies) was sixty cubits; but in opposition to ver. 16, according to which the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies were separated by boards of cedar, he assumes that there was a wall of two cubits in thickness between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, according to Ezek. xli. 3; and, lastly, for no other reason than the wish to get the round number 100, he takes for granted that the hinder wall of the temple was a cubit thicker than that on the other sides.

of the throne of David involved the dwelling of God among His people, or rather is founded upon it. This dwelling of God is now to receive a new and lasting realization. The temple is to be a pledge that the Lord will maintain for His people His covenant of grace and His gracious presence. In this respect the promise, "I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel, and not forsake my people Israel," is a confirmation of the word which Jehovah had spoken to David, although, so far as the actual words are concerned, it is more closely connected with Lev. xxvi. 11, when the highest blessing attendant upon the faithful observance of the commandments of God is summed up in the promise, "I will make my abode among you, and my soul will not despise you."

Vers. 14-35. THE INTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE TEMPLE-HOUSE.—Vers. 14-22. *Internal covering of the house, and division into Holy and Most Holy.*—Ver. 14 (cf. ver. 9) resumes the description of the building of the temple, which had been interrupted by the divine promise just communicated.—Ver. 15. "He built (*i.e.*, so far as the sense is concerned, he covered) the walls of the house within with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the walls of the ceiling he overlaid it with wood within, and overlaid the floor with cypress boards." The expression קירות הַסֹּף, "walls of the ceiling," is very striking here, and renders it probable that קירות is only a copyist's error for קורות, "beams of the ceiling." The whole of the inside of the house was covered with wood, so that nothing was to be seen of the stone wall (ver. 18). On the other hand, the biblical text knows nothing of any covering of the outer walls also with wood, as many have assumed.—Vers. 16, 17. "And he built אֹמָת עֶשְׂרִים אַמָּה, the twenty cubits (*i.e.* the space of twenty cubits), of the hindermost side of the house with boards of cedar," from the floor to the beams (of the roof). עַל-קִירוֹת is to be explained from עַל קִירוֹת הַסֹּף in ver. 15. "And built them for it (the house —לָּהּ pointing back to הַבַּיִת) into the hinder room, into the Most Holy." קֹדֶשׁ is more precisely defined by the apposition הַקֹּדֶשׁ הַקָּדִים, and therefore denotes the Most Holy Place. But there is a doubt as to its derivation and true meaning. Aquila and Symmachus render it *χρηματιστήριον*, Jerome *λαλητήριον*, or in the Vulg. *oraculum*, so that they derive it from דָּבַר, to speak; and Hengstenberg adopts this derivation in Ps. xxviii. 2: דְּבַר, lit. that which is spoken, then the place where the speaking

takes place. Most of the more recent commentators, on the other hand, follow the example of C. B. Michaelis and J. Simonis, and render it, after the Arabic, the hinder portion or back room, which is favoured by the antithesis **הֵיכָל לְפָנָי**, the front sanctuary (ver. 17). The words of the text, moreover, are not to be understood as referring to a cedar wall in front of the Most Holy Place which rose to the height of twenty cubits, but to all four walls of the Most Holy Place, so that the wall which divided the hinder room from the Holy Place is not expressly mentioned, simply because it is self-evident. The words also imply that the *whole* of the hinder space of the house to the length of twenty cubits was cut off for the Most Holy Place, and therefore the party wall must also have filled the whole height of the house, which was as much as thirty cubits, and reached, as is expressly stated, from the floor to the roof. There remained therefore forty cubits of the house (in length) for **הֵיכָל לְפָנָי**, the front palace, *i.e.* the Holy Place of the temple (ver. 17). **לְפָנָי**, *anterior*, formed from **לָפַי** (cf. Ewald, § 164, *a*).—In ver. 18 there is inserted in a circumstantial clause the statement as to the internal decoration of both rooms; and the further description of the Most Holy Place is given in vers. 19 sqq. “And cedar wood was (placed) against the house inside, sculpture of gourds (*colocynthis*) and open buds.” **מְקֻלָּעַת** is in apposition to **אֲרָז**, containing a more minute description of the nature of the covering of cedar. **מְקֻלָּעַת** signifies sculpture, half-raised work (*basso relievo*); not, however, “that kind of bas-relief in which the figures, instead of rising above the surface on which they are wrought, are simply separated from it by the chiselling out of their outlines, and their being then rounded off according to these outlines” (Thenius). For although the expression **מְקֻלָּעוֹת מְאֻזֵּי** (ver. 29) appears to favour this, yet “merely engraved work” does not harmonize with the decorations of the brazen stands in ch. vii. 31, which are also called **מְקֻלָּעוֹת**. **מְקֻלָּעִים** are figures resembling the **פְּקֻעָה**, or wild gourds (2 Kings iv. 39), *i.e.* oval ornaments, probably running in straight rows along the walls. **פְּתוּרֵי צִיָּים** are open flower-buds; not hangings or garlands of flowers (Thenius), for this meaning cannot be derived from **פָּטַר** in the sense of loosening or setting free, so as to signify flowers loosened or set free (= garlands), which would be a marvellous expression! The objection that, “according to Num. xvii. 23, flowers not yet opened, *i.e.* flower-buds, were not **צִיָּים**, but **פְּתוּרִים**,” rests upon a

false interpretation of the passage referred to.—Ver. 19. “And (= namely) he prepared a hinder room in the house within, to place the ark of the covenant of Jehovah there.” *וַיִּתֵּן*, as ch. xvii. 14 shows, is not a future (*ut reponeres*), but the infinitive *וְהָיָה* with a repeated syllable *וְהָיָה* (see Ewald, § 238, c).—Ver. 20. “And the interior of the hinder room was twenty cubits the length, twenty cubits the breadth, and twenty cubits its height.” The word *לְפָנַי* I agree with Kimchi in regarding as the construct state of the noun *לְפָנִים*, which occurs again in ver. 29 in the sense of the inner part or interior, as is evident from the antithesis *לְחִיצוֹן* (on the outside). “And he overlaid it with fine gold.” *וְהָיָה קִנּוֹר* (= *קִנּוֹר* in Job xxviii. 15) unquestionably signifies fine or costly gold, although the derivation of this meaning is still questionable; viz. whether it is derived from *קָנַר* in the sense of to shut up, i.e. gold shut up or carefully preserved, after the analogy of *בָּתָּם*; or is used in the sense of taking out or selecting, i.e. gold selected or pure; or in the sense of closed, i.e. gold condensed or unadulterated (Fürst and Delitzsch on Job xxviii. 15).

The Most Holy Place had therefore the form of a perfect cube in the temple as well as in the tabernacle, only on an enlarged scale. Now, as the internal elevation of the house, i.e. of the whole of the temple-house, the hinder portion of which formed the Most Holy Place, was thirty cubits, there was a space of about ten cubits in height above the Most Holy Place and below the roof of the temple-house for the upper rooms mentioned in 2 Chron. iii. 9, on the nature and purpose of which nothing is said in the two accounts.¹ “And he overlaid (clothed) the altar with cedar wood.” There is something very striking in the allusion to the altar in this passage, since the verse itself treats simply of the Most Holy Place; and still more striking is the expression *הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר לְדָבִיר*, “the altar belonging to the *Debir*,” in ver. 22, since there was no altar in the Most Holy

¹ This upper room does not presuppose, however, that the party wall, which follows as a matter of course from ver. 16, was not merely a cedar wall, but a wall two cubits thick. The supposed difficulty of setting up a cedar wall thirty cubits high is not so great as to necessitate assumptions opposed to the text. For we cannot possibly see why it could not have been made secure “without injuring the temple wall.” The wood panelling must have been nailed firmly to the wall without injuring the wall itself; and therefore this could be done just as well in the case of the cedar beams or boards of the party wall.

Place. We cannot remove the strangeness of these sentences by such alterations as Thenius and Böttcher propose, because the alterations suggested are much too complicated to appear admissible. The allusion to the altar in both these verses is rather to be explained from the statements in the Pentateuch as to the position of the altar of incense; viz. Ex. xxx. 6, "Thou shalt place it before the curtain, which is above the ark of the testimony before the capporeth over the testimony;" and Ex. xl. 5, "before the ark of the testimony;" whereby this altar, although actually standing "before the inner curtain," i.e. in the Holy Place, according to Ex. xl. 26, was placed in a closer relation to the Most Holy Place than the other two things which were in the Holy Place. The clothing of the altar with cedar presupposes that it had a heart of stone; and the omission of the article before מִזְבֵּחַ may be explained on the ground that it is mentioned here for the first time, just as in ver. 16, where דִּבְרֵי was first mentioned, it had no article.—Ver. 21. To the gilding of the Most Holy Place, and the allusion to the altar of incense, which in a certain sense belonged to it, there is now appended in ver. 21 the gilding of the Holy Place. "Solomon overlaid the house from within with fine gold." הַבַּיִת מִפְּנִימָה cannot be the party wall between the Holy Place and the Most Holy, as I formerly supposed, but is the Holy Place as distinguished from the Most Holy. The following words וַיַּעֲבֵר וְהוּא are very obscure. If we rendered them, "he caused to pass over in (with) golden chains before the hinder room," we could only think of an ornament consisting of golden chains, which ran along the wall in front of the hinder room and above the folding doors. But this would be very singularly expressed. We must therefore take עָבַר, as Gesenius, de Wette, and many of the earlier commentators do, according to the Chaldean usage in the sense of bolting or fastening: "he bolted (fastened) with golden chains before the hinder room;" and must assume with Merz and others that the doors into the Most Holy Place (except on the day of atonement) were closed and fastened with golden chains, which were stretched across the whole breadth of the door and stood out against the wall.¹—The following expres-

¹ The conjecture of Thenius, that אֶת־הַפָּרֹכֶת (the curtain) has dropped out of the text and should be restored ("he carried the curtain across with golden chains"), is very properly described by Merz as "certainly untenable," since, apart from the fact that not one of the older versions contains

sion, וַיִּצְבֹּהוּ זָהָב, "and he overlaid it with gold," can only refer to the altar mentioned in the previous verse, the gilding of which has not yet been noticed, however surprising the separation of these words from ver. 20 may be.—In ver. 22 what has already been stated with regard to the gilding is repeated once more in a comprehensive manner, which brings this subject to a close. The whole house (בְּתֵּי הַקֹּדֶשׁ) is the Holy Place and the Most Holy, but not the porch or hall, as this is expressly distinguished from the house. הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, the whole altar, not merely a portion of it.

Vers. 23-28. *The large cherub-figures in the Most Holy Place.*—Ver. 23. He made (caused to be made) in the hinder room two cherubs of olive wood, i.e. wood of the *oleaster* or wild olive-tree, which is very firm and durable, and, according to 2 Chron. iii. 10, כְּעֵשֶׂה צַעֲצָעִים, i.e., according to the Vulgate, *opus statuarium*, a peculiar kind of sculpture, which cannot be more precisely defined, as the meaning of צֵא is uncertain. "Ten cubits was the height of it" (i.e. of the one and of the other). The figures had a human form, like the golden cherubs upon the ark of the covenant, and stood upright upon their feet (2 Chron. iii. 13), with extended wings of five cubits in length, so that one wing of the one reached to one wing of the other in the centre of the room, and the other wing of each reached to the opposite wall, and consequently the four extended wings filled the entire breadth of the Most Holy Place (a breadth of twenty cubits), and the two cherubs stood opposite to one another and ten cubits apart. The wings were evidently fastened to the back and placed close to one another upon the shoulder-blades, so that the small space between their starting-points is not taken into consideration in the calculation of their length. The figures were completely overlaid with gold. The ark of the covenant was placed between these cherubs, and under the wings which pointed towards one another. As they were made like those upon the ark, they had evidently the same meaning, and simply served to strengthen the idea which was symbolized in the cherub, and which we have expounded in the Com-

the missing words, chains would have impeded the moving of the curtain. It is true that, according to 2 Chron. iii. 14, there was a curtain before the Most Holy Place; but as it is not mentioned so early as this even in the Chronicles, this would not be its proper position in the account before us, but it would be most suitably mentioned either in connection with or after the reference to the doors of the Most Holy Place in vers. 31 and 32.

mentary on Ex. xxv. 20 sqq. Only their faces were not turned towards one another and bent down towards the ark, as in the case of the golden cherubim of the ark; but, according to 2 Chron. iii. 13, they were turned *לְבַיְתָא*, towards the house, *i.e.* the Holy Place, so as to allow of the extension of the wings along the full length of the Most Holy Place.

Vers. 29–35. *Ornaments of the walls; the floors and doors.*—

Ver. 29. All the walls of the house (the Holy Place and the Most Holy) round about (*סָבִיב*, adverb) he made engraved work (carving) of cherubs, palms, and open flowers from within to the outside (*i.e.* in the Most Holy as well as in the Holy Place). *לְבַיְתָא . . . מִלְּפָנֵי . . . מִלְּפָנֵי*; and *מִלְּפָנֵי* as in ver. 20. This completes the account of the nature of the covering of wood. In addition to the oval figures and open flowers (ver. 18), there were also figures of cherubim and palm-trees carved in the wooden panels. Nothing is said as to the distribution of these figures. But a comparison with Ezek. xli. 18 shows at any rate so much, that the palm-trees alternated with the cherubs, so that there was always one cherub standing between two palm-trees. The gourd-shaped figures and the open flowers probably formed the upper and lower setting of the rows of palms and cherubs, the flowers hanging in the form of garlands above the palms and cherubs, and the rows of gourds arranged in bars constituting the boundary lines both above and below. It is a disputed question whether there was only one row of palms and cherubs running round the walls, or whether there were two, or possibly even three. There is more probability in the second or third of these assumptions than in the first, inasmuch as on the walls of the Egyptian temples there were often three or four rows of mythological characters in relief arranged one above another (compare my work on the Temple, pp. 70 sqq.).—Ver. 30. The floor of the house he overlaid with gold within and without, *i.e.* in the Most Holy Place and in the Holy Place also.—Vers. 31, 32. He made the entrance to the back room, doors (*i.e.* consisting of doors; cf. Ewald, § 284, *α, β*) of olive wood, which moved, according to ch. vii. 50, on golden hinges. *וְהָאֵל וְהָאֵל*, “the projection of the door-posts was a fifth” (*מֵחֵמֶרֶת* is construed freely as an explanatory apposition to *וְהָאֵל*, to which it is really subordinate; cf. Ewald, § 290, *e*). These obscure words, which have been interpreted in very different ways (see Ges. *Thes.* pp. 43 sq.), can hardly have any other meaning than this: the projecting

framework of the doors occupied the fifth part of the breadth of the wall. For the explanation given by Böttcher and Thenius, "the entrance framework with posts of fifth strength," has no real support in Ezek. xli. 3. To justify the rendering given to חֲמִשָּׁה (fifth strength), חֲמִשָּׁה is supplied, though not in the sense of projection, but in the thoroughly unwarranted sense of strength or thickness of the wall; and in addition to this, a wall two cubits thick is postulated between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, in direct contradiction to ver. 16. The further evidence, which Thenius finds in ch. viii. 8, in support of this explanation, has been already rejected by Böttcher as unsustained. It would indeed be extremely strange for the thickness of the door-posts which formed the setting of the entrance to be given, whereas nothing is said about the size of the doors. According to our explanation, "a fifth of the breadth of the wall," the entrance was four cubits broad including the projecting door-posts, and each of the two wings of the folding doors about a cubit and a half broad, if we reckon the projecting framework on either side at half a cubit in breadth.—Ver. 32. "And two doors (*i.e.* folding doors, *sc.* he made; חֲמִשָּׁה is also governed by עֲשֶׂה in ver. 31) of olive wood, and carved upon them carved work," etc., as upon the walls (ver. 29), "and overlaid them with gold, spreading the gold upon the cherubs and palms" (רָחַץ, *hiphil* of רָחַץ), *i.e.* he spread gold-leaf upon them, so that, as Rashi observes, all the figures, the elevations and depressions of the carved work, were impressed upon the coating of gold-leaf, and were thus plainly seen. Thenius infers from this explanatory clause, that the gilding upon the walls and doors was most probably confined to the figures engraved, and did not extend over the whole of the walls and doors, because, if the doors had been entirely overlaid with gold, the gilding of the carved work upon them would have followed as a matter of course. But this inference is a very doubtful one. For if it followed as a matter of course from the gilding of the entire doors that the carved work upon them was overlaid with gold, it would by no means follow that the overlaying was such as to leave the carved work visible or prominent, which this clause affirms. Moreover, a partial gilding of the walls would not coincide with the expression חֲמִשָּׁה בְּכָל הַיָּמִין in ver. 22, since these words, which are used with emphasis, evidently affirm more than "that such (partial) gilding was carried out everywhere throughout the temple proper."

The doors in front of the Most Holy Place did not render the curtain mentioned in 2 Chron. iii. 14 unnecessary, as many suppose. This curtain may very well have been suspended within the doors; so that even when the doors were opened outwards on the entrance of the high priest, the curtain formed a second covering, which prevented the priests who were ministering in the Holy Place and court from looking in.¹—Vers. 33, 34. “And thus he made upon the door of the Holy Place posts of olive wood from a fourth (of the wall),” i.e. a framework which occupied a fourth of the breadth of the wall, or was five cubits broad (see at ver. 31), “and two doors of cypress wood, two leaves each door turning,” i.e. each of the folding doors consisting of two leaves, each of which was made to turn by itself, so that it could be opened and shut alone (without the other; עץ עץ is probably only a copyist's error for עץ עץ). Cypress wood was chosen for the folding doors of the Holy Place, and not olive wood, as in the case of the Most Holy Place, probably because it is lighter in weight, and therefore less likely to sink. It is questionable here what idea we are to form of the division of each folding door into two leaves, each of which turned by itself: whether we are to think of each wing as divided lengthwise into two narrow leaves, or as divided half way up, so that the lower half could be opened without the upper. I agree with Merz in thinking the latter the more probable assumption; for the objection made by Thenius, on the ground that doors of this kind are only seen in the houses of the peasantry, is an idle assertion which cannot be proved. In a doorway of five cubits in breadth, after reckoning the doorposts, the width of the two wings could not be more than two cubits each. And if such a door had been divided into two halves, each half would have been only one cubit wide, so that when open it would not have furnished the requisite room for one man conveniently to pass through. On the other hand, we may assume that a folding door of four cubits in breadth, if made in just proportions, would be eight cubits high. And a door of such a height might easily be

¹ H. Merz (Herzog's *Cycl.*) now admits this, whereas he formerly agreed with Ewald and others in denying the existence of the curtain in Solomon's temple, and regarded the curtain (veil) in Matt. xxvii. 51, 52 as an arbitrary addition made by Herod out of his princely caprice, thus overlooking the deep symbolical meaning which the veil or curtain possessed.

divided into two halves, so that only the lower half (of two cubits in breadth and about four in height) was opened for the daily entrance of the priests into the Holy Place. These doors probably opened outwards, like those in front of the Most Holy Place.—Ver. 35. Carving and gilding: as upon the doors before the hinder room. The gold was levelled or smoothed over that which had been engraved, *i.e.* it was beaten out thin and laid upon the carving in such a manner that the gold plate fitted closely to the figures. Gilding was generally effected in ancient times by the laying on of gold plate, which was fastened with tacks (compare 2 Chron. iii. 9).

Ver. 36. *The courts*.—"He built the inner court three rows of hewn stones and one row of hewn cedar beams." The epithet inner court applied to the "court of the priests" (2 Chron. iv. 9) presupposes an outer one, which is also mentioned in 2 Chron. iv. 9, and called "the great court." The inner one is called the *upper* (higher) court in Jer. xxxvi. 10, from which it follows that it was situated on a higher level than the outer one, which surrounded it on all sides. It was enclosed by a low wall, consisting of three rows of hewn stones, or square stones, laid one upon another, and a row of hewn cedar beams, which were either laid horizontally upon the stones, after the analogy of the panelling of the temple walls on the inside, or placed upright so as to form a palisading, in order that the people might be able to see through into the court of the priests. According to 2 Chron. iv. 9, the outer court had gates lined with brass, so that it was also surrounded with a high wall. Around it there were chambers and cells (2 Kings xxiii. 11; Jer. xxxv. 4, xxxvi. 10) for the priests and Levites, the plans for which had already been made by David (1 Chron. xxviii. 12). The principal gate was the east gate (Ezek. xi. 1). Other gates are mentioned in 2 Kings xi. 6, 2 Chron. xxiii. 5, Jer. xx. 2, 2 Kings xii. 10, 2 Chron. xxiv. 8. The size of these courts is not given. At the same time, following the analogy of the tabernacle, and with the reduplication of the rooms of the tabernacle which is adopted in other cases in the temple, we may set down the length of the court of the priests from east to west at 200 cubits, and the breadth from south to north at 100 cubits; so that in front of the temple-building on the east there was a space of 100 cubits in length and breadth, or 10,000 square cubits, left free for the altar of burnt-offering and the other

vessels, in other words, for the sacrificial worship. The outer or great court will therefore, no doubt, have been at least twice as large, namely, 400 cubits long and 200 cubits broad, *i.e.*, in all, 80,000 square cubits; so that the front space before the court of the priests (on the eastern side) was 150 cubits long from east to west, and 200 cubits broad from south to north, and 50 cubits in breadth or depth still remained for the other three sides.

Vers. 37, 38. *The time consumed in building.*—The foundation was laid in the fourth year in the month Ziv (see ver. 1), and it was finished in the eleventh year in the month *Bul*, *i.e.* the eighth month, so that it was built in seven years, or, more precisely, seven years and a half, "according to all its matters and all its due." *בָּנָה* for *בָּנָה* signifies *proventus*; *בָּנָה* is therefore the fruit month, the month of tree fruits. The name probably originated with the Phœnicians, with whom the fruit ripened later; and it is said to be found upon the great Sidonian inscription (compare Dietrich on *Ges. Lex. s.v.*). For other explanations see *Ges. Thes.* p. 560. In comparison with other large buildings of antiquity,¹ and also of modern times, the work was executed in a very short time. But we must bear in mind that the building was not a very large one, notwithstanding all its splendour; that an unusually large number of workmen were employed upon it; and that the preparation of the materials, more especially the hewing of the stones, took place at Lebanon, and for the most part preceded the laying of the foundation of the temple, so that this is not to be included in the seven years and a half. Moreover, the period mentioned probably refers to the building of the temple-house and court of the priests only, and to the general arrangement of the outer court, and does not include the completion of the underground works which were necessary to prepare the space required for them, and of which only a portion may have been carried out by Solomon.²

¹ According to Pliny (*H. N.* 36, c. 14), all Asia was building at the celebrated temple of Diana at Ephesus for 220 years.

² The account given by Josephus of these substructures does not show very clearly how much originated with Solomon, and how much belongs to the following centuries. At the close of his description of Solomon's temple (*Ant.* viii. 3, 9), he states that, in order to obtain the same level for the *ἔξωθεν* *ἱερός*, *i.e.* the outer court of the temple, as that of the *ἑσώθεν*, he had large valleys filled up, into which it was difficult to look down on account of their depth, by raising the ground to the height of 400 cubits, so as to make them

The importance of the temple is clearly expressed in ch. viii. 13, 27, ix. 3, 2 Chron. vi. 2, and other passages. It was to be a house built as the dwelling-place for Jehovah, a place for His seat for ever; not indeed in any such sense as that the house could contain God within its space, when the heavens of heavens cannot contain Him (ch. viii. 27), but a house where the name of Jehovah is or dwells (ch. viii. 16 sqq.; 2 Chron. vi. 5; cf. 2 Sam. vii. 13, etc.), *i.e.* where God manifests His presence in

level with the top of the mountain; and in the *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, after describing the temple-mountain as a mighty hill, the summit of which hardly sufficed for the temple-house and altar when the building was commenced, because it sloped off on all sides, he adds: "Solomon therefore caused a wall to be raised on the eastern side, and had a porch built upon the ground that was heaped up, and on the other sides the temple (*ναός*) was naked (*γυμνός*)." But in the description of the temple of Herod (*Ant.* xv. 11, 3) he says: "The temple was surrounded by enormous porticos (*στοάς*), which rested upon a large wall, and were the largest work of which men have ever heard. It was a steep rocky hill, rising gradually towards the eastern part of the city up to the highest point. This hill Solomon surrounded with a wall by very great works up to the very apex, and walled it round, commencing at the root, which is surrounded by a deep ravine, with stones which were fastened together with lead, . . . and continuing to the top, so that the size and height of the building, which was completed as a square, were immense," etc. The flat obtained in this manner is then described by Josephus as a *περίβολος* of four stadia in circumference, namely, one stadium on each side. Now, although it was the outer court of the temple of Herod (the court of the Gentiles) which first had this circumference (see my *bibl. Archæol.* i. pp. 143, 144), and Josephus, *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, relates that subsequently (*τοῖς ἐξῆς αἰῶσιν*) the levelling of the hill was carried out to even a greater extent, as the people still continued to heap up earth, it is quite conceivable that Solomon may have planned the area of the temple with this circumference. And this conjecture acquires great probability from the fact that, according to the researches of Robinson (*Pal.* i. pp. 420 sqq.; *Recent Investigations concerning the Topography of Jerusalem*, pp. 68 sqq.; and *Later Biblical Researches*, pp. 173 sqq.), there are layers of enormous square stones in the lowest part of the south-western and south-eastern corners of the present Haram wall, the dimensions of which, apart from the fact that they are hewn with grooved edges, point to an early Israelitish origin, so that they might very well be relics of the Solomonian substructures of the temple-hill. There is also the remnant of the arch of a bridge of the same construction on the southern portion of the western wall of the Haram, which points to a bridge that led across from Moriah to Zion, and "appears to remove all the objections to the identity of this part of the enclosure of the mosque with that of the ancient temple" (*Rob. Pal.* i. p. 426). "Here then," adds Robinson (*Pal.* i. pp. 427, 428), "we have indisputable remains of Jewish antiquity, consisting of an important portion of the western wall of

a real manner to His people, and shows Himself to them as the covenant God, so that Israel may there worship Him and receive an answer to its prayers. The temple had therefore the same purpose as the tabernacle, whose place it took, and which it resembled in its fundamental form, its proportions, divisions, and furniture. As the glory of the Lord entered into the tabernacle in the cloud, so did it into the temple also at its dedication, to sanctify it as the place of the gracious presence of God (ch. viii.

the ancient temple area. They are probably to be referred to a period long antecedent to the days of Herod; for the labours of this splendour-loving tyrant appear to have been confined to the body of the temple and the porticos around the court. The magnitude of the stones also, and the workmanship, as compared with other remaining monuments of Herod, seem to point to an earlier origin. In the accounts we have of the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans, and its rebuilding by Zerubbabel under Darius, no mention is made of these exterior walls. The former temple was destroyed by fire, which would not affect these foundations; nor is it probable that a feeble colony of returning exiles could have accomplished works like these. There seems, therefore, little room for hesitation in referring them back to the days of Solomon, or rather of his successors, who, according to Josephus, built up here immense walls, 'immoveable for all time.'

But however probable this assumption may be, the successors of Solomon cannot come into consideration at all, since Josephus says nothing of the kind, and the biblical accounts are not favourable to this conjecture. With the division of the kingdom after the death of Solomon the might of the kings of Judah was broken; and the accounts of the new court which Jehoshaphat built, i.e. of the restoration of the inner court (2 Chron. xx. 5), and of the repairs of the temple by Joash (2 Kings xii. 5 sqq.; 2 Chron. xxiv. 4 sqq.) and Josiah (2 Kings xxii. 5 sqq.; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8 sqq.), do not produce the impression that walls so costly or so large could have been built at that time. The statement of Josephus (*l.c. de Bell. Jud. v. 5, 1*) concerning the gradual extension of the levelled hill, has reference to the enlargement of the temple area towards the north, inasmuch as he adds to the words already quoted: "and cutting through the north wall, they took in as much as was afterwards occupied by the circumference of the whole temple."—If, therefore, the remains of the ancient wall which have been mentioned, with their stones of grooved edges, are of early Israelitish origin, we must trace them to Solomon; and this is favoured still further by the fact, that when Solomon had a magnificent palace built for himself opposite to the temple (see ch. vii. 1-12), he would assuredly connect the temple-mountain with Zion by a bridge.—Even J. Berggren (*Bibel u. Josephus über Jerus. u. d. heil. Grab.*) thinks it probable that "the so-called remains of an arch in the western Haram wall may be, as Robinson at first indicated, a relic of that ancient and marvellous xystus bridge, with which the Davidic steps on the two steep sides of the valley of the Tyropeum, constructed for the purpose of going from Moriah to Zion or from Zion to Moriah, were connected."

10 ; 2 Chron. v. 14). The temple thereby became not only a visible pledge of the lasting duration of the covenant, by virtue of which God would dwell among His people, but also a copy of the kingdom of God, which received at its erection an embodiment answering to its existing condition at the time. As the tabernacle, with its resemblance to a nomad's tent, answered to the time when Israel had not yet found rest in the promised land of the Lord ; so was the temple, regarded as an immoveable house, a pledge that Israel had now acquired its lasting inheritance in Canaan, and that the kingdom of God on earth had obtained a firm foundation in the midst of it.—This relation between the temple and the tabernacle will serve to explain all the points of difference which present themselves between these two sanctuaries, notwithstanding their agreement in fundamental forms and in all essential particulars. As a house or palace of Jehovah, the temple was not only built of solid and costly materials, with massive walls of square stones, and with floors, ceilings, walls, and doors of cedar, cypress, and olive woods—these almost imperishable kinds of wood—but was also provided with a hall like the palaces of earthly kings, and with side buildings in three stories in which to keep the utensils requisite for a magnificent ceremonial, though care was taken that these adjoining and side buildings were not attached directly to the main building so as to violate the indestructibility and perfectness of the house of God, but merely helped to exalt it and elevate its dignity. And the increased size of the inner rooms, whilst the significant forms and measures of the tabernacle were preserved, was also essentially connected with this. Whereas the length and breadth of the dwelling were doubled, and the height of the whole house tripled, the form of a cube was still retained for the Most Holy Place as the stamp of the perfected kingdom of God (see *Comm. on Pent.* vol. ii. p. 184), and the space was fixed at twenty cubits in length, breadth, and height. On the other hand, in the case of the Holy Place the sameness of height and breadth were sacrificed to the harmonious proportions of the house or palace, as points of inferior importance ; and the measurements were thirty cubits in height, twenty cubits in breadth, and forty cubits in length ; so that ten as the number of perfectness was preserved as the standard even here. And in order to exhibit still further the perfectness and glory of the house of God, the walls were not constructed of ordinary quarry-

stone, but of large square stones prepared at the quarry, and the walls were panelled within with costly wood after the manner of the palaces of Hither Asia, the panelling being filled with carved work and overlaid with gold plate. And whereas the overlaying of the whole of the interior with gold shadowed forth the glory of the house as the residence of the heavenly King, the idea of this house of God was still more distinctly expressed in the carved work of the walls. In the tabernacle the walls were decorated with tapestries in costly colours and interwoven figures of cherubim; but in the temple they were ornamented with carved work of figures of cherubim, palms, and opening flowers. To the figures of cherubim, as representations of the heavenly spirits which surround the Lord of glory and set forth the psychical life at its highest stage, there are thus added flowers, and still more particularly palms, those "princes of the vegetable kingdom," which, with their fine majestic growth, and their large, fresh, evergreen leaves, unite within themselves the whole of the fulness and glory of the vegetable life; to set forth the sanctuary (probably with special reference to Canaan as the land of palms, and with an allusion to the glory of the King of peace, inasmuch as the palm is not only the sign of Palestine, but also the symbol of peace) "as a place that was ever verdant, abiding in all the freshness of strength, and enfolding within itself the fulness of life," and thereby to make it a scene of health and life, of peace and joy, a "paradise of God," where the righteous who are planted there flourish, and blossom, and bear fruit to old age (Ps. xcii. 13). And this idea of the house, as an immoveable dwelling-place of God, is in perfect harmony with the setting up of two colossal cherubim in the Most Holy Place, which filled the whole space with their outspread wings, and overshadowed the ark of the covenant, to show that the ark of the covenant with its small golden cherubim upon the Capporeth, which had journeyed with the people through the desert to Canaan, was henceforth to have there a permanent and unchangeable abode.

CHAP. VII. SOLOMON'S PALACE AND THE FURNITURE OF THE
TEMPLE.

Vers. 1-12. *Erection of the royal palace.*—Ver. 1 is closely connected in form with ch. vi. 38, and contains a summary account of the building, which is more minutely described in

vers. 2-12. "And Solomon built his house (his palace) in thirteen years, and finished (in that time) all his house." The thirteen years are to be reckoned after the completion of the temple in seven years, so that the two buildings were executed in twenty years (ch. ix. 10). The expression *בְּיָמָיו* is used, because the palace consisted of several buildings connected together; namely, (1) the house of the forest of Lebanon (vers. 2-5); (2) the pillar-hall with the porch (ver. 6); (3) the throne-room and judgment-hall (ver. 7); (4) the king's dwelling-house and the house of Pharaoh's daughter (ver. 8). That all these buildings were only different portions of the one royal palace, and the house of the forest of Lebanon was not a summer residence of Solomon erected on Lebanon itself, as many of the earlier commentators supposed, is indisputably evident, not only from the first verse when correctly interpreted, but also and still more clearly from the fact that when the buildings of Solomon are spoken of afterwards (see ch. ix. 1, 10, 15, and x. 12), we only read of the house of Jehovah and the house of the king, that is to say, of the temple and *one* palace. The description of the several portions of this palace is so very brief, that it is impossible to form a distinct idea of its character. The different divisions are given in vers. 1-8 in their natural order, commencing at the back and terminating with the front (ver. 8), and there then follows in vers. 9-12 the description of the stones that were used.—Vers. 2-5. *The house of the forest of Lebanon.*—This building—so named because it was built, so to speak, of a forest of cedar pillars—is called in the Arabic the "house of his arms," because, according to ch. x. 17, it also served as a keeping-place for arms: "it is hardly to be regarded, however, as simply an arsenal, but was probably intended for other purposes also. He built it "a hundred cubits its length, fifty cubits its breadth, and thirty cubits its height, on four rows of cedar pillars, and hewn cedar beams (were) over the pillars." As the building was not merely a hall of pillars, but, according to ver. 3, had side-rooms (*סִדְרֵי*, cf. ch. vi. 5) above the pillars, the construction of it can hardly be represented in any other way than this, that the rooms were built upon four rows of pillars, which ran round all four sides of the building, which was 100 cubits long and fifty cubits broad in the inside, and thus surrounded the inner courtyard on all sides. Of course the building could not rest merely upon pillars, but was surrounded on the outside with a strong

wall of hewn square stones (ver. 9), so that the hewn beams which were laid upon the pillars had their outer ends built into the wall, and were supported by it, so as to give to the whole building the requisite strength.¹—Ver. 3. “And roofing in (of) cedar was above over the side-rooms upon the pillars, five and forty; fifteen the row.” וְהַגִּבֵּי is to be understood of the roofing, as in ch. vi 15. (compare וְהַגִּבֵּי, ch. vi 15). The numbers “forty-five and fifteen the row” cannot refer to וְהַגִּבֵּי, but must refer, as Thenius assumes, to וְהַגִּבֵּי as the main idea, which is more precisely defined by עַל הַגִּבֵּי. If we took it as referring to the pillars, as I myself have formerly done, we should have to assume that there were only galleries or pillar-halls above the lower rows of pillars, which is at variance with וְהַגִּבֵּי. There were forty-five side-rooms, therefore, built upon the lower rows of pillars, in ranges of fifteen each. This could only be done by the ranges of rooms being built, not side by side, but one over the other, in other words, by the forty-five side-rooms forming three stories, as in the side buildings of the temple, so that each

¹ Thenius therefore supposes that “the lower part of the armoury formed a peristyle, a *fourfold* row of pillars running round inside its walls and enclosing a courtyard, so that the Vulgate alone gives the true sense, *quatuor deambulacra inter columnas cedrinas* ;” and he points to the court of the palace of *Luxor*, which has a double row of pillars round it. The number of pillars is not given in the text, but Thenius in his drawing of this building sets it down at 400, which would certainly present a forest-like aspect to any one entering the building. Nevertheless we cannot regard this assumption as correct, because the pillars, which we cannot suppose to have been less than a cubit in thickness, would have been so close to one another that the four rows of pillars could not have formed four *deambulacra*. As the whole building was only fifty cubits broad, and this breadth included the inner courtyard, we cannot suppose that the sides of the building were more than ten cubits deep, which would leave a breadth of thirty cubits for the court. If then four pillars, each of a cubit in thickness, stood side by side or one behind the other in a space of ten cubits in depth, the distance between the pillars would be only a cubit and a half, that is to say, would be only just enough for one man and no more to walk conveniently through. And what could have been the object of crowding pillars together in this way, so as to render the entire space almost useless? It is on this ground, probably, that Hermann Weiss assumes that each side of the oblong building, which was half as broad as it was long, was supported by one row, and therefore all the sides together by four rows of cedar pillars, and the beams of the same material which rested upon them. But this view is hardly a correct one; for it not only does not do justice to the words of the text, “four rows of pillars,” but it is insufficient in itself, for the simple reason that one row of pillars on each side would not have afforded the requisite strength and stability to the three stories built upon them, even

story had a "row" of fifteen side-rooms round it. This view receives support from ver. 4: "and beam-layers (עֲבָדֵי עֵץ, beams, as in ch. vi. 4) were three rows, and outlook against outlook three times;" i.e. the rows of side-rooms were built one over the other by means of layers of beams, so that the rooms had windows opposite to one another three times; that is to say, the windows looking out upon the court were so arranged in the three stories that those on the one side were *vis à vis* to those on the opposite side of the building. The expression in ver. 5, מִלִּפְנֵי מַחְזָה לְמַחְזָה, "window over against window," compels us to take מַחְזָה לְמַחְזָה in the sense of "opposite to the window" (לִפְנֵי, *versus*), and not, as Thenius proposes, "outlook against outlook," according to which לִפְנֵי is supposed to indicate that the windows were only separated from one another by slender piers. מַחְזָה, which only occurs here, is different from חֲלֹזָה, the ordinary window, and probably denotes a large opening affording a wide outlook.—Ver. 5. "And all the doorways and mouldings were square of beams" (קָדְשֵׁי is an accusative of free subordination, denoting the material or the mode of execution; cf. Ewald, § 284, α, β). "Square with a

if we should not suppose the rooms in these stories to be very broad, since the further three rows of pillars, which Weiss assumes in addition, according to ver. 3, as the actual supporters of the upper building, have no foundation in the text. The words "four rows of cedar pillars" do not absolutely require the assumption that there were four rows side by side or one behind the other on every side of the building; for the assertion that סָבִיב does not denote a row in the sense of a straight line, but generally signifies a row surrounding and enclosing a space, is refuted by Ex. xxviii. 17, where we read of the four סָבִיב of precious stones upon the breastplate of the high priest.—Is it not likely that the truth lies midway between these two views, and that the following is the view most in accordance with the actual fact, namely, that there were four rows of pillars running along the full length of the building, but that they were distributed on the two sides, so that there were only two rows on each side? In this case a person entering from the front would see four rows of pillars running the whole length of the building. In any case the rows of pillars would of necessity be broken in front by the entrance itself.

The utter uncertainty as to the number and position of the four rows of pillars is sufficient in itself to render it quite impossible to draw any plan of the building that could in the slightest degree answer to the reality. Moreover, there is no allusion at all in the description given in the text to either entrance or exit, or to staircases and other things, and the other buildings are still more scantily described, so that nothing certain can be determined with regard to their relative position or their probable connection with one another. For this reason, after studying the matter again and again, I have been obliged to relinquish the intention to illustrate the description in the text by drawings.

straight upper beam" (Thenius) cannot be the correct rendering of רִבְעִים שָׁנָה. Thenius proposes to read רִבְעִים for רִבְעִים, after the reading *ai χῶραι* of the Seventy, who have also rendered רִבְעִים in ver. 4 by *χῶρα*, a broad space. It may be pleaded in support of this, that רִבְעִים is less applicable to the doorposts or mouldings than to the doorways and outlooks (windows), inasmuch as, if the doorways were square, the square form of the moulding or framework would follow as a matter of course. רִבְעִים are both the doors, through which the different rooms were connected with one another, and also those through which the building and its stories were reached, of course by stairs, probably winding staircases, as in the side stories of the temple. The stairs were placed, no doubt, at the front of the building. The height given is thirty cubits, corresponding to that of the whole building (ver. 2). If we reckon the height of the lower pillars at eight cubits, there were twenty-two cubits left for the stories; and assuming that the roofing of each was one cubit in thickness, there remained eighteen cubits in all for the rooms of the three stories; and this, if equally distributed, would give an internal height of six cubits for each story, or if arranged on a graduated scale, which would probably be more appropriate, a height of seven, six, and five cubits respectively.

Vers. 6-8. *The other buildings.*—Ver. 6. "And he made the *pillar-hall*, fifty cubits its length, and thirty cubits its breadth, and a hall in front of them, and pillars and a threshold in front of them." With regard to the situation of this hall in relation to the other parts of the building, which is not precisely defined, we may infer, from the fact that it is mentioned between the house of the forest of Lebanon and the throne and judgment halls, that it stood between these two. The length of this building (fifty cubits) corresponds to the breadth of the house of the forest of Lebanon; so that, according to the analogy of the temple-hall (ch. vi. 3), we might picture to ourselves the length given here as running parallel to the breadth of the house of the forest of Lebanon, and might therefore assume that the pillar-hall was fifty cubits broad and thirty cubits deep. But the statement that there was a hall *in front of* the pillar-hall is irreconcilable with this assumption. We must therefore understand the length in the natural way, as signifying the measurement from back to front, and regard the pillar-hall as a portico fifty cubits long and thirty cubits broad, in front of which there was also a porch as

an entrance. **עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם**, in front of them, *i.e.* in front of the pillars which formed this portico. The last words, "and pillars and threshold in front of them," refer to the porch. This had also pillars, probably on both sides of the doorway, which carried the roof; and in front of them was **עַץ**, *i.e.*, according to the Chaldees **קִסְפֵּתָא**, the moulding or framework of the threshold, a threshold-like entrance, with steps.—Ver. 7. "And the *throne-hall*, where he judged, the judgment-hall, he made and (indeed) covered with cedar, from floor to floor." The throne-hall and the judgment-hall are therefore one and the same hall, which was both a court of judgment and an audience-chamber, and in which, no doubt, there stood the splendid throne described in ch. x. 18-20. But it is distinguished from the pillar-hall by the repetition of **עֵץ**. It probably followed immediately upon this, but was clearly distinguished from it by the fact that it was covered with cedar **עַד הַקִּרְעַת עַד הַקִּרְעַת**. These words are very obscure. The rendering given by Thenius, "panelled from the floor to the beams of the roof," is open to these objections: (1) that **קִסֵּן** generally does not mean to *panel*, but simply to *cover*, and that **קִסֵּן בָּמֶזֶל** in particular cannot possibly be taken in a different sense here from that which it bears in ver. 3, where it denotes the roofing of the rooms built above the portico of pillars; and (2) that the alteration of the second **הַקִּרְעַת** into **הַקִּירֹת** has no critical warrant in the rendering of the Syriac, *a fundamento ad cælum ejus usque*, or in that of the Vulgate, *a pavimento usque ad summitatem*, whereas the LXX. and Chald. both read **עַד הַקִּרְעַת**. But even if we were to read **הַקִּירֹת**, this would not of itself signify the roof beams, inasmuch as in ch. vi. 16 **הַקִּירֹת** or **הַקִּירֹת** receives its more precise definition from the expression **הַקִּירֹת הַקִּירֹת** (קירֹת) in ver. 15. The words in question cannot have any other meaning than this: "from the one floor to the other," *i.e.* either from the floor of the throne-hall to the floor of the pillar-hall (described in ver. 6), or more probably from the lower floor to the upper, inasmuch as there were rooms built over the throne-room, just as in the case of the house of the forest of Lebanon; for **קִרְעַת** may denote not only the lower floor, but also the floor of upper rooms, which served at the same time as the ceiling of the lower rooms. So much, at any rate, may be gathered from these words, with all their obscurity, that the throne-hall was not an open pillar-hall, but was only open in front, and was shut in by solid walls on the other three sides.—

Ver. 8. After (behind) the throne and judgment hall then followed the king's own palace, the principal entrance to which was probably through the throne-hall, so that the king really delivered judgment and granted audiences in the gate of his palace. "His house, where he dwelt, in the other court inwards from the (throne) hall was like this work," i.e. was built like the throne-hall; "and a (dwelling) house he made for the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Solomon had taken, like this hall." The construction of the dwelling-places of the king and queen cannot be ascertained from these words, because the hall with which its style is compared is not more minutely described. All that can be clearly inferred from the words, "in the other court inside the hall," is, that the abode of the king and his Egyptian wife had a court of its own, and when looked at from the entrance, formed the hinder court of the whole palace. The house of Pharaoh's daughter was probably distinct from the dwelling-place of the king, so that the palace of the women formed a building by itself, most likely behind the dwelling-house of the king, since the women in the East generally occupy the inner portion of the house. The statement that the dwelling-place of the king and queen formed a court by itself within the complex of the palace, warrants the further inference, that the rest of the buildings (the house of the forest of Lebanon, the pillar-hall, and the throne-hall) were united together in one first or front court.

Vers. 9-12. "All these (viz. the whole of the buildings described in vers. 2-8) were costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, sawn with the saw, within and without (i.e. on the inner and outer side of the halls and buildings), and from the foundation to the corbels, and from without to the great court." הַמִּפְחוֹת, the corbels, upon which the beams of the roof rest. The Sept. renders it *ἕως τῶν γεισῶν*. Thenius understands by this the battlements which protected the flat roofs, and therefore interprets מִפְחוֹת as signifying the stone border of the roof of the palace. But *γείσος*, or *γείσος*, *γείσος*, merely signifies the projection of the roof, and, generally speaking, every projection in a building resembling a roof, but not the battlement-like protection or border of the flat roof, which is called מִעֲקֶה in Deut. xxii. 8. חוּץ, the outside in distinction from the great court, can only be the outer court; and as חוּץ הַחָצֵר הַגְּדוֹלָה is no doubt identical with חוּץ הָאֶחָדָה (ver. 8), and therefore refers to the court surrounding the king's

dwelling-house, *החצר* is to be understood as relating to the courtyard or fore-court surrounding the front halls.—Vers. 10, 11. “And the foundation was laid with costly, large stones of ten and eight cubits (*sc.* in length, and of corresponding breadth and thickness). And above (the foundation, and therefore the visible walls, were) costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, and cedars.”—Ver. 12. And (as for) the great court, there were round it three rows (*i.e.* it was formed of three rows) of hewn stones and a row of hewn cedar beams, as in the inner court of the house of Jehovah (see at ch. vi. 36) and the hall of the house. *וְכִלְכִּלָּהּ* signifies “and so with the court,” *Vav* serving as a comparison, as in Prov. xxv. 3, 20, and frequently in Proverbs (see Dietrich in *Ges. Lex. s.v.* 1, and Ewald, § 340, *b*), so that there is no necessity for the un-Hebraic conjecture of Thenius, *בְּכִלְכִּלָּהּ הַבַּיִת* in all probability refers not to the temple-hall, but to the pillar-hall of the palace, the surrounding wall of which was of the same nature as the wall of the great, *i.e.* the other or hinder, court.¹

Vers. 13–51. THE METALLIC VESSELS OF THE TEMPLE (compare 2 Chron. ii. 13, 14, and iii. 15–v. 1).—Vers. 13, 14. To

¹ The situation of this palace in Jerusalem is not defined. Ewald supposes (*Gesch.* iii. p. 317) that it was probably built on the southern continuation of the temple-mountain, commonly called *Ophel*, *i.e.* Hill. But “nothing more is needed to convince us that it cannot have stood upon Ophel, than a single glance at any geographical outline of Ophel on one of the best of the modern maps, and a recollection of the fact that, according to Neh. iii. 26, 31, it was upon Ophel, where the king’s palace is said to have stood, that the temple-socagers and shopkeepers had their places of abode after the captivity” (Thenius). The view held by earlier travellers and pilgrims to Zion, and defended by Berggren (p. 109 sqq.), namely, that the ancient Solomonian and Asmonæan palaces stood upon Moriah on the western side of the temple, is equally untenable. For the *xystus*, above which, according to Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* ii. 16, 3, the Asmonæan palace stood, was connected with the temple by a bridge, and therefore did not stand upon Moriah, but upon Zion or the *ἄνω πόλις*, since this bridge, according to Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* vi. 6, 2, connected the temple with the upper city. Moreover, it clearly follows from the passages of Josephus already noticed (p. 84 sq.), in which he refers to the substructures of the temple area, that the temple occupied the whole of Moriah towards the west, and extended as far as the valley of the Tyropæon, and consequently there was no room for a palace on that side. When Josephus affirms, therefore (*Ant.* viii. 5, 2), that Solomon’s palace stood opposite to the temple (*ἀντικρὺς ἔχον τὸν ναόν*), it can only have been built on the north-east side of Zion, as most of the modern writers assume (see W. Krafft,

make these vessels king Hiram had sent to Solomon, at his request (2 Chron. ii. 6), a workman named *Hiram* of Tyre. Ver. 13 contains a supplementary remark, in which *הַיָּסֵלֶה* must be rendered in the pluperfect (compare the remarks on Gen. ii. 19). King Solomon had sent and fetched *Hiram* from Tyre. This artisan bore the same name as the king, *הִירָם* or *הִירָמוֹ* (ver. 40), in 2 Chron. ii. 13 *הִירָם* (*Huram*), with the epithet *אָבִי*, i.e. my father, *אָב* being a title of honour equivalent to master or counsellor, as in Gen. xlv. 8. He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was *אִישׁ צִיֵּר*, i.e. a Tyrian by birth. According to 2 Chron. ii. 13, his mother was "of the daughters of Dan," i.e. of the tribe of Dan. Both statements may easily be united thus: she was a Danite by birth, and married into the tribe of Naphtali. When her husband died, she was married again as the widow of a Naphtalite, and became the wife of a Tyrian, to whom she bore a son, *Hiram*. This explanation is also adopted by Bertheau (on the Chronicles); and the conjecture of Lundius, Thenius, and others, that the mother was an Israelitish widow of the city of Dan in the tribe of Naphtali, which was quite close to Tyre, is less in harmony with the expression "of the daughters of Dan." *הָאִישׁ הַצִּיֵּר*, "a brass-worker," refers to *הוא* (he), i.e. *Hiram*, and not to his father (Thenius). The skill of Hiram is described in almost the same terms as that of Bezaleel in Ex. xxxi. 3 sqq., with this exception, that Bezaleel's skill is attributed to his being filled with the Spirit of God, i.e. is described rather as a supernatural gift, whereas in the case of Hiram the more indefinite expression, "he was filled with wisdom, etc.," is used, representing it rather as a natural endowment. In the account given here, Hiram is merely described as a worker in brass, because he is only mentioned at the commencement of the section which treats of the preparation of the brazen vessels of the temple. According to 2 Chron. ii. 14, he was able to work in gold, silver, brass, iron, stone, wood, purple, etc. There is nothing improbable in this extension of his skill to wood and to

Topographie Jerus. p. 114 sqq., and *Berggr.* p. 110). This is sustained not only by the probability that the Asmonæans would hardly build their palace anywhere else than on the spot where the palace of the kings of Judah built by Solomon stood, but also by the account of the elevation of Joash to the throne in 2 Kings xi. and 2 Chron. xxiii., from which it is perfectly obvious that the royal palace stood upon Zion opposite to the temple.

the art of weaving. Bezaleel also combined in himself all these talents. Of course Hiram was merely a foreman or leader of these different branches of art; and he certainly did not come alone, but brought several assistants with him, who carried out the different works under his superintendence.—The enumeration of them commences with the pillars of the temple-hall.

Vers. 15-22. *The brazen pillars of the porch* (compare 2 Chron. iii. 15-17).—He formed the two brazen pillars, which were erected, according to 2 Chron. iii. 15, “before the (temple) house, i.e. in front of the hall of the temple. One was eighteen cubits high, and a thread of twelve cubits surmounted (spanned) the other pillar.” The statement of the height of the one pillar and that of the circumference of the other is to be understood as an abbreviated expression, signifying that the height and thickness mentioned applied to the one as well as to the other, or that they were alike in height and circumference. According to the Chronicles, they were thirty-five cubits long; which many expositors understand as signifying that the length of the two together was thirty-five cubits, so that each one was only $17\frac{1}{2}$ cubits long, for which the full number 18 is substituted in our text. But this mode of reconciling the discrepancy is very improbable, and is hardly in harmony with the words of the Chronicles. The number 35 evidently arose from confounding the numeral letters $\eta = 18$ with $\aleph = 35$. The correctness of the number 18 is confirmed by 2 Kings xxv. 17 and Jer. lii. 21. The pillars were hollow, the brass being four finger-breadths in thickness (Jer. lii. 21); and they were cast in the Jordan valley (ver. 46).—Ver. 16. “And he made two capitals (כְּתִירֹת), to set them on the heads of the pillars, cast in brass, five cubits the height of the one and of the other capital.” If, on the other hand, in 2 Kings xxv. 17 the height of the capital is said to have been three cubits, this discrepancy cannot be explained on the supposition that the capitals had been reduced two cubits in the course of time; but the statement rests, like the parallel passage in Jer. lii. 22, upon an error of the text, i.e. upon the substitution of \aleph (3) for η (5).—Ver. 17. “Plait (i.e. ornaments of plait), plait-work and cords (twist, resembling) chain-work, were on the capitals, which were upon the heads of the pillars, seven on the one capital and seven on the other capital.” Consequently this decoration consisted of seven twists arranged as festoons, which were hung round the capitals of the

pillars.—Ver. 18. "And he made pomegranates, and indeed two rows round about the one twist, to cover the capitals which were upon the head of the pillars; and so he did with the other capital." In the Masoretic text the words **הַעֲמֻדִים** and **הַרְבָּנִים** are confused together, and we must read, as some of the Codd. do, in the first clause **אֶת־הַרְבָּנִים** for **אֶת־הַעֲמֻדִים**, and in the middle clause **עַל־רֹאשׁ הַרְבָּנִים** for **עַל־רֹאשׁ הַעֲמֻדִים**. This is not only required by the sense, but sustained by a comparison with ver. 19. The relation between the two rows of pomegranates and the plaited work is indeed not precisely defined; but it is generally and correctly assumed, that one row ran round the pillars below the plaited work and the other above, so that the plaited work, which was formed of seven cords plaited together in the form of festoons, was enclosed above and below by the rows of pomegranates. If we compare with this the further statements in vers. 41 and 42, 2 Chron. iii. 16 and iv. 12, 13, and Jer. lii. 23, **הַכִּתְרִים** is there more precisely designated **גִּלְיוֹת הַכִּתְרִים**, "bowls of the capitals," from which it is evident that the lower portion of the capitals, to which the braided work was fastened, was rounded in the form of a pitcher or caldron. The number of the pomegranates on the two festoons is given at 400, so that there were 200 on each capital, and consequently each row contained 100 (2 Chron. iii. 16); and according to Jer. (*l.c.*) there were 96 **רִיחִים**, "windwards," and in all 100 on the braided work round about. **רִיחִים**, "windwards," can hardly be taken in any other sense than this: in the direction of the wind, *i.e.* facing the four quarters of the heavens. This meaning is indisputably sustained by the use of the word **רִיחַ**, to denote the quarters of the heavens, in statements of the aspect of buildings (Ezek. xlii. 16–18), whereas there is no foundation whatever for such meanings as "airwards = uncovered" (Böttcher, Thenius), or hanging freely (Ewald).¹—In vers. 19 and 20 a second decoration of the capitals of the pillars

¹ It is hardly necessary to observe, that the expression **שָׁאַף רִיחַ**, to gasp for air, in Jer. ii. 24, xiv. 6, does not warrant our giving to **רִיחִים** the meaning open or uncovered, as Böttcher supposes. But when Thenius follows Böttcher (*Proben*, p. 335) in adducing in support of this the fact "that the tangent, which is drawn to any circle divided into a hundred parts, covers exactly four of these parts," the fact rests upon a simple error, inasmuch as any drawing will show that a tangent only touches one point of a circle divided into a hundred parts. And the remark of Böttcher, "If you describe on the outside of a circle of twelve cubits in circumference a hundred small circles of twelve-hundredths of a cubit in diameter, a tangent drawn thereupon will

is mentioned, from which we may see that the rounding with the chain-like plaited work and the pomegranates enclosing it did not cover the capital to the very top, but only the lower portion of it. The decoration of the upper part is described in ver. 19: "And capitals, which were upon the top of the pillars, were (or, Hiram made) lily-work after the manner of the hall, four cubits." The lily-work occupied, according to ver. 20, the upper portion of the capitals, which is here called כִּתְרֹת, as a crown set upon the lower portion. It was lily-work, *i.e.* sculpture in the form of flowering lilies. The words בְּאֵלֶיךָ אֲרָבַע אַמּוֹת are obscure. According to Böttcher and Thenius, בְּאֵלֶיךָ is intended to indicate the position of the pillars within the hall, so that their capitals sustained the lintel of the doorway. But even if בְּאֵלֶיךָ were rendered, within the hall, as it is by Böttcher, it is impossible to see how this meaning could be obtained from the words "capitals upon the head of the pillars lily-work within the hall." In that case we must at least have "the pillars within the hall;" and בְּאֵלֶיךָ would be connected with הָעֲמֻדִים, instead of being separated from it by מִעֲשֵׂה שֹׁשָׁן. Even if we were to introduce a stop after שֹׁשָׁן and take בְּאֵלֶיךָ by itself, the expression "in (or at) the hall" would not in itself indicate the position of the pillars in the doorway, to say nothing of the fact that it is only in ver. 21 that anything is said concerning the position of the pillars. Again, the measurement "four cubits" cannot be understood, as it is by Thenius, as denoting the diameter of the capitals of the pillars; it must rather indicate the measure of the lily-work, that is to say, it affirms that there were four cubits of lily-work on the capitals, which were five cubits high, —in other words, the lily-work covered the four upper cubits of the capitals; from which it still further follows, that the plaited work which formed the decoration of the lower portion of the capitals was only one cubit broad or high. Consequently בְּאֵלֶיךָ cannot be understood in any other sense than "in the manner of or according to the hall," and can only express the thought, that there was lily-work on the capitals of the pillars as there was on the hall. For the vindication of this use of בְּ

cover to the eye exactly four small circles, although mathematically it touches only one of them in one point," is not correct according to any measurement. For if the tangent touches one of these smaller circles with mathematical exactness, to the eye there will be covered either three or five half circles, or even seven, but never four.

see *Ges. Lex.* by Dietrich, s.v. ג.¹ There is no valid objection to the inference to which this leads, namely, that on the frontispiece of the temple-hall there was a decoration of lily-work. For since the construction of the hall is not more minutely described, we cannot expect a description of its decorations.—In ver. 20 a more precise account is given of the position in which the crowns consisting of lily-work were placed on the capitals of the columns, so that this verse is to be regarded as an explanation of ver. 19: namely, capitals upon the pillars (did he make) also above near the belly, which was on the other side of the plait-work." הַבֶּטֶן, the belly, i.e. the belly-shaped rounding, can only be the rounding of the lower portion of the capitals, which is called גִּלְגָּל in vers. 41, 42. Hence לְעֵבֶר הַשִּׁבְכָה (*Keri*), "on the other side of the plaited work," can only mean behind or under the plait, since we cannot suppose that there was a belly-shaped rounding above the caldron-shaped rounding which was covered with plaited work, and between this and the lily-work. The belly-shaped rounding, above or upon which the plaited work lay round about, might, when looked at from without, be described as being on the other side of it, i.e. behind it. In the second half of the verse: "and the pomegranates two hundred in rows round about on the second capital," the number of the pomegranates placed upon the capitals, which was omitted in ver. 18, is introduced in a supplementary form.²—Ver. 21. "And

¹ This is the way in which the earlier translators appear to have understood it: e.g., LXX. ἵππον κρίνον κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τεσσάρων πηχῶν ("lily-work according to the hall four cubits"); Vulg. *Capitella . . . quasi opere lilii fabricata erant in porticu quatuor cubitorum*; Chald. עֹבֵר שִׁבְכָה לְקִים בְּאֵלְמָא אַרְבַּע אַמָּן (*opus liliaceum collectum in porticu quatuor cubitorum*); Syr. *opus liliaceum idem fecit* (ܒܐܠܡܐ ܕܥܡܢ) in porticu quatuor cubitis. These readings appear to be based upon the view supported by Rashi (בְּאֵלְמָא): lily-work as it was in the hall.

² Hermann Weiss (*Kostümkunde*, i. p. 367) agrees in the main with the idea worked out in the text; but he assumes, on the ground of monumental views, that the decoration was of a much simpler kind, and one by no means out of harmony with the well-known monumental remains of the East. In his opinion, the pillars consisted of "a shaft nineteen cubits in height, surmounted at the top, exactly after the fashion of the ornamentation of the Egyptian pillars, with seven bands decorated like plaited work, which unitedly covered a cubit, in addition to which there was the lily-work of five cubits in height, i.e. a slender capital rising up in the form of the calyx of a lily, ornamented with pomegranates." Our reasons for dissenting from this opinion are given in the exposition of the different verses.

he set up the pillars at the hall of the Holy Place, and set up the right pillar, and called its name *Jachin*, and . . . the left . . . *Boaz*." Instead of לְאַמֵּן הַיְחִיָּל we have in 2 Chron. iii. 15 לְפָנֵי הַבַּיִת, and in ver. 17 עַל־פְּנֵי הַיְחִיָּל, "before the house," "before the Holy Place." This unquestionably implies that the two brazen pillars stood unconnected in front of the hall, on the right and left sides of it, and not within the hall as supporters of the roof. Nevertheless many have decided in favour of the latter view. But of the four arguments used by Thenius in proof that this was the position of the pillars, there is no force whatever in the first, which is founded upon Amos ix. 1, unless we assume, as Merz and others do, that the words of the prophet, "Smite the capital, that the thresholds may shake, and break them (the capitals of the pillars), that they may fall upon the head of all," refer to the temple at Jerusalem, and not, as Thenius and others suppose, to the temple erected at Bethel for the calf-worship. For even if the temple at Bethel had really had a portal supported by pillars, it would by no means follow that the pillars Jachin and Boaz in Solomon's temple supported the roof of the hall, as it is nowhere stated that the temple of Jeroboam at Bethel was an exact copy of that of Solomon. And even with the only correct interpretation, in which the words of Amos are made to refer to the temple at Jerusalem, the argument founded upon them in support of the position of the pillars as bearers of the hall rests upon the false idea, that the כִּפּוֹת, which are shaken by the smiting of the capital, are the beams lying upon the top of the pillars, or the *superliminaria* of the hall. It is impossible to prove that כִּפּוֹ has any such meaning. The beam over the entrance, or upon the door-posts, is called כִּשְׁקוֹף in Ex. xii. 7, 22, 23, whereas כִּפּוֹ denotes the threshold, i.e. the lower part of the framework of the door, as is evident from Judg. xix. 27. The words of the prophet are not to be interpreted architecturally, but to be taken in a rhetorical sense; "so that by the blow, which strikes the capital, and causes the thresholds to tremble, such a blow is intended as shakes the temple in all its joints" (Baur on Amos ix. 1). "הַכִּפּוֹתוֹר, a kind of ornament at the top of the pillars, and הַכִּפּוֹת, the thresholds, are opposed to one another, to express the thought that the building is to be shaken and destroyed *a summo usque ad imum, a capite ad calcem*" (Hengstenberg, *Christol.* i. p. 366 transl.). The other arguments derived from

Ezek xl 48 and 49, and from Josephus, *Ant.* viii. 3, 4, prove nothing at all. From the words of Josephus, *τούτων τῶν κιονῶν τὸν μὲν ἕτερον κατὰ τὴν δεξιὰν ἕστησε τοῦ προπύλαιου παραστάδα . . . τὸν δὲ ἕτερον, κ.τ.λ.*, it would only follow "that the pillars (according to the view of Josephus) must have stood in the doorway," if it were the case that *παραστάς* had no other meaning than *doorpost*, and *προπύλαιον* could be understood as referring to the temple-hall generally. But this is conclusively disproved by the fact that Josephus always calls the temple-hall *πρόναον* (i.e., and viii. 3, 2 and 3), so that *προπύλαιον* can only denote the fore-court, and *παραστάς* a pillar standing by itself. Consequently Josephus regarded the pillars Jachin and Boaz as *propylaea* erected in front of the hall. We must therefore adhere to the view expressed by Bähr (*d. Tempel*, p. 35 sqq.), that these pillars did not support the roof of the temple-hall, but were set up in front of the hall on either side of the entrance. In addition to the words of the text, this conclusion is sustained (1) by the circumstance that the two pillars are not mentioned in connection with the building of the temple and the hall, but are referred to for the first time here in the enumeration of the sacred vessels of the court that were made of brass. "If the pillars had formed an essential part of the construction and had been supporters of the hall, they would certainly have been mentioned in the description of the building, and not have been placed among the articles of furniture" (Schnaase); and moreover they would not have been made of metal like the rest of the vessels, but would have been constructed of the same building materials as the hall and the house, namely, of stone or wood (Bähr). And to this we may add (2) the monumental character of the pillars, which is evident from the names given to them. No architectural portion of the building received a special name.¹ *Jachin* (יָכִין): "he establishes," *stabiliet templum* (Simonis *Onom.* p. 430); and *Boaz* (בּוֹאֵז), *ex יָי בֹּא in illo, sc. Domino, robur* (Sim. p. 460). Kimchi has correctly interpreted the first name thus: "Let this temple

¹ Stieglitz (*Gesch. der Baukunst*, p. 127) aptly observes in relation to this: "The architect cannot subscribe to Meyer's view (that the pillars were supporters of the hall), since it was only through their independent position that the pillars received the solemn character intended to be given to them, and by their dignity subverted the end designed, of exalting the whole building and calling attention to the real purpose of the whole."

stand for ever;" and the second, "Solomon desired that God would give it strength and endurance." The pillars were symbols of the stability and strength, which not only the temple as an outward building, but the kingdom of God in Israel as embodied in the temple, received from the Lord, who had chosen the temple to be His dwelling-place in the midst of His people.¹—In ver. 22 it is stated again that there was lily-work upon the head of the pillars,—a repetition which may be explained from the significance of this emblem of the capitals of the pillars; and then the words, "So was the work of the capitals finished," bring the account of this ornament of the temple to a close.

Vers. 23-26. *The brazen sea* (cf. 2 Chron. iv. 2-5).—"He made the molten sea—a water-basin called יָם (mare) on account of its size—ten cubits from one upper rim to the other," i.e. in diameter measured from the upper rim to the one opposite to it, "rounded all round, and five cubits its (external) height, and a line of thirty cubits encircled it round about," i.e. it was thirty cubits in circumference. The *Chethib* קַיִם is to be read קָיִם here and in Zech. i. 16 and Jer. xxxi. 39, for which the *Keri* has קֵי in all these passages. קָיִם or קֵי means a line for measuring, which is expressed in ver. 15 by מִדָּה. The relation of the diameter to the circumference is expressed in whole numbers which come very near to the mathematical proportions. The more exact proportions would be as 7 to 22, or 113 to 355.—Ver. 24. And colocynths (gourds) ran round it under its brim, ten to the cubit, surrounding the sea in two rows; the colocynths "cast in its casting," i.e. cast at the same time as the vessel itself. Instead of פִּקְעִיִּים, gourds (see at ch. vi. 18), we find דִּמְתֵּי בָקָרִים, figures of oxen, in the corresponding text of the Chronicles, and in the last clause merely הַבָּקָר, an evident error of the pen, בָּקָרִים being substituted by mistake for פִּקְעִיִּים, and afterwards interpreted דִּמְתֵּי בָקָרִים. The assumption by which the early expositors removed the discrepancy, namely, that they were casts of bullocks' heads, is not to be thought of, for the simple reason that בָּקָרִים signifies oxen and not the *heads* of oxen. How far apart the two rows of gourd-like ornaments were, it is impossible

¹ There is no necessity to refute the fanciful notion of Ewald, that these pillars, "when they were erected and consecrated, were certainly named after men who were held in estimation at that time, probably after the younger sons of Solomon," and that of Thenius, that יָכֵן בָּנֵן, "He (the Lord) establishes with strength," was engraved upon them as an inscription.

to decide. Their size may be estimated, from the fact that there were ten within the space of a cubit, at a little over two inches in diameter.—Ver. 25. This vessel stood (rested) upon twelve brazen oxen, three turning to the north, three to the west, three to the south, and three to the east, “and the sea above upon them, and all their backs (turned) inwards;” *i.e.* they were so placed that three of their heads were directed towards each quarter of the heavens. The size of the oxen is not given; but we must assume that it was in proportion to the size and height of the sea, and therefore about five cubits in height up to the back. These figures stood, no doubt, upon a metal plate, which gave them a fixed and immoveable position (see the engraving in my *bibl. Archäol.* Taf. iii. fig. 1).—Ver. 26. “And its thickness (*i.e.* the thickness of the metal) was a handbreadth” = four finger-breadths, as in the case of the brazen pillars (see at ver. 15), “and its upper rim like work of a goblet (or of a goblet-rim, *i.e.* bent outwards), lily-blossom,” *i.e.* ornamented with lily-flowers. It held 2000 baths; according to the Chronicles, 3000 baths. The latter statement has arisen from the confusion of 1 (3) with 2 (2); since, according to the calculation of Thenius, the capacity of the vessel, from the dimensions given, could not exceed 2000 baths. This vessel, which took the place of the laver in the tabernacle, was provided for the priests to wash themselves (2 Chron. iv. 6), that is to say, that a supply of water might be kept in readiness to enable the priests to wash their hands and feet when they approached the altar to officiate, or were about to enter the Holy Place (Ex. xxx. 18 sqq.). There were no doubt taps by which the water required for this purpose was drawn off from the sea.¹—The artistic form of the vessel corresponded to its sacred purpose. The rim of the basin, which rose upwards in the form of a lily, was intended to point to the holiness and loveliness of that life which issued from the sanctuary. The twelve oxen, on which it rested, pointed to the twelve tribes of Israel as a priestly nation, which cleansed itself

¹ For the different conjectures on this subject, see Lundius, *jud. Heiligtümer*, p. 356. Thenius supposes that there was also a provision for filling the vessel, since the height of it would have rendered it a work of great labour and time to fill it by hand, and that there was probably a pipe hidden behind the figures of the oxen, since, according to Aristæus, *histor. LXX. Interp.*, Oxon. 1692, p. 32 (also Eusebii *præp. evang.* ix. 38), there were openings concealed at the foot of the altar, out of which water was allowed to run at certain seasons for the requisite cleansing of the pavement of the court from

here in the persons of its priests, to appear clean and holy before the Lord. Just as the number twelve unquestionably suggests the allusion to the twelve tribes of the covenant nation, so, in the choice of oxen or bullocks as supporters of the basin, it is impossible to overlook the significance of this selection of the first and highest of the sacrificial animals to represent the priestly service, especially if we compare the position of the lions on Solomon's throne (ch. x. 20).

Vers. 27-39. THE BRAZEN STANDS AND THEIR BASINS.¹—He made ten stands of brass, each four cubits long, four cubits broad, and three cubits high. מַלְנוֹת, stands or stools (Luther), is the name given to these vessels from their purpose, viz. to serve as supports to the basins which were used for washing the flesh of the sacrifices. They were square chests cast in brass, of the dimensions given.—Vers. 28, 29. Their work (their construction) was the following: they had מְסָבִיחַ, lit. surroundings, i.e. panels or flat sides, and that between מְסָבִיחַ, commissuræ, i.e. frames or borders, which enclosed the sides, and were connected together at the angles; and upon the panels within the borders (there were figures of) lions, oxen, and cherubim. The statement in Josephus, that each centre was divided into three compartments, has nothing to support it in the biblical text, nor is it at all probable in itself, inasmuch as a division of this kind would have rendered the figures placed upon them insignificantly small. "And upon the borders was a base above." בָּזִיז is a noun, and has been rendered correctly by the Chaldee בְּנִיתָא, basis. The meaning is, above, over the borders, there was a pedestal for the basin upon the chest, which is more fully described in ver. 31. To take בָּזִיז as an adverb does not give a suitable sense. For if we adopt the rendering, and upon the corner borders (or ledges) likewise above (De Wette and Ewald),—i.e. there were also figures of lions, oxen, and cherubim upon the corner borders, the blood of the sacrifices; and there is still a fountain just in the neighbourhood of the spot on which, according to ver. 39, the brazen sea must have stood (see Schultz's plan); and in the time of the Crusaders there was a large basin, covered by a dome supported by columns (see Robinson, *Pal.* i. 446). But even if the later temple was supplied with the water required by means of artificial water-pipes, the Solomonian origin of these arrangements or designs is by no means raised even to the rank of probability.

¹ The description which follows will be more easily understood by comparing with it the sketch given in my *biblische Archäologie*, Taf. iii. fig. 4.

—it is impossible to tell what the meaning of ^{לְפָנֵי} can be, to say nothing of the fact that on the corner borders there could hardly be room for such figures as these. This last argument also tells against the rendering adopted by Thenius: “and upon the corner borders, above as well as below the lions and oxen, (there were) wreaths;” in which, moreover, it is impossible to attach any supportable meaning to the ^{לְפָנֵי}. When, on the other hand, Thenius objects to our view that the pedestal in question is spoken of for the first time in ver. 31, and that the expression “above the corner borders (ledges)” would be extremely unsuitable, since the pedestal in question was above the whole stand; the former remark is not quite correct, for ver. 31 merely contains a more minute description of the character of the pedestal, and the latter is answered by the fact that the pedestal derived its strength from the corner borders or ledges. “And below the lions and oxen were wreaths, pendant work” ^{לְפָנֵי}, here and at ver. 36, is to be explained from ^{לְפָנֵי} in Prov. i. 9 and iv. 9, and signifies twists or wreaths. ^{מְשֻׁלָּה מִיָּד} is not “work of sinking,” i.e. sunken work (Thenius), which never can be the meaning of ^{מִיָּד}, but pendant work, festoons, by which, however, we cannot understand festoons hanging *freely*, or floating in the air.—Ver. 30. “Every stool had four brazen wheels and brazen axles, and the four feet thereof had shoulder-pieces; below the basin were the shoulder-pieces cast, beyond each one (were) wreaths.” The meaning is that the square chests stood upon axles with wheels of brass, after the style of ordinary carriage wheels (ver. 33), so that they could be driven or easily moved from one place to another; and that they did not rest directly upon the axles, but stood upon four feet, which were fastened upon the axles. This raised the chest above the rim of the wheels, so that not only were the sides of the chest which were ornamented with figures left uncovered, but, according to ver. 32, the wheels stood below the panels, and not, as in ordinary carriages, at the side of the chest. With regard to the connection between the axles and the wheels, Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 972) and Thenius suppose that the axles were fastened to the wheels, as in the Roman *plaustra* and at the present day in Italy, so as to turn with them; and Thenius argues in support of this, that ^{לְפָנֵי} is to be connected not only with what immediately precedes, but also with ^{מִיָּד}. But this latter is unfounded; and the idea is altogether irreconcilable with the fact that the wheels had naves (^{חֲסִי}),

ver. 33), from which we must infer that they revolved upon the axles. The words *וְאִרְבָּעָה פַּעֲמֹתָיו בְּתַחַת לָהֶם* are ambiguous. They may either be rendered, "and its four feet had shoulder-pieces," or, as Thenius supposes, "and its four feet served as shoulder-pieces." *פַּעֲמֹת* means stepping feet, feet bent out as if for stepping (Ex. xxv. 12). The suffix attached to *פַּעֲמֹתָיו* refers to *מְכוֹנָה*, the masculine being often used indefinitely instead of the feminine, as in *לָהֶם* in ver. 28. Thenius compares these feet to the *ἀμαξόποδες* of the Greeks, and imagines that they were divided below, like fork-shaped upright contrivances, in which, as in forks, the wheels turned with the axles, so that the axle-peg, which projected outwards, had a special apparatus, instead of the usual pin, in the form of a stirrup-like and on the lower side hand-shaped holder (*יד*), which was fastened to the lower rim of the *מְכוֹנָה*, and descended perpendicularly so as to cover the foot, and the general arrangement of the wheels themselves received greater strength in consequence. These feet, which were divided in the shape of forks, are supposed to be called *בְּתַחַת* (shoulders), because they were not attached underneath at the edge of the stand, but being cast with the corner rims passed down in the inner angles, so that their uppermost portion was *under the basin*, and the lowest portion was under the stand, which we are to picture to ourselves as without a bottom, and projecting as a split foot, held the wheel, and so formed its shoulder-pieces. But we cannot regard this representation as either in accordance with the text, or as really correct. Even if *בְּתַחַת לָהֶם* could in any case be grammatically rendered, "they served them (the wheels and axles) as shoulders," although it would be a very questionable course to take *לָהֶם* in a different sense here from that which it bears in the perfectly similar construction in ver. 28, the feet which carried the stand could not possibly be called the shoulders of the wheels and their axles, since they did not carry the wheels, but the *מְכוֹנָה*. Moreover, this idea is irreconcilable with the following words: "below the basin were the shoulder-pieces cast." If, for example, as Thenius assumes, the *mechonah* had a cover which was arched like a dome, and had a neck in the centre into which the basin was inserted by its lower rim, the shoulder-pieces, supposing that they were cast upon the inner borders of the chest, would not be *below the basin*, but simply below the corners of the lid of the chest, so that they would stand in no direct

relation whatever to the basin. We must therefore give the preference to the rendering, which is grammatically the most natural one, "and its feet had shoulder-pieces," and understand the words as signifying that from the feet, which descended of course from the four corner borders of the chest down to the axles, there ascended shoulder-pieces, which ran along the outside of the chest and reached to the lower part of the basin which was upon the lid of the chest, and as shoulders either supported or helped to support it. According to ver. 34, these shoulder-pieces were so cast upon the four corners of the chest, that they sprang out of it as it were. מַעֲבָרֵי אֵישׁ לְאִוֹת, opposite to each one were wreaths. Where these festoons were attached, the various senses in which מַעֲבָרֵי is used prevent our deciding with certainty. At any rate, we must reject the alteration proposed by Thenius, of לְאִוֹת into לְאַחַת, for the simple reason that לְאִישׁ לְאַחַת in the sense of "one to the other" would not be Hebraic.—In ver. 31 we have a description of the upper portion of the *mechonah*, which formed the pedestal for the basin, and therewith an explanation of מִתְּחִילָה לְבֵינִי. "And the mouth of it (the basin) was within the crown and upwards with a cubit, and the mouth of it (the crown) was rounded, stand-work, a cubit and a half (wide), and on its mouth also there was engraved work, and its panels were square, not round." To understand this verse, we must observe that, according to ver. 35, the *mechonah* chest was provided at the top with a dome-shaped covering, in the centre of which there was an elevation resembling the capital of a pillar (הַכֶּתֶרֶת, the crown), supporting the basin, which was inserted into it by its lower rim. The suffix in מִוֶּמֶה (its mouth) is supposed by Thenius to refer to the *mechonah* chest, and he questions the allusion to the basin, on the ground that this was so flat that a *mouth*-like opening could not possibly be spoken of, and the basins were never within the *mechonah*. But however correct these two remarks may be in themselves, they by no means demonstrate the necessity of taking מִוֶּמֶה as referring to the *mechonah* chest. For מֶה (the mouth) is not necessarily to be understood as denoting a mouth-like opening to the basin; but just as מִן רֹאשׁ in Ex. xxviii. 32 signifies the opening of the clothes for the head, i.e. for putting the head through when putting on the clothes, so may מִוֶּמֶה (its mouth) be the opening or mouth for the basin, i.e. the opening into which the basin fitted and was emptied, the water in the

basin being let off into the *mechonah* chest through the head-shaped neck by means of a tap or plug. The mouth was really the lower or contracted portion of the shell-shaped basin, which was about a cubit in height within the neck and upwards, that is to say, in all, inasmuch as it went partly into the neck and rose in part above it. The פִּיָּה (the mouth thereof) which follows is the (upper) opening of the crown-like neck of the lid of the *mechonah*. This was rounded, מְעֻשָּׂה־כֶּן, stand-work, i.e., according to De Wette's correct paraphrase, formed after the style of the foot of a pillar, a cubit and a half in diameter. "And also upon the mouth of it (the *mechonah*) was carved work." The מַלְאָה (also) refers to the fact that the sides of the *mechonah* were already ornamented with carving. מְסֻבֵּי־הָאֵלֶּים, the panels of the crown-like neck (כְּתֹרֶת) and its mouth (פִּיָּה) were square, like the panels of the sides of the *mechonah* chest. The fact that panels are spoken of in connection with this neck, may be explained on the assumption that with its height of one cubit and its circumference of almost five cubits (which follows from its having a diameter of a cubit and a half) it had stronger borders of brass to strengthen its bearing power, while between them it consisted of thinner plates, which are called fillings or panels.—In vers. 32, 33, the wheels are more minutely described. Every stool had four wheels under the panels, i.e. not against the sides of the chest, but under them, and יָדוֹת, hands or holders of the wheels, i.e. special contrivances for fastening the wheels to the axles, probably larger and more artistically worked than the linch-pins of ordinary carriages. These יָדוֹת were only required when the wheels turned upon the axles, and not when they were fastened to them. The height of the wheel was a cubit and a half, i.e. not half the height, but the whole. For with a half height of a cubit and a half the wheels would have been three cubits in diameter; and as the chest was only four cubits long, the hinder wheels and front wheels would almost have touched one another. The work (construction) of the wheels resembled that of (ordinary) carriage wheels; but everything about them (holders, felloes, spokes, and naves) was cast in brass.—In ver. 34 the description passes to the upper portion of the *mechonah*. "And he made four shoulder-pieces at the four corners of one (i.e. of every) stand; out of the stand were its shoulder-pieces." כְּתֻפּוֹת are the shoulder-pieces already mentioned in ver. 30, which were attached to the feet below, or

which terminated in feet. They were fastened to the corners in such a way that they seemed to come out of them; and they rose above the corners with a slight inclination (curve) towards the middle of the neck or capital, till they came under the outer rim of the basin which rested upon the capital of the lid of the chest, so as to support the basin, which turned considerably outwards at the top.—Ver. 35. “And on the upper part of the stand (the *mechonah* chest) half a cubit high was rounded all round, and on the upper part were its holders, and its panels out of it. ראש המכונה is the upper portion of the square chest. This was not flat, but rounded, i.e. arched, so that the arching rose half a cubit high above the height of the sides. This arched covering (or lid) had ידות, holders, and panels, which were therefore upon the upper part of the מכונה. The holders we take to be strong broad borders of brass, which gave the lid the necessary firmness; and the fillings or panels are the thinner plates of brass between them. They were both נפצתה, “out of it,” out of the upper part of the *mechonah*, i.e. cast along with it. With regard to the decoration of it, ver. 36 states that “he cut out (engraved) upon the plates of its holders, and upon its panels, cherubim, lions, and palms, according to the empty space of every one, and wreaths all round.” We cannot determine anything further with regard to the distribution of these figures.—Vers. 37, 38. “Thus he made the ten stools of one kind of casting, measure, and form, and also ten brazen basins (בירות), each holding forty baths, and each basin four cubits.” In a round vessel this can only be understood of the diameter, not of the height or depth, as the basins were set upon (על) the stands. ביד אחד על המכונה is dependent upon יעש: he made ten basins, . . . one basin upon a stand for the ten stands, i.e. one basin for each stand. If then the basins were a cubit in diameter at the top, and therefore their size corresponded almost exactly to the length and breadth of the stand, whilst the crown-like neck, into which they were inserted, was only a cubit and a half in diameter (ver. 31), their shape must have resembled that of wide-spreading shells. And the form thus given to them required the shoulder-pieces described in vers. 30 and 34 as supports beneath the outer rim of the basins, to prevent their upsetting when the carriage was wheeled about.¹—Ver. 39. And he put

¹ The description which Ewald has given of these stands in his *Geschichte*, iii. pp. 311, 312, and still more elaborately in an article in the *Göttingen*

the stands five on the right side of the house and five on the left; and the (brazen) sea he put upon the right side eastwards, opposite to the south. The right side is the south side, and the left the north side. Consequently the stands were not placed on the right and left, *i.e.* on each side of the altar of burnt-offering, but on each side of the house, *i.e.* of the temple-hall; while the brazen sea stood farther forward between the hall and the altar, only more towards the south, *i.e.* to the south-east of the hall and the south-west of the altar of burnt-offering. The basins upon the stands were for washing (according to 2 Chron. iv. 6), namely, "the work of the burnt-offering," that is to say, for cleansing the flesh and fat, which were to be consumed upon the altar of burnt-offering. By means of the stands on wheels, they could not only easily bring the water required near to the priests who were engaged in preparing the sacrifices, but could also let down the dirty water into the chest of the stand by means of a special contrivance introduced for the purpose, and afterwards take it away. As the introduction of carriages for the basins arose from the necessities of the altar-service, so the preparation of ten such stands, and the size of the basins, was occasioned by the greater extension of the sacrificial worship, in which it often happened that a considerable number of sacrifices had to be made ready for the altar at the same time. The artistic work of these stands and their decoration with figures were intended to show that these vessels were set apart for the service of the sanctuary. The emblems are to some extent the same as those on the walls of the sanctuary, *viz.* cherubim, palms, and flowers, which had therefore naturally the same meaning here as they had there; the only difference being that they were executed there in gold, whereas here they were in brass, to correspond to the character of the court. Moreover, there were also figures of lions and oxen, pointing no doubt to the royal and priestly characters, which were combined,

Gelehrten Nachr. 1859, pp. 131-146, is not only obscure, but almost entirely erroneous, since he proposes in the most arbitrary way to make several alterations in the biblical text, on the assumption that the Solomonian stands were constructed just like the small bronze four-wheeled kettle-carriages (hardly a foot in size) which have been discovered in Mecklenburg, Steyermark, and other places of Europe. See on this subject G. C. F. Lisch, "über die ehernen Wagenbecken der Bronzezeit," in the *Jahrb. des Vereins f. Mecklenb. Geschichte*, ix. pp. 373, 374, where a sketch of a small carriage of this kind is given.

according to Ex. xix. 6, in the nation worshipping the Lord in this place.

Vers. 40–51. *Summary enumeration of the other vessels of the temple.*—In ver. 40 the brazen vessels of the court are given. In vers. 41–47 the several portions of the brazen pillars, the stands and basins, the brazen sea and the smaller vessels of brass, are mentioned once more, together with notices of the nature, casting, and quantity of the metal used for making them. And in vers. 48–50 we have the golden vessels of the Holy Place. This section agrees almost word for word with 2 Chron. iv. 11–v. 1, where, moreover, not only is the arrangement observed in the previous description of the temple-building a different one, but the making of the brazen altar of burnt-offering, of the golden candlesticks, and of the table of shew-bread, and the arrangement of the great court (2 Chron. iv. 7–9) are also described, to which there is no allusion whatever in the account before us; so that these notices in the Chronicles fill up an actual gap in the description of the building of the temple which is given here.—Ver. 40*a*. *The smaller brazen vessels.*—Hiram made the pots, shovels, and bowls. הַפִּירֹת is a slip of the pen for הַפִּירֹת, pots, as we may see by comparing it with ver. 45 and the parallel passages 2 Chron. iv. 11 and 2 Kings xxv. 14. The pots were used for carrying away the ashes; הַיָּעִים, the shovels, for clearing the ashes from the altar; הַפְּתִיקוֹת were the bowls used for catching the blood, when the sacrificial animals were slaughtered: compare Ex. xxvii. 3 and Num. iv. 14, where forks and fire-basins or coal-pans are also mentioned.—Ver. 40*b* introduces the recapitulation of all the vessels made by Hiram. בֵּית יְהוָה, in the house of the Lord (cf. Ewald, § 300, *b*); in 2 Chron. iv. 11 more clearly, בְּבֵית י'; we find it also in ver. 45, for which we have in 2 Chron. iv. 16 לְבֵית יְהוָה, for the house of Jehovah. The several objects enumerated in vers. 41–45 are accusatives governed by לַעֲשׂוֹת.—Vers. 41–44, the brazen pillars with the several portions of their capitals; see at vers. 15–22. The inappropriate expression עַל־פְּנֵי הָעֲמֻדִים (upon the face of the pillars) in ver. 42 is probably a mistake for עַל־שְׁנֵי הָעַ, "upon the two pillars," for it could not properly be said of the capitals that they were upon the surface of the pillars.—Ver. 43. The ten stands and their basins: see at vers. 27–37; ver. 44, the brazen sea: *vid.* vers. 23–26; lastly, ver. 45, the pots, etc., as at ver. 40. The *Chethib* הָאֵהָל is a

mistake for **הַאֲלֵה** (*Keri*).¹ **וְהִשֵּׁה כְּסָרֵט**, of polished brass—accusative of the material governed by **עָשָׂה**.—Ver. 46. “In the Jordan valley he cast them—in thickened earth between Succoth and Zarthan,” where the ground, according to Burckhardt, *Syr.* ii. p. 593, is marly throughout. **בְּמַעְיֵה הָאֲרָצָה**, “by thickening of the earth,” the forms being made in the ground by stamping together the clayey soil. *Succoth* was on the other side of the Jordan,—not, however, at the ford near Bethsean (Thenius), but on the south side of the Jabbok (see at Judg. viii. 5 and Gen. xxxiii. 17). *Zarthan* or *Zereda* was in the Jordan valley on this side, probably at *Kurn Sartabeh* (see at Judg. vii. 22 and Josh. iii. 16). The casting-place must have been on this side of the Jordan, as the (eastern) bank on the other side has scarcely any level ground at all. The circumstance that a place on the other side is mentioned in connection with one on this side, may be explained from the fact that the two places were obliquely opposite to one another, and in the valley on this side there was no large place in the neighbourhood above Zarthan which could be appropriately introduced to define the site of the casting-place.—Ver. 47. Solomon left all these vessels of excessive number unweighed. **וַיִּנָּח** does not mean he laid them down (= set them up : Movers), but he let them lie, *i.e.* unweighed, as the additional clause, “the weight of the brass was not ascertained,” clearly shows. This large quantity of brass, according to 1 Chron. xviii. 8, David had taken from the cities of Hadadezer, adding also the brass presented to him by Toi.—Vers. 48-50. *The golden vessels of the Holy Place* (cf. 2 Chron. iv. 19-22). The vessels enumerated here are divided, by the repetition of **וְהָיָה כֶּסֶד** in vers. 49 and 50, into two classes, which were made of fine gold; and to this a third class is added in ver. 50b which was made of gold of inferior purity. As **וְהָיָה כֶּסֶד** is governed in both instances by **וַיַּעַשׂ** as an accusative of the material, the **וְהָיָה** (gold) attached to the separate vessels must be taken as an adjective. “Solomon made all the vessels in the house of Jehovah (*i.e.* had them

¹ After **וַיִּנָּח הָאֲלֵה** the LXX. have the interpolation, *καὶ οἱ στήλοι τεσσαράκοντα καὶ ὀκτώ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τοῦ οἴκου Κυρίου*, which is proved to be apocryphal by the marvellous combination of the king's house and the house of God, though it is nevertheless regarded by Thenius as genuine, and as an interesting notice respecting certain pillars in the enclosure of the inner court of the temple, and in the king's palace!

made): the golden altar, and the golden table on which was the shew-bread, and the candlesticks . . . of costly gold (כֶּסֶד: see at ch. vi. 20). *The house of Jehovah* is indeed here, as in ver. 40, the temple with its courts, and not merely the Holy Place, or the temple-house in the stricter sense; but it by no means follows from this that כָּל-הַכֵּלִים, "*all the vessels*," includes both the brazen vessels already enumerated and also the golden vessels mentioned afterwards. A decisive objection to our taking the כָּל (all) as referring to those already enumerated as well as those which follow, is to be found in the circumstance that the sentence commencing with וַיֵּשׁ is only concluded with כָּנִי in ver. 49. It is evident from this that כָּל-הַכֵּלִים is particularized in the several vessels enumerated from מִזְבֵּחַ onwards. These vessels no doubt belonged to the Holy Place or temple-house only; though this is not involved in the expression "*the house of Jehovah*," but is apparent from the context, or from the fact that all the vessels of the court have already been enumerated in vers. 40-46, and were made of brass, whereas the *golden* vessels follow here. That these were intended for the Holy Place is assumed as well known from the analogy of the tabernacle. אֲשֶׁר בֵּית יְהוָה merely affirms that the vessels mentioned afterwards belonged to the house of God, and were not prepared for the palace of Solomon or any other earthly purpose. We cannot infer from the expression "*Solomon made*" that the golden vessels were not made by Hiram the artist, as the brazen ones were (Thenius). Solomon is simply named as the builder of the temple, and the introduction of his name was primarily occasioned by ver. 47. The "*golden altar*" is the altar of incense in the Holy Place, which is called golden because it was overlaid with gold-plate; for, according to ch. vi. 20, its sides were covered with cedar wood, after the analogy of the golden altar in the tabernacle (Ex. xxx. 1-5). "And the table, upon which the shew-bread, of gold." וְהַבִּלֵּב belongs to הַשֻּׁלְחָן, to which it stands in free subjection (*vid.* Ewald, § 287, k), signifying "*the golden table*." Instead of הַשֻּׁלְחָן we have הַשֻּׁלְחָנוֹת in 2 Chron. iv. 19 (the tables), because there it has already been stated in ver. 8 that ten tables were made, and put in the Holy Place. In our account that verse is omitted; and hence there is only a notice of *the* table upon which the loaves of shew-bread generally lay, just as in 2 Chron. xxix. 18, in which the chronicler does not contradict

himself, as Thenius fancies. The number ten, moreover, is required and proved to be correct in the case of the tables, by the occurrence of the same number in connection with the candlesticks. In no single passage of the Old Testament is it stated that there was only one table of shew-bread in the Holy Place of Solomon's temple.¹ The tables were certainly made of wood, like the Mosaic table of shew-bread, probably of cedar wood, and only overlaid with gold (see at Ex. xxv. 23-30). "And the candlesticks, five on the right and five on the left, before the back-room." These were also made in imitation of the Mosaic candlestick (see Ex. xxv. 31 sqq.), and were probably placed not near to the party wall in a straight line to the right and left of the door leading into the Most Holy Place, but along the two longer sides of the Holy Place; and the same with the tables, except that they stood nearer to the side walls with the candlesticks in front of them, so that the whole space might be lighted more brilliantly. The altar of burnt-offering, on the contrary, stood in front of and very near to the entrance into the Most Holy Place (see at ch. vi. 20).—In the following clause (vers. 49b and 50a) the ornaments of the candlesticks are mentioned first, and then the rest of the smaller golden vessels are enumerated. הַפְּרָחִים, the flower-work, with which the candlesticks were ornamented (see Ex. xxv. 33). The word is evidently used collectively here, so that the נְתִיבִים mentioned along with them in the book of Exodus (*l.c.*) are included. הַנֵּרוֹת, the lamps, which were placed upon the shaft and arms of the candlestick (Ex. xxv. 37). הַמְּלָקָחִים, the snuffers (Ex. xxv. 38). כַּסּוֹת, basins in Ex. xii. 22, here probably deep dishes (*Schalen*). מְזִמְרֹת, knives. מְזִמְרֹת, bowls (*Schalen*) or cans with spouts for the wine for the libations; according to 2 Chron. iv. 8, there were a hundred of these made. כַּסּוֹת, small flat vessels,

¹ Nothing can be learned from 2 Chron. xxix. 18 concerning the number of the vessels in the Holy Place. If we were to conclude from this passage that there were no more vessels in the Holy Place than are mentioned there, we should also have to assume, if we would not fall into a most unscientific inconsistency, that there was neither a candlestick nor a golden altar of incense in the Holy Place. The correct meaning of this passage may be gathered from the words of king Abiam in 2 Chron. xiii. 11: "We lay the shew-bread upon the pure table, and light the golden candlestick every evening;" from which it is obvious that here and there only the table and the candlestick are mentioned, because usually only one table had shew-bread upon it, and only one candlestick was lighted.

probably for carrying the incense to the altar. *nīḥāḥ*, extinguishers; see at Ex. xxv. 38.—Ver. 50b. The *nīḥāḥ* were also of gold, possibly of inferior quality. These were either the *hinges* of the doors, or more probably the sockets, in which the pegs of the doors turned. They were provided for the doors of the inner temple, viz. the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. We must supply *Vāv* before *לְנִיחָהֶם*.

All the vessels mentioned in vers. 48 and 49 belonged to the Holy Place of the temple, and were the same as those in the tabernacle; so that the remarks made in the Comm. on Ex. xxv. 30 and 39, and xxx. 1–10, as to their purpose and signification, apply to them as well. Only the number of the tables and candlesticks was ten times greater. If a multiplication of the number of these two vessels appeared appropriate on account of the increase in the size of the room, the number was fixed at ten, to express the idea of completeness by that number. No new vessel was made for the Most Holy Place, because the Mosaic ark of the covenant was placed therein (ch. viii. 4: compare the remarks on this at Ex. xxv. 10–22).—The account of the vessels of the temple is brought to a close in ver. 51: “So was ended all the work that king Solomon made in the house of the Lord; and Solomon brought all that was consecrated by his father, (namely) the silver and the gold (which were not wrought), and the vessels he placed in the treasuries of the house of Jehovah.” As so much gold and brass had already been expended upon the building, it might appear strange that Solomon should not have used up all the treasures collected by his father, but should still be able to bring a large portion of it into the treasuries of the temple. But according to 1 Chron. xxii. 14, 16, and xxix. 2 sqq., David had collected together an almost incalculable amount of gold, silver, and brass, and had also added his own private treasure and the freewill offerings of the leading men of the nation (1 Chron. xxix. 7–9). Solomon was also able to devote to the building of the temple a considerable portion of his own very large revenues (cf. ch. x. 14), so that a respectable remnant might still be left of the treasure of the sanctuary, which was not first established by David, but had been commenced by Samuel and Saul, and in which David’s generals, Joab and others, had deposited a portion of the gold and silver that they had taken as booty (1 Chron. xxvi. 20–28). For it is evident that not a little had found its

way into this treasure through the successful wars of David, from the fact that golden shields were taken from the generals of Hadadezer, and that these were consecrated to the Lord along with the silver, golden, and brazen vessels offered as gifts of homage by king Toi of Hamath, in addition to the gold and silver which David had consecrated from the defeated Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and Amalekites (2 Sam. viii. 7, 11, 12; 1 Chron. xviii. 7, 10, 11).¹

CHAP. VIII. DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

This solemn transaction consisted of three parts, and the chapter arranges itself in three sections accordingly: viz. (a) the conveyance of the ark and the tabernacle, together with its vessels, into the temple, with the words spoken by Solomon on the occasion (vers. 1-21); (b) Solomon's dedicatory prayer (vers. 22-53); (c) the blessing of the congregation, and the offering of sacrifice and observance of a feast (vers. 54-66).—The parallel account to this in 2 Chron. v. 2-vii. 10, in addition to certain minor alterations of words and constructions, intro-

¹ The amazing extent to which this booty may possibly have reached, may be inferred from the accounts we have concerning the quantity of the precious metals in Syria in the Macedonian age. In the *gaza regia* of Damascus, Alexander found 2600 talents of gold and 600 talents of uncoined silver (Curt. iii. 13, 16, cf. Arrian, ii. 11, 10). In the temple of Jupiter at Antioch there was a statue of this god of solid silver fifteen cubits high (Justin, xxxix. 2, 5, 6); and in the temple at Hierapolis there was also a golden statue (Lucian, *de Dea Syr.* § 31). According to Appian (*Parth.* 28, ed. Schweigh.), this temple was so full of wealth, that Crassus spent several days in weighing the vessels of silver and gold. And from the unanimous testimony of the ancients, the treasures of the palaces and temples of Asia in the earlier times were greater still. Of the many accounts which Bähr (*Symbolik*, i. p. 258 sqq.) and Movers (*Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 40 sqq.) have collected together on this subject, we will mention only a few here, the credibility of which cannot be disputed. According to Varro (in Plin. xxxiii. 15), Cyrus had taken 34,000 pounds of gold as booty after the conquest of Asia, beside the gold wrought into vessels and ornaments, and 500,000 talents of silver. In Susa, Alexander took 40,000, or, according to other accounts, 50,000, talents from the royal treasury; or, as it is still more definitely stated, 40,000 talents of uncoined gold and silver, and 9000 talents of coined dariks. Alexander had these brought to Ecbatana, where he accumulated 180,000 talents. Antigonus afterwards found in Susa 15,000 talents more in vessels and wrought gold and silver. In Persepolis, Alexander took 120,000 talents, and in Pasargada 6000 talents. For the proofs, see Movers, pp. 42, 43.

duced for the most part merely for the sake of elucidation, contains here and there, and more especially towards the end, a few deviations of greater extent, partly omissions and partly additions. But in other respects it agrees almost word for word with our account.

With regard to the time of the dedication, it is merely stated in ver. 2 that the heads of the nation assembled at Jerusalem to this feast in the seventh month. The year in which this took place is not given. But as the building of the temple was finished, according to ch. vi. 38, in the *eighth* month of the eleventh year of Solomon's reign, the dedication which followed in the *seventh* month cannot have taken place in the same year as the completion of the building. Ewald's opinion, that Solomon dedicated the building a month before it was finished, is not only extremely improbable in itself, but is directly at variance with ch. vii. 51. If we add to this, that according to ch. ix. 1-10 it was not till after the lapse of twenty years, during which he had built the two houses, the temple, and his palace, that the Lord appeared to Solomon at the dedication of the temple and promised to answer his prayer, we must decide in favour of the view held by Thenius, that the dedication of the temple did not take place till twenty years after the building of it was begun, or thirteen years after it was finished, and when Solomon had also completed the building of the palace, which occupied thirteen years, as the LXX. have indicated at the commencement of ch. viii. 1 by the interpolation of the words, καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς συνετέλεσε Σαλωμών τοῦ οἰκοδομήσαι τὸν οἶκον Κυρίου καὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ μετὰ εἴκοσι ἔτη.¹

Vers. 1-21. The FIRST ACT of the solemnities consisted (1) in the removal of the ark of the covenant into the Most Holy Place of the temple (vers. 1-11); and (2) in the words with which Solomon celebrated the entrance of the Lord into the new temple (vers. 12-21).—Vers. 1-11. *Removal of the ark of the covenant into the temple.*—This solemn transaction was founded entirely upon the solemnities with which the ark was conveyed in the time of David from the house of Obed-edom into the holy tent upon Zion (2 Sam vi. 12 sqq.; 1 Chron. xv.

¹ From the whole character of the Alexandrian version, there can be no doubt that these words have been transferred by the LXX. from ch. ix. 1, and have not dropped out of the Hebrew text, as Thenius supposes.

2 sqq.). Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' houses (נְשִׂיֵּי בְּיֵת הָאֲבוֹת, contracted from נְשִׂיֵּי בְּיֵת הָאֲבוֹת of the Israelites, as representatives of the whole congregation, to himself at Jerusalem, to bring the ark of the covenant out of the city of David, i.e. from Mount Zion (see the Comm. on 2 Sam. vi. 16, 17), into the temple which he had built upon Moriah. (On the use of the contracted form of the imperfect יִקְהַל after אַחֲרָי, see Ewald, § 233, b.)—Ver. 2. Accordingly "all the men of Israel (i.e. the heads of the tribes and families mentioned in ver. 1) assembled together to the king in the month Ethanim, i.e. the seventh month, at the feast." Gesenius explains the name הָאֶתָנִים (in 55 codd. הָאֵיתָנִים) as meaning "month of the flowing brooks," after אֵיתָן in Prov. xiii. 15; Böttcher, on the other hand, supposes it to denote the equinox. But apart from other grounds, the plural by no means favours this. Nor does the seventh month answer to the period between the middle of our September and the middle of October, as is supposed by Thenius, who founds upon this supposition the explanation already rejected by Böttcher, viz. "month of gifts;" but it corresponds to the period between the new moon of October and the new moon of November, during which the rainy season commences in Palestine (Rob. Pal. ii. p. 96 sqq.), so that this month may very well have received its name from the constant flowing of the brooks. The explanation, "that is the seventh month," is added, however (here as in ch. vi. 1, 38), not because the arrangement of the months was a different one before the captivity (Thenius), but because different names came into use for the months during the captivity. בָּחֳגֵי is construed with the article: "because the feast intended was one that was well known, and had already been kept for a long time (viz. the feast of tabernacles)." The article overthrows the explanation given by Thenius, who supposes that the reference is to the festivities connected with the dedication of the temple itself.—Vers. 3, 4. After the arrival of all the elders (i.e. of the representatives of the nation, more particularly described in ver. 1), the priests carried the ark and brought it up (sc. into the temple), with the tabernacle and all the holy vessels in it. The expression וַיַּעֲלוּ אֹתָם, which follows, introduces as a supplementary notice, according to the general diffuseness of the early Hebrew style of narrative, the more precise statement that the priests and Levites brought up these

sacred vessels. אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד is not the tent erected for the ark of the covenant upon Zion, which can be proved to have been never so designated, and which is expressly distinguished from the former in 2 Chron. i. 4 as compared with ver. 3, but is the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon in front of which Solomon had offered sacrifice (ch. iii. 4). The tabernacle with the vessels in it, to which, however, the ark of the covenant, that had long been separated from it, did not belong, was probably preserved as a sacred relic in the rooms above the Most Holy Place. The ark of the covenant was carried by priests on all solemn occasions, according to the spirit of the law, which enjoined, in Num. iii. 31 and iv. 5 sqq., that the ark of the covenant and the rest of the sacred vessels should be carried by the Levites, after the priests had carefully wrapped them up; and the Levites were prohibited from directly touching them, on pain of death. When, therefore, the ark of the covenant was carried in solemn procession, as in the case before us, probably uncovered, this could only be done by the priests, more especially as the Levites were not allowed to enter the Most Holy Place. Consequently, by the statement in ver. 3b, that the priests and Levites carried *them* (אֹתָם), viz. the objects mentioned before, we are to understand that the ark of the covenant was carried into the temple by the priests, and the tabernacle with its vessels by the Levites.¹—Ver. 5. "And king Solomon and the whole congregation, that had gathered round him, were with him before the ark sacrificing sheep and oxen in innumerable multitude." This took place while the ark of the covenant was carried up, no doubt when it was brought into the court of the temple, and was set down there for a time either within or in front of the hall. Then was this magnificent sacrifice "offered" there "in front of the ark" (לְפָנֵי הָאָרֶץ).—Ver. 6. After this sacrificing was ended, the priests carried the ark to its place, into the back-room of the house, into the Most Holy under the wings of the cherubim (already described in ch.

¹ Instead of כֹּהֲנִים in ver. 3, we have הִלָּלִים in 2 Chron. v. 4; and instead of הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלָּלִים in ver. 4, we have הַכֹּהֲנִים הִלָּלִים, "the Levitical priests." These variations are to be attributed to inexactness in expression. For it is obvious that Thenius is wrong in his notion that the chronicler mentioned the Levites instead of the priests, from the simple fact that he states in ver. 7 that "the priests carried the ark," etc., in exact agreement with our account.

vi. 23 sqq.). The latter statement is explained in ver. 7. "For the cherubim were spreading out wings towards the place of the ark, and so covered (lit. threw a shade) over the ark and over its poles from above." If the outspread wings of the great cherubic figures threw a shade not only over the ark of the covenant, but also over its poles, the ark was probably so placed that the poles ran from north to south, and not from east to west, as they are sketched in my *Archäologie*.—Ver. 8. "And the poles were long, and there were seen their heads (i.e. they were so long that their heads were seen) from the Holy Place before the hinder room; but on the outside (outside the Holy Place, say in the porch) they were not seen." יָאֲרָכֻ cannot be rendered: they had lengthened the poles, from which Kimchi and others have inferred that they had made new and longer carrying-poles, since the form of the tense in this connection cannot be the pluperfect, and in that case, moreover, the object would be indicated by אֵת as in ch. iii. 14; but הָאֲרָכִי is used intransitively, "to be long," lit. to show length, as in Ex. xx. 12, Deut. v. 16, etc. The remark to the effect that the poles were visible, indicates that the precept of the law in Ex. xxv. 15, according to which the poles were to be left in the ark, was observed in Solomon's temple also. Any one could convince himself of this, for the poles were there "to this day." The author of our books has retained this chronological allusion as he found it in his original sources; for when he composed his work, the temple was no longer standing. It is impossible, however, to ascertain from this statement how the heads of the poles could be seen in the Holy Place,—whether from the fact that they reached the curtain and formed elevations therein, if the poles ran from front to back; or whether, if, as is more probable, they ran from south to north, the front heads were to be seen, simply when the curtain was drawn back¹—Ver. 9. "There was nothing in the ark but the two tables of stone, which Moses had put there at Horeb, when Jehovah concluded the covenant with Israel." The intention of this remark is

¹ The proof which Thenius has endeavoured to give by means of a drawing of the correctness of the latter view, is founded upon untenable assumptions (see Böttcher, *Ehrentl.* ii. p. 69). It by no means follows from the expression עַל־פְּנֵי דְבָרִי that the heads of the poles were visible as far off as the door of the Holy Place, but simply that they could be seen in the Holy Place, though not outside.



also simply to show that the law, which enjoined that the ark should merely preserve the stone tables of the covenant (Ex. xxv. 16, xl. 20), had not been departed from in the lapse of time. *וְאֵשֶׁר* before *כִּי* is not a pronoun, but a conjunction: when, from the time that, as in Deut. xi. 6, etc. *כִּי* without *כִּי־הָיָה*, signifying the conclusion of a covenant, as in 1 Sam. xx. 16, xxii. 8, etc. *Horeb*, the general name for the place where the law was given, instead of the more definite name *Sinai*, as in Deuteronomy (see the Comm. on Ex. xix. 1, 2).¹—Vers. 10, 11. At the dedication of the tabernacle the glory of Jehovah in the cloud filled the sanctuary, so that Moses could not enter (Ex. xl. 34, 35); and so was it now. When the priests came out of the sanctuary, after putting the ark of the covenant in its place, the cloud filled the house of Jehovah, so that the priests could not stand to minister. The signification of this fact was the same on both occasions. The cloud, as the visible symbol of the gracious presence of God, filled the temple, as a sign that Jehovah the covenant-God had entered into it, and had chosen it as the scene of His gracious manifestation in Israel. By the inability of the priests to stand, we are not to understand that the cloud drove them away; for it was not till the priests had come out that it filled the temple. It simply means that they could not remain in the Holy Place to perform service, say to offer an incense-offering upon the altar to consecrate it, just as sacrifices were offered upon the altar of burnt-offering after the dedicatory prayer (vers. 62, 63).²

¹ The statement in Heb. ix. 4, to the effect that the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded were also to be found in the ark, which is at variance with this verse, and which the earlier commentators endeavoured to bring into harmony with it by forced methods of different kinds, simply rests upon an erroneous interpretation of *לְפָנֵי הָעֵדוּת* in Ex. xvi. 33, 34, and Num. xvii. 25, which had become traditional among the Jews; since this merely affirms that the objects mentioned had been deposited in front of the testimony, i.e. in front of the ark which contained the testimony, and not within it, as the Jews supposed.—Still less are De Wette and others warranted in deducing from this verse an argument against the existence of the Mosaic book of the law in the time of Solomon, inasmuch as, according to the precept in Deut. xxxi. 26, the book of the law was not to be kept in the ark, but by the side of it, or near it.

² Bertheau's opinion (on 2 Chron. v. 14), that the priests could not remain in the hall and in front of it on account of the cloud, namely, "the cloud of smoke, which, ascending from the sacrifices burned upon the altar of burnt-offering, concealed the glory of the Lord," is decidedly erroneous. For the

The glory of the Lord, which is like a consuming fire (Ex. xxiv. 17; Deut. iv. 24, ix. 3), before which unholy man cannot stand, manifested itself in the cloud. This marvellous manifestation of the glory of God took place only at the dedication; after that the cloud was only visible in the Most Holy Place on the great day of atonement, when the high priest entered it.—The Chronicles contain a long account at this place of the playing and singing of the Levites at these solemnities (*vid.* 2 Chron. v. 12-14).

Vers. 12-21. *Solomon extols this marvellous proof of the favour of the Lord.*—Ver. 12. Then spake Solomon, "Jehovah hath spoken to dwell in the darkness." "Solomon saw that the temple was filled with a cloud, and remembered that God had been pleased to appear in a cloud in the tent of Moses also. Hence he assuredly believed that God was in this cloud also, and that, as formerly He had filled the tabernacle, so He would now fill the temple and dwell therein" (Seb. Schmidt). אָמַר יְהוָה, which Thenius still renders incorrectly, "the Lord intends to dwell in the darkness," refers, as Rashi, C. a Lap., and others have seen, to the utterances of God in the Pentateuch concerning the manifestation of His gracious presence among His people, not merely to Lev. xvi. 2 (I will appear in the cloud), but also to Ex. xix. 9, where the Lord said to Moses, "I come to thee בְּעָנָן וּבְגֶעֶם," and still more to Ex. xx. 21 and Deut. iv. 11, v. 19, according to which God came down upon Sinai בְּעָנָן. Solomon took the word עָנָן from these passages. That he meant by this the black, dark cloud which filled the temple, is perfectly obvious from the combination עָנָן וְהָעֶרְפֶּל in Deut. v. 19 and iv. 11.¹ Solomon saw this word of Jehovah realized in

cloud which hindered the priests from performing the service was, according to the distinct words of the text, the cloud which filled the house; and the explanatory clause, "for the glory of the Lord filled the house of Jehovah," indicates in the most unmistakeable terms that it was the vehicle of the glory of God, and therefore was not a cloud of smoke formed by the burning sacrifices, but the cloud in which God manifested His invisible being to His people,—the very same cloud in which Jehovah was to appear above the Capporeth, when the high priest entered the Most Holy Place on the day of atonement, so that he was commanded not to enter it at all times, and, when he entered, to cover the Capporeth with the cloud of the burning incense (Lev. xvi. 2, 13).

¹ Thenius, however, has built up all kinds of untenable conjectures as to alterations of the text, upon the erroneous assumption that עָנָן means the

the filling of the temple with the cloud, and learned therefrom that the Lord would dwell in this temple. Hence, being firmly convinced of the presence of Jehovah in the cloud which filled the sanctuary, he adds in ver. 13: "I have built Thee a house to dwell in, a place for Thy seat for ever." We are not to understand עוֹלָמִים as signifying that Solomon believed that the temple built by him would stand for ever; but it is to be explained partly from the contrast to the previous abode of God in the tabernacle, which from the very nature of the case could only be a temporary one, inasmuch as a tent, such as the tabernacle was, is not only a moveable and provisional dwelling, but also a very perishable one, and partly from the promise given to David in 2 Sam vii. 14-16, that the Lord would establish the throne of his kingdom for his seed for ever. This promise involved the eternal duration of the gracious connection between God and Israel, which was embodied in the dwelling of God in the temple. This connection, from its very nature, was an eternal one; even if the earthly form, from which Solomon at that moment abstracted himself, was temporal and perishable.—Solomon had spoken these words with his face turned to the Most Holy Place. He then (ver. 14) turned his face to the congregation, which was standing in the court, and blessed it. The word "blessed" (בֵּרַךְ) denotes the wish for a blessing with which the king greeted the assembled congregation, and introduced the praise of God which follows.—In vers. 15-21 he praises the Lord for having now fulfilled with His hand what He spake with His mouth to his father David (2 Sam. vii.).—Ver. 16. The promise of God, to choose Jerusalem as the place for the temple and David as prince, is taken freely from 2 Sam. vii. 7, 8. In 2 Chron. vi. 6, before "I chose David," we find "and I chose Jerusalem, that my name might be there;" so that the affirmation answers more precisely to the preceding negation, whereas in the account before us this middle term is omitted.—Vers. 17-19. David's intention to build the temple, and the answer of God that his son was to execute this work, are so far copied from 2 Sam. vii. 2, 12, 13, that God approves the intention of David as such. הִטִּיבָהּ, "Thou didst well that it was in thy mind."—Vers. 20, 21. light and radiant cloud, and cannot be synonymous with עָנָן. Böttcher adopts the same opinion, without taking any notice of the striking remarks of Bertheau on 2 Chron. v. 14.

"And Jehovah has set up His word." *וַיָּקֶם* supplies the explanation of *כִּלְאָה בְּיָדוֹ* (hath fulfilled with his hand) in ver. 15. God had caused Solomon to take possession of the throne of David; and Solomon had built the temple and prepared a place there for the ark of the covenant. The ark is thereby declared to be the kernel and star of the temple, because it was the throne of the glory of God.

Vers. 22-53. SECOND ACT of the feast of dedication: *Solomon's dedicatory prayer* (cf. 2 Chron. vi. 12-42).—Ver. 22. "Then Solomon stood before the altar of Jehovah in front of all the assembly of Israel, and stretched out his hands towards heaven." It is evident from ver. 54 that Solomon uttered the prayer which follows upon his knees. The Chronicles contain the same account as we have here, with this addition, that it is said to have taken place on a "scaffold," or kind of pulpit (*בִּינָה*) specially erected for the purpose.¹ The altar, to the front of which Solomon went, was the altar of burnt-offering in the court, where the congregation was gathered together. The expression *וַיִּשְׁתָּחֲוֶה* favours the idea that Solomon offered the prayer upon his knees with his face turned towards the congregation, and not with his back to the people and his face turned towards the temple, as Thenius supposes.—The substance of the prayer is closely connected with the prayer of Moses, especially with the blessings and curses therein (*vid.* Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii.). Commencing with the praise of God, who "keepeth covenant and truth" towards His servants, and has thus far performed to His servant David the promise that He gave him (vers. 23, 24), Solomon entreats the Lord still further to fulfil this promise of His (vers. 25, 26), and to keep His eyes constantly open over the temple, to hearken to the prayers of His people, and to avert the curse threatened against sinners from all who shall call upon Him in this temple (vers. 27-53).—Vers. 23, 24. By granting the blessing promised to His people, the Lord has

¹ Böttcher is right in his assertion, that the opinion expressed by Thenius and Cappellus, that this passage in the Chronicles has been dropped out of our text through a copyist's oversight, is a very improbable one; although the reasons he assigns are for the most part untenable. The omission may be explained in a very simple manner, from the fact that the introduction of this circumstance had no bearing upon the design or contents of the dedicatory prayer.

hitherto proved Himself to be the true and only God in heaven and on earth, who keepeth covenant and mercy with those who walk before Him with all their heart. This acknowledgment produces the requisite confidence for offering the prayer which is sure of an answer (Matt. xxi. 22; Mark xi. 24; Jas. i. 6). For **אֵלֹהֵינוּ**, compare Ex. xv. 11 with Deut. iv. 39; 2 Sam. vii. 22, xxii. 32; Ps. lxxxvi. 8. "Who keepeth covenant and mercy," *verbatim* the same as in Deut. vii. 9. The promise given to His servant David (2 Sam. vii.), the fulfilment of which the commencement now lay before their eyes (cf. vers. 20, 21), was an emanation from the covenant faithfulness of God. "As it is this day," as in ch. iii. 6.—Ver. 25. The expression "and now" (**וְעַתָּה**) introduces the prayer for the further fulfilment of the promise, never to allow a successor upon the throne to be wanting to David, in the same conditional form in which David had uttered the hope in ch. ii. 4, and in which the Lord had renewed the promise to Solomon during the building of the temple (ch. vi. 12, 13). In **מִלְפָּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ**, instead of **מִלְפָּנֵי יְהוָה** in ch. ii. 4, the divine rejection is more distinctly indicated.—Ver. 26 is not merely a repetition of the prayer in ver. 25, as Thenius supposes, but forms the introduction to the prayers which follow for the hearing of all the prayers presented before the Lord in the temple. The words, "let Thy words be verified, which Thou spakest unto Thy servant David," contain something more than a prayer for the continual preservation of the descendants of David upon the throne, for the fulfilment of which Solomon prayed in ver. 25. They refer to the whole of the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12–16. The plural **דְּבָרֶיךָ** (*Chethib*) points back to **כָּל־דְּבָרֶיךָ** in 2 Sam. vii. 17, and is not to be altered into the singular after the *Keri*. The singular **דְּבָרְךָ** is used as it frequently is with the subject in the plural, when the verb precedes (cf. Ewald, § 316, α, 1). Solomon has here in mind one particular point in the promise, viz. that God would not withdraw His mercy from the seed of David, even when it sinned. This is evident from what follows, where he mentions simply cases of transgression, and prays that they may be forgiven.—Vers. 26–28 sqq. are closely connected in this sense: keep Thy words that were spoken to David; for although this temple cannot hold Thine infinite divine nature, I know that Thou wilt have respect to the prayer of Thy servant, to keep Thine eyes open over this temple, to hear every prayer which

Thy people shall bring before Thee therein. וְיָבִיאוּ in ver. 28 continues the optative אִם יִבְנֶה in ver. 26 ; and ver. 27 contains an intermediate thought, with which Solomon meets certain contracted ideas of the gracious presence of God in the temple. כִּי (ver. 27) signifies neither but, nevertheless, *atqui* (Böttcher), nor “as” (Thenius, Bertheau); and the assertion that ver. 27 is the commencement of a new section is overthrown by the inadmissible rendering of וְיָבִיאוּ, “but Thou turnest Thyself” (Thenius).—With the words, “Should God really dwell upon the earth! behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens (*i.e.* the heavens in their widest extent, cf. Deut. x. 14) cannot contain Thee, to say nothing (כִּי אֵין; cf. Ewald, § 354, c) of this house which I have built,” in which the infinitude of God and His exaltation above the world are expressed as clearly and forcibly as possible, Solomon does not intend to guard against the delusion that God really dwells in temples (J. D. Mich.), but simply to meet the erroneous idea that He dwells in the temple as men dwell in a house, namely, shut up within it, and not also outside and above it,—a delusion which sometimes forced its way into the unspiritual nation, but which was always attacked by the prophets (cf. Mic. iii. 11; Jer. vii. 4, etc.). For it is evident that Solomon did combine with his clear perception of the infinite exaltation of God a firm belief in His real presence in the temple, and did not do homage to the abstract idealism of the rationalists, not merely from his declaration in vers. 12 sqq. that he had built this temple as a dwelling-place for God, but also from the substance of all the following prayers, and primarily from the general prayer in vers. 28 and 29, that God would take this temple under His special protection, and hearken to every prayer directed towards it. The distinction between תַּפִּלָּה, תַּחֲנִיחַ, and רִנָּה is the following: תַּפִּלָּה denotes prayer in general, praise, supplication, and thanksgiving; תַּחֲנִיחַ, supplication or entreaty, prayer for help and mercy; and רִנָּה, jubilation, prayer as the joyous utterance of praise and thanksgiving.—Ver. 29. “That Thine eyes may be open upon this house night and day.” אֶל־הַבַּיִת, *speciali quadam providentia in hanc domum directi* (Mich.). The following clause, “upon the place of which Thou hast said, My name shall be there” (namely, 2 Sam. vii. 13, *implicite*), contains within itself the ground upon which the prayer rests. Because the name of God will be in the temple, *i.e.* because God will mani-

fest His gracious presence there, He will also keep His eyes open upon it, so as to hear the prayer of Solomon directed towards it. **אֶל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה** (toward this place): because Solomon also was praying in the court towards the temple.—In ver. 30, “and hear the supplication of Thy servant and of Thy people Israel,” he begins by asking that those prayers may be heard which the king and people shall henceforth bring before God in the temple. **וְהִשְׁמַעְתָּ** corresponds to **וְיָנִיחַ** in ver. 28, and is more precisely defined by the following **וְהִנֵּחָהּ הַשָּׁמַע** (as for these prayers), Thou wilt hear them up to the place of Thine abode, to heaven. **לְשָׁמַע** is a pregnant expression: to hear the prayer, which ascends to heaven. In the Chronicles we find throughout the explanatory **וְ**. The last words, “hear and forgive,” must be left in their general form, and not limited by anything to be supplied. Nothing but forgiveness of sin can remove the curse by which transgression is followed.

This general prayer is then particularized from ver. 31 onwards by the introduction of *seven* special petitions for an answer in the different cases in which, in future, prayers may be offered to God in the temple. The *first* prayer (vers. 31, 32) has reference to the oaths sworn in the temple, the sanctity of which God is asked to protect. “If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him, to cause him to swear, and he come (and) swear before the altar in this house, then wilt Thou hear,” etc. **וְכֵן יִשָּׁר** does not mean either “granted that” (Thenius) or “just *when*” (Ewald, § 533, *a*), although **כֵּן** is used in the Chronicles, and we might render it freely “*when* ;” but **וְכֵן** is simply an accusative particle, serving to introduce the following clause, in the sense of “as for,” or “with regard to (such a case as) that a man sins” (*vid.* Ewald, § 277, *a*). **וְכֵן יִשָּׁר** cannot be taken as anything but an *asyndeton*. For if **וְכֵן** were a substantive, it would have the article (**הַכֵּן**) provided it were the subject, and the verb would be written **יִשָּׁרֶה**; and if it were the object, we should have **יִשָּׁרֶהוּ**, as in Neh. x. 30 (cf. Ezek. xvii. 13). The prayer refers to the cases mentioned in Ex. xxii. 6–12 and Lev. v. 21–24, when property entrusted to any one had been lost or injured, or when a thing had been found and the finding was denied, or when an act of fraud had been committed; in which cases the law required not only compensation with the addition of a fifth of its value, but also a trespass-offering as an expiation of the sin committed by taking

a false oath. But as this punishment could only be inflicted when the guilty person afterwards confessed his guilt, many false oaths might have been sworn in the cases in question and have remained unpunished, so far as men were concerned. Solomon therefore prays that the Lord will hear every such oath that shall have been sworn before the altar, and work (עֲשֶׂה), i.e. actively interpose, and judge His servants, to punish the guilty and justify the innocent. The construction הַשָּׁמַע הַשְּׂפִיט (vers. 32, 34, 36, etc.) can be explained more simply from the adverbial use of the accusative (Ewald, § 300, b), than from אֶל הַשָּׁמַע in ver. 30. הָתִן דְּרָבָה בְּרֹאשׁוֹ, to give (bring) his way upon his head, i.e. to cause the merited punishment to fall upon him (cf. Ezek. ix. 10, xi. 21, etc.). הַרְשִׁיעַ רָשָׁע and הַצְדִּיק צָדִיק recall Deut. xxv. 2. For הָתִן לוֹ בְּצַדִּיקוֹ compare 2 Sam. xxii. 21, 25.—The following cases are all taken from Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii.

Vers. 33 and 34. The *second* petition,—“If Thy people Israel are smitten by the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and they turn to Thee and confess Thy name, . . . then hear . . . and bring them back into the land,”—refers to the threatenings in Lev. xxvi. 17 and Deut. xxviii. 25, where the nation is threatened with defeat and subjugation on the part of enemies, who shall invade the land, in which case prisoners of war are carried away into foreign lands, but the mass of the people remain in the land, so that they who are beaten can pray to the Lord in the temple, that He will forgive them their sin, save them out of the power of the enemy, and bring back the captives and fugitives into their fatherland.

Vers. 35 and 36. The *third* prayer refers to the remission of the punishment of drought threatened against the land, when the heaven is shut up, according to Lev. xxvi. 19, Deut. xi. 17, xxviii. 23. בִּי הִשְׁמַנְתָּם, because Thou humblest them (LXX., Vulg.); not “that Thou hearest them” (Chald. and others). בִּי הוֹרֵם, because Thou teachest them the good way. These words correspond to בִּי הוֹנֵם, and contain a motive for forgiveness. Because God teaches His people and seeks by means of chastisements to bring them back to the good way when they fail to keep His commandments, He must forgive when they recognise the punishment as a divine chastisement and come to Him with penitential prayer.

Vers. 37-40. The *fourth* prayer relates to the removal of other land-plagues: famine (Lev. xxvi. 19, 20, and 26; Deut. xxviii. 23); pestilence (Lev. xxvi. 25); blight and mildew

in the corn (Deut. xxviii. 22); locusts (חֲסִיל, devourer, is connected with אֶרֶבָה without a copula,—in the Chronicles by *Vat*,—to depict the plague of locusts more vividly before their eyes after Deut. xxviii. 38); oppression by enemies in their own land; lastly, plagues and diseases of all kinds, such as are threatened against the rebellious in Lev. xxvi. 16 and Deut. xxviii. 59–61. יָצַר is not the imperfect *Kal* of יָצַר (Ges., Dietr., Fürst, Olsh. *Gramm.* p. 524), but the imperfect *Hiphil* of יָצַר in Deut. xxviii. 52, as in Neh. ix. 27; and the difficult expression בְּאֶרְצוֹ שְׁעָרָיו is probably to be altered into בְּאֶרְצוֹ שׁ, whilst שְׁעָרָיו is either to be taken as a second object to יָצַר, as Luther supposes, or as in apposition to בְּאֶרְצוֹ, in the land (in) his gates, as Bertheau assumes. The assertion of Thenius, that all the versions except the Vulgate are founded upon the reading בְּאֶרְצוֹ שְׁעָרָיו, is incorrect. בְּיָהוּה is omitted after כָּל-מַחְלָה, since Solomon dropped the construction with which he commenced, and therefore briefly summed up all the prayers, addressed to God under the various chastisements here named, in the expression כָּל-מַחְלָה בְּלִי-חַיָּה, which is placed absolutely at the opening of ver. 38. אֲשֶׁר יִדְעוּ וְיִרְאוּ, “when they perceive each one the stroke of his heart,” i.e. not *dolor animi quem quisque sentit* (Vatab., C. a Lap.), but the plague regarded as a blow falling upon the heart, in other words, as a chastisement inflicted upon him by God. In all these cases may God hear his prayer, and do and give to every one according to his way. אֲשֶׁר יָדָע, “as Thou knowest his heart,” i.e. as is profitable for every one according to the state of his heart or his disposition. God can do this, because He knows the hearts of all men (cf. Jer. xvii. 10). The purpose assigned for all this hearing of prayer (ver. 40), viz. “that they may fear Thee,” etc., is the same as in Deut. iv. 10.

Vers. 41–43. The *fifth* prayer has reference to the hearing of the prayers of foreigners, who shall pray in the temple. Solomon assumes as certain that foreigners will come and worship before Jehovah in His temple; even Moses himself had allowed the foreigners living among the Israelites to offer sacrifice at the temple (Num. xv. 14 sqq.), and the great name and the arm of the Lord, that had manifested itself in deeds of omnipotence, had become known in the times of Moses to the surrounding nations (Ex. xv. 14, xviii. 1; Josh. v. 1), and the report of this had reached Balaam even in Mesopotamia (see the Comm. on Num. xxii.). אֵל הַנִּכְבֵּר does not mean “as for the

foreigners" (Thenius), for לֹא is never used in this sense; but it is to be connected with וַיִּשְׁמַע in ver. 43, as $\text{לֹא שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים}$ frequently occurs (Bertheau).—Ver. 42 is a parenthesis inserted in explanation of $\text{לִשְׁמֹעַ שְׁכֵנֵי$: "for they will hear," etc. The strong hand and the outstretched arm are connected together as a standing expression for the wondrous manifestations of the divine omnipotence in the guidance of Israel, as in Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, etc. With $\text{וַיִּבְרָא יְהוָה וַיִּתְּנָם לְלֵב יִשְׂרָאֵל}$ the $\text{וַיִּבְרָא יְהוָה וַיִּתְּנָם לְלֵב יִשְׂרָאֵל}$ in ver. 41 is resumed, and the main thought continued.—Ver. 43. The reason for the hearing of the prayers of foreigners is "that all nations may know Thy name to fear Thee," etc., as in Deut. xxviii. 10. An examination of this original passage, from which $\text{כִּי שָׁמַע יְהוָה וְעַל וְנִי}$ is taken and transferred to the temple, shows that the common explanations of this phrase, viz. "that this house is called after Thy name," or "that Thy name is invoked over this temple (at its dedication)," are erroneous. The name of the Lord is always used in the Scriptures to denote the working of God among His people or in His kingdom (see at 2 Sam. vi. 2). The naming of this name over the nation, the temple, etc., presupposes the working of God within it, and denotes the confession and acknowledgment of that working. This is obvious from such passages as Jer. xiv. 9, where the expression "Thy name is called over us" is only a further explanation of the word "Thou art in the midst of us;" and from Isa. lxiii. 19, where "we are they over whom Thou hast not ruled from eternity" is equivalent to "over whom Thy name has not been called." The name of Jehovah will be named over the temple, when Jehovah manifests His gracious presence within it in such a manner, that the nations who pray towards it experience the working of the living God within His sanctuary. It is in this sense that it is stated in 2 Sam. vi. 2 that the name of Jehovah is named above the ark of the covenant (see the Comm. *in loc.*).—There are no cases on record of the worship of foreigners in connection with Solomon's temple, though there are in connection with the temple built after the captivity (*vid.* Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 8, 5, that of Alexander the Great; xii. 2, 5 sqq., that of Ptolemæus Philadelphus; and 2 Macc. iii. 2, 3, that of Seleucus).

Finally, in vers. 44-50 Solomon also asks, that when prayers are directed towards the temple by those who are far away both from Jerusalem and the temple, they may be heard. The *sixth* case, in vers. 44 and 45, is, if Israel should be engaged in war

with an enemy by the appointment of God; and the *seventh*, in vers. 46–50, is, if it should be carried away by enemies on account of its sins.¹ By the expression in ver. 44, “in the way which Thou sendest them,” the war is described as one undertaken by the direction of God, whether waged against an enemy who has invaded the land, or outside the land of Canaan for the chastisement of the heathen dwelling around them. “And shall pray ‘*וַיִּתְּנוּ הָעִיר וְהַמִּקְדָּשׁ*’:” i.e. in the direction towards the chosen city and the temple, namely, in faith in the actual presence of the covenant God in the temple. *וְאֵל יְהוָה*, “to Jehovah,” instead of “to Thee,” is probably introduced for the sake of greater clearness. *וְשִׁיתָ מִשְׁפָּטָם*, and secure them justice (cf. Deut. x. 18, Ps. ix. 5, etc.).—Vers. 46 sqq. In the seventh prayer, viz. if Israel should be given up to its enemies on account of its sins and carried away into the land of the enemy, Solomon had the threat in Lev. xxvi. 33 and 44 in his eye, though he does not confine his prayer to the exile of the whole nation foretold in that passage and in Deut. xxviii. 45 sqq., 64 sqq., and xxx. 1–5, but extends it to every case of transportation to an enemy’s land. *וְהִשִּׁיבוּ אֶל לִבָּם*, “and they take it to heart,” compare Deut. iv. 39, and without the object, Deut. xxx. 1; not “they feel remorse,” as Thenius supposes, because the *Hiphil* cannot have this reflective signification (Böttcher). The confession of sin in ver. 47, *הִתְחַנַּנְנוּ וְהִתְעַיֵּיטוּ רָשָׁעֵינוּ*, was adopted by the Jews when in captivity as the most exhaustive expression of their deep consciousness of guilt (Dan. ix. 5; Ps. cvi. 6). *הִתְחַנַּן*, to slip, *labi*, depicts sin as a wandering from right;

¹ Bertheau (on Chron.) has already proved that there is no force in the arguments by which Thenius attempts to show, on doctrinal grounds, that vers. 44–51 are an interpolated addition. As he correctly observes, “it is, on the contrary, quite in harmony with the original plan, that the two cases are also anticipated, in which the prayers of Israelites who are at a distance from the seat of the sanctuary are directed towards the temple, since it is perfectly appropriate that the prayers of the Israelites at the place of the sanctuary are mentioned first, then the prayers of foreigners at the same place, and lastly the prayers of Israelites, who, because they are not in Jerusalem, are obliged to content themselves with turning their faces towards the temple. We might also point to the fact that it is probably intentional that exactly seven cases are enumerated, inasmuch as in enumerations of this kind, which are not restricted by the nature of the case to any definite measure, such a number as seven easily furnishes an outward limit,”—or more correctly: because seven as a sacred or covenant number was more appropriate than any other to embrace *all* prayers addressed to God.

הָעֵתָּה, to act perversely, as a conscious perversion of justice; and נִשְׁעַן as a passionate rebellion against God (cf. Isa. lvii. 20).—Ver. 50. וַיַּחֲמֹם לְרַחֲמֵיהֶם: literally, “and make (place) them for compassion before their captors, that they may have compassion upon them,” i.e. cause them to meet with compassion from their enemies, who have carried them away.—In vers. 51-53 Solomon closes with general reasons, which should secure the hearing of his prayer on the part of God. Bertheau follows the earlier commentators in admitting that these reasons refer not merely to the last petitions, but to all the preceding ones.¹ The plea “for they are Thy people,” etc. (ver. 51), is taken from Deut. iv. 10; and that in ver. 53, “Thou didst separate them,” etc., is taken from Lev. xx. 24, 26, compared with Ex. xix. 5. לְהִיחַ עֵינֶיךָ וְנִ, “that Thine eyes may be opened,” follows upon הֲשִׁמְעָה (“then hear Thou”) in ver. 49; just as ver. 29 at the commencement of the prayer follows upon וַיִּנָּח in ver. 28. The recurrence of the same expression shows that the prayer is drawing to a close, and is rounded off by a return to the thought with which it opened. “As Thou spakest by Moses” points back to Ex. xix. 5.—In 2 Chron. vi. 40-42 the conclusion of the prayer is somewhat altered, and closes with the appeal to the Lord to cause salvation and grace to go forth from the temple over His people.

Vers. 54-66. CONCLUDING ACT of the dedication of the temple. Vers. 54-61. *Blessing the congregation*.—After the conclusion of the prayer, Solomon rose up from his knees and blessed all the assembled congregation. וַיִּכְנָף פָּרִשְׁוֹת is a circumstantial clause, which must be connected with the previous words and rendered thus: “from lying upon his knees *with* his hands spread out towards heaven.” “And he stood,” i.e. he came from the altar and stood nearer to the assembled congregation. The blessing begins with praise to the Lord for the fulfilment of His promises (ver. 16), and consists in the petition that the Lord will always fulfil his (Solomon’s) prayers, and

¹ Seb. Schmidt has already given the following explanation: “These things which I have asked for myself and for my people do Thou, O Lord, because it is for Thy people that I have prayed, and I am their king: therefore hear Thou the prayers of Thy servant and Thy people. For in ver. 52 he makes mention of his own case and of the cases of all the rest, in which they would call upon the Lord.

grant His people the promised salvation.¹—Ver. 56. The praise of Jehovah rests, so far as the first part is concerned, upon the promise in Deut. xii. 9, 10, and upon its fulfilment in Josh. xxi. 44, 45 and xxiii. 14; and the second part is founded upon Lev. xxvi. 3–13 and Deut. xxviii. 1–14, where the “good word, which the Lord spake by Moses,” is more precisely described as the blessing which the Lord had promised to His people and had hitherto bestowed upon them. He had already given Israel rest by means of Joshua when the land of Canaan was taken; but since many parts of the land still remained in the hands of the Canaanites, this rest was only fully secured to them by David’s victories over all their enemies. This glorious fulfilment warranted the hope that the Lord would also fulfil in the future what He had promised His servant David (2 Sam. vii. 10), if the people themselves would only faithfully adhere to their God. Solomon therefore sums up all his wishes for the good of the kingdom in vers. 57–61 in the words, “May Jehovah our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us nor forsake us, to incline our heart to Himself, that we may walk in all His ways,” etc.—that the evil word predicted by Moses in Lev. xxvi. 14 sqq., Deut. xxviii. 15, may not fall upon us. For ver. 57 compare Deut. xxxi. 6, 8, and Josh. i. 5. לֹא יִשָּׁקֵץ corresponds to לֹא יִשָּׁקֵץ in these passages. In the Pentateuch יָשָׁקֵץ is used but once of men who forsake the Lord, viz. Deut. xxxii. 15; in other cases it is only used in the general sense of casting away, letting alone, and other similar meanings. It is first used of God, in the sense of for-

¹ This blessing is omitted from the Chronicles, because it is simply a recapitulation of the longer prayer; but instead of it we have a statement, in 2 Chron. vii. 1–4, to the effect that fire fell from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering upon the altar. This statement, which even Movers regards as a traditional, i.e. a legendary addition, according to his erroneous view of the sources of the Chronicles, is confirmed by the similar miracle which occurred at the dedication of the temple. It is omitted, like so many other things in the account before us, because all that was essential in this occurrence was contained *implicite* in the filling of the temple with the glory of the Lord. Just as at the consecration of the Mosaic sanctuary the Lord did not merely manifest His gracious presence through the cloud which filled the tent, but also kindled the first sacrifice with fire from heaven (Lev. ix. 24), to sanctify the altar as the legitimate place of sacrifice; so also at the temple the miraculous kindling of the first sacrifice with fire from heaven was the immediate and even necessary consequence of the filling of the temple with the cloud, in which the presence of Jehovah was embodied.

saking His people, in Ps. xxvii. 9 in connection with עָנִי; and it frequently occurs afterwards in Jeremiah.—Ver. 59. May these my words, which I have prayed (vers. 25-43), be near to Jehovah our God day and night, that He may secure the right of His servant (the king) and of His people, as every day demands. כִּי־יִסֹּף יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ, as in Ex. v. 13, xvi. 4.—For ver. 60 compare ver. 43.—Ver. 61. Let your heart be 'שְׁלֵמָה עִם', wholly, undividedly devoted to the Lord (cf. ch. xi. 4, xv. 3, 14, etc.).

Vers. 62-66. *Sacrifices and feast*.—Vers. 62, 63. The dedicatory prayer was followed by a magnificent sacrifice offered by the king and all Israel. The thank-offering (זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים) consisted, in accordance with the magnitude of the manifestation of divine grace, of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. This enormous number of sacrificial animals, in which J. D. Michaelis found serious difficulties, Thenius endeavours to set aside as too large, by calculating that as these sacrifices were offered in seven days, reckoning the sacrificial day at twelve full hours, there must have been about five oxen and about twenty-five sheep slaughtered and offered in sacrifice every minute for the king alone. This calculation would be conclusive, if there were any foundation for the three assumptions upon which it rests: namely, (1) that the number of sacrifices mentioned was offered for the king alone; (2) that the slaughtering and preparation of the sacrificial animals could only be performed by the priests and Levites; and (3) that the whole of the flesh of these sacrificial animals was to be consumed upon the altar. But these three assumptions are all erroneous. There is nothing in the account about their being "for the king alone." For it is obvious that the words "and Solomon offered a sacrifice" are not to be understood as signifying that the king had these sacrifices offered for himself alone, but that the words refer to the sacrifices offered by the king and all Israel for the consecration of the temple, from the simple fact that in ver. 62 "Solomon and all Israel" are expressly mentioned as offering sacrifice, and that after the statement of the number of the sacrifices we find these words in ver. 63: "so the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of Jehovah." Moreover it is very evident from the law in Lev. i. and iii. that at the offering of sacrifice the slaughtering, flaying, and preparation of the sacrificial animals were performed by any Israelite, and that it was only the sprinkling of the blood against the

altar and the burning of the sacrificial portions upon the altar which were the exclusive province of the priests. In order to form a correct idea of the enormous number of sacrifices which could be slaughtered on any one day, we will refer again to the notice in Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* vi. 9, 3) already mentioned in the *Comm. on the Pentateuch*, vol. iii. p. 51 (translation), that in the reign of the emperor Nero the procurator *Cestius* directed the priests to count the number of the paschal lambs, and that they counted 250,000, which were slaughtered for the passover between the ninth and eleventh hours of the day, and of which the blood was sprinkled upon the altar. If then it was possible at that time to slaughter more than 250,000 lambs in three hours of the afternoon, and to sprinkle the blood upon the altar, there can have been no difficulty in slaughtering and sacrificing 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep at the dedication of the temple on each of the seven days of the festival. As all Israel from Hamath to the brook of Egypt came to Jerusalem to this festival, we shall not be above the mark if we estimate the number of the heads of houses present at 100,000. And with very little trouble they could have slaughtered 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep a day and prepared them for sacrificing. How many priests took an active part in this, we do not indeed know, in fact we have no information as to the number of the priests in Solomon's time; but we know that in the time of David the number of Levites qualified for service, reckoning from their thirtieth year, was 38,000, so that we may certainly assume that there were two or three thousand priests. Now if only the half of these Levites and priests had come to Jerusalem to the dedication of the temple, they alone could have slaughtered 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep every day. And would not a thousand priests have been sufficient to sprinkle the blood of so many animals upon the altar and to burn the fat between the morning and evening sacrifice? If we divided these sacrifices among a thousand priests, each one would only have had to attend to the sprinkling of the blood and burning of the fat of three oxen and eighteen sheep each day.—But the brazen altar of burnt-offering might not have been large enough for the burning of so many sacrifices, notwithstanding the fact that only the fat portions of the thank-offerings were consumed, and they did not require much room; since the morning and evening burnt-offerings were added daily, and as festal offerings

they would certainly not consist of a lamb only, but at least of one bullock, and they were burned whole, although the altar of burnt-offering with a surface of 144 square yards (see my *bibl. Archäol.* i. p. 127) would hold a very large quantity of sacrificial flesh at once. In ver. 64, however, it is expressly stated that Solomon sanctified the middle of the court, which was before the house of Jehovah, to burn the burnt-offering and meat-offering and the fat portions of the thank-offerings there, because the brazen altar was too small to hold these sacrifices. "The middle of the court" (מִתְּוֶהֱבָה) is the whole of the inner portion of the court of the priests, which was in front of the temple-house and formed the centre of the court surrounding the temple. Of course we have not to imagine that the sacrifices were offered upon the stone pavement of the court, but must assume that there were auxiliary altars erected in the inner court around the brazen altar. By the burnt-offering and the meat-offering (belonging to it: מִזְבֵּחַ הַבְּרִיטָה) we are not to understand certain burnt-offerings, which were offered for a definite number of thank-offerings, as Thenius supposes. The singular and the definite article are both at variance with this. The reference is rather to the (well-known) daily morning and evening burnt-offerings with their meat-offering, and in this case, no doubt, to such a festal sacrifice as is prescribed in Num. xxviii. for the great yearly feasts.—Ver. 65. Thus Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from the neighbourhood of Hamath to the brook of Egypt, i.e. from the whole land in its fullest extent from north to south. "The district of Hamath," i.e. *Epiphania* on the Orontes, is mentioned as the northern boundary (cf. Num. xxxiv. 8, xiii. 21, Josh. xiii. 5, etc.); and "the brook of Egypt" (נַחַל מִצְרַיִם), *Rhinocorura*, as the southern boundary (cf. Num. xxxiv. 8, Josh. xv. 4). "The feast" (הַחֵג), which Solomon held with the people "seven days and seven days, fourteen days," is not the feast of the dedication, but, as in ver. 2, the feast of tabernacles, which fell in the seventh month; and the meaning of the verse is, that on that occasion the feast of the seventh month was kept for fourteen days, namely, seven days as the feast of the dedication, and seven days as the feast of tabernacles. We are obliged to take the words in this way, partly on account of the evident reference to בִּרְאֵי (at the feast) in ver. 2 in the expression מִזְבֵּחַ הַבְּרִיטָה (the feast) in this verse, and partly on account of the statement which follows in

ver. 66, "and on the eighth day he sent the people away." The "eighth day" is not the first day of the feast of tabernacles (Thenius); but the eighth day, as the conclusion of the feast of tabernacles, *עֲצֵרֶת* (Lev. xxiii. 36). The correctness of this view is placed beyond all doubt by the context in the Chronicles, which states more clearly that "Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him . . . and they kept *עֲצֵרֶת* (the closing feast) on the eighth day; for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days and the feast seven days; and on the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away." The feast of tabernacles lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 21st, with a closing festival on the eighth day, *i.e.* the 22d of the month (Lev. xxiii. 33-39). This festival was preceded by the dedication of the temple from the 8th to the 14th of the month. The statement in ver. 66, "on the eighth day he sent the people away," if we take the words in their strict sense, is at variance with the statement in the Chronicles, "on the 23d day," since the eighth day of the feast of tabernacles was the 22d day of the month; but it may easily be accounted for from want of precision in a well-known matter. Solomon sent the people away on the eighth day, *i.e.* on the afternoon or evening of the *atzereth* of the feast of tabernacles, so that on the morning of the next day, *i.e.* on the 23d of the month, the people took their journey home, "joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shown to His servant David and to the people." *David* is mentioned, because the completion of the building of the temple was the fulfilment of the divine promise given to him. "Tents," for houses, as in 2 Sam. xx. 1, Judg. vii. 8, and other passages.

CHAP. IX. THE ANSWER TO SOLOMON'S PRAYER. THE MEANS
EMPLOYED FOR THE ERECTION OF HIS BUILDINGS.

Vers. 1-9. THE ANSWER OF THE LORD TO SOLOMON'S DEDICATORY PRAYER (cf. 2 Chron. vii. 11-22).—Vers. 1, 2. When Solomon had finished the building of the temple, and of his palace, and of all that he had a desire to build, the Lord appeared to him the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon, *i.e.* by night in a dream (see ch. iii. 5), to promise him that his prayer should be answered. For the point of time, see at ch. viii. 1. *בְּלִישְׁתֵּי הַלַּיְלָה*, all Solomon's desire or pleasure, is para-

phrased thus in the Chronicles: כָּל־הַבָּא עַל־לֵב, "all that came into his mind," and, in accordance with the context, is very properly restricted to these two principal buildings by the clause, "in the house of Jehovah and in his own house."—Vers. 3 sqq. The divine promise to Solomon, that his prayer should be answered, is closely connected with the substance of the prayer; but in our account we have only a brief summary, whereas in the Chronicles it is given more elaborately (*vid.* 2 Chron. vii. 12-16). "I have sanctified this house which thou hast built, to put my name there." For the expression, see Deut. xii. 11. The sanctifying consisted in the fact, that Jehovah put His name in the temple; i.e. that by filling the temple with the cloud which visibly displayed His presence, He consecrated it as the scene of the manifestation of His grace. To Solomon's prayer, "May Thine eyes stand open over this house" (ch. viii. 29), the Lord replies, giving always more than we ask, "My eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually."—Vers. 4 and 5 contain the special answer to ch. viii. 25 and 26.—Vers. 6-9 refer to the prayer for the turning away of the curse, to which the Lord replies: If ye and your children turn away from me, and do not keep my commandments, but worship other gods, this house will not protect you from the curses threatened in the law, but they will be fulfilled in all their terrible force upon you and upon this temple. This threat follows the Pentateuch exactly in the words in which it is expressed; ver. 7 being founded upon Deut. xxviii. 37, 45, and 63, and the curse pronounced upon Israel in Deut. xxix. 23-26 being transferred to the temple in vers. 8 and 9.—שֶׁלֹּא יִשְׁלַח מֵעַל פָּנָי, to dismiss, i.e. to reject from before my face. "This house will be מְעֻלָּה," i.e. will stand high, or through its rejection will be a lofty example for all that pass by. The temple stood upon a high mountain, so that its ruins could not fail to attract the attention of all who went past. The expression מְעֻלָּה is selected with an implied allusion to Deut. xxvi. 19 and xxviii. 1. God there promises to make Israel מְעֻלָּה, high, exalted above all nations. This blessing will be turned into a curse. The temple, which was high and widely renowned, shall continue to be high, but in the opposite sense, as an example of the rejection of Israel from the presence of God.¹

¹ The conjecture of Böttcher, Thenius, and Bertheau, that מְעֻלָּה should be altered into מְעֻלָּה, has no support in Mic. iii. 12, Jer. xxvi. 18, and Ps. lxxix. 1,

Vers. 10-28. THE MEANS BY WHICH THE BUILDINGS WERE ERECTED.—In order that all which still remained to be said concerning Solomon's buildings might be grouped together, different notices are introduced here, namely, as to his relation to Hiram, the erection of several fortresses, and the tributary labour, and also as to his maritime expeditions; and these heterogeneous materials are so arranged as to indicate the resources which enabled Solomon to erect so many and such magnificent buildings. These resources were: (1) his connection with king Hiram, who furnished him with building materials (vers. 10-14); (2) the tributary labour which he raised in his kingdom (vers. 15-25); (3) the maritime expedition to Ophir, which brought him great wealth (vers. 26-28). But these notices are very condensed, and, as a comparison with the parallel account in 2 Chron. viii. shows, are simply incomplete extracts from a more elaborate history. In the account of the tributary labour, the enumeration of the cities finished and fortified (vers. 15-19) is interpolated; and the information concerning the support which was rendered to Solomon in the erection of his buildings by Hiram (vers. 11-14), is merely supplementary to the account already given in ch. v. Vers. 24 and 25 point still more clearly to an earlier account, since they would be otherwise unintelligible.—In 2 Chron. viii. the arrangement is a simpler one: the buildings are first of all enumerated in vers. 1-6, and the account of the tributary labour follows in vers. 7-11.

Vers. 10-14. The notices concerning *Solomon's connection with Hiram* are very imperfect; for ver. 14 does not furnish a conclusion either in form or substance. The notice in 2 Chron. viii. 1, 2 is still shorter, but it supplies an important addition to the account before us.—Vers. 10 and 11 form one

and has all the ancient versions against it; for they all contain the Masoretic text, either in a verbal translation (LXX.), or in a paraphrase, as for example the Chaldee, "the house that was high shall be destroyed;" the Syriac and Arabic, "this house will be destroyed;" and the Vulgate, *domus hæc erit in exemplum*.—In 2 Chron. vii. 21 the thought is somewhat varied by the alteration of *יְהִי* into *אֶשֶׁר יְהִי*. For it would never enter the mind of any sober critic to attribute this variation to a misinterpretation of our text. Still less can it be an unsuccessful attempt to explain or rectify our text, as Böttcher imagines, since the assertion of this critic, that *עֲלִיּוֹן* is only used to signify an exalted position, and never the exaltation of dignity or worth, is proved to be erroneous by Deut. xxvi. 19 and xxviii. 1.

period. **וְהָיָה** (then he gave) in ver. 11 introduces the apodosis to **וְהָיָה כֵּן** (and it came to pass, etc.) in ver. 10; and ver. 11 contains a circumstantial clause inserted as a parenthesis. Hiram had supported Solomon according to his desire with cedar wood and cypress wood, and with gold; and Solomon gave him in return, after his buildings were completed, twenty cities in the land of *Galil*. But these cities did not please Hiram. When he went out to see them, he said, "What kind of cities are these (**כֵּן** in a contemptuous sense) which thou hast given me, my brother?" **וְהָיָה כֵּן** as in ch. xx. 32, 1 Macc. x. 18, xi. 30, 2 Macc. xi. 22, as a conventional expression used by princes in their intercourse with one another. "And he called the land *Cabul* unto this day;" i.e. it retained this name even to later times. The land of *Galil* is a part of the country which was afterwards known as *Galilæa*, namely, the northern portion of it, as is evident from the fact that in Josh. xx. 7, xxi. 32, *Kedes* in the mountains of Naphtali, to the north-west of Lake *Huleh*, is distinguished from the Kadesh in southern Palestine by the epithet **בְּגִלְיָל**. It is still more evident from 2 Kings xv. 29 and Isa. viii. 23 that *Galil* embraced the northern part of the tribe of Naphtali; whilst the expression used by Isaiah, **בְּגִלְיָל הַנִּזְוִי**, also shows that this district was for the most part inhabited by heathen (i.e. non-Israelites). The twenty cities in *Galil*, which Solomon gave to Hiram, certainly belonged therefore to the cities of the Canaanites mentioned in 2 Sam. xxiv. 7; that is to say, they were cities occupied chiefly by a heathen population, and in all probability they were in a very bad condition. Consequently they did not please Hiram, and he gave to the district the contemptuous name of the land of *Cabul*. Of the various interpretations given to the word *Cabul* (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 656), the one proposed by Hiller (*Onomast.* p. 435), and adopted by Reland, Ges., Maurer, and others, viz. that it is a contraction of **כְּהַבֵּל**, *sicut id quod evanuit tanquam nihil*, has the most to support it, since this is the meaning required by the context. At the same time it is possible, and even probable, that it had originally a different signification, and is derived from **כָּבַל** = **חָבַל** in the sense of to pawn, as Gesenius and Dietrich suppose. This is favoured by the occurrence of the name *Cabul* in Josh. xix. 27, where it is probably derivable from **כָּבַל**, to fetter, and signifies literally a fortress or castle; but in this instance it has no connection with

the land of *Cabul*, since it is still preserved in the village of Cabul to the south-east of Acre (see the Comm. on Josh. *l.c.*). The "land of Cabul" would therefore mean the pawned land; and in the mouths of the people this would be twisted into "good for nothing." In this case וַיִּקְרָא would have to be taken impersonally: "they called;" and the notice respecting this name would be simply an explanation of the way in which the people interpreted it. Hiram, however, did not retain this district, but gave it back to Solomon, who then completed the cities (2 Chron. viii. 2.).¹ The only way in which we can give to ver. 14 a meaning in harmony with the context, is by taking it as a supplementary explanation of וַיִּקְרָא . . . נָשָׂא . . . חִירָם in ver. 11, and so rendering וַיִּשְׁלַח as a pluperfect, as in ch. vii. 13: "Hiram had sent the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold." If we reckon the value of gold as being ten times the worth of silver, a hundred and twenty talents of gold would be 3,141,600 *thalers* (about £471,240: Tr.). This is no doubt to be regarded as a loan, which Solomon obtained from Hiram to enable him to complete his buildings. Although David may have collected together the requisite amount of precious metals for the building of the temple, and Solomon had also very considerable yearly revenues, derived partly from tribute paid by subjugated nations and partly from trade, his buildings were so extensive, inasmuch as he erected a large number of cities beside the temple and his splendid palace (vers. 15–19), that his revenues might not suffice for the completion of these costly works; and therefore, since he would not apply the consecrated treasures of the temple to the erection of cities and palaces, he might find himself compelled to procure a loan from the wealthy king Hiram, which he probably intended to cover by ceding to him twenty cities on the border of the Phœnician territory. But as these cities did not please the king of Tyre and he gave them back to Solomon, the latter will no doubt have repaid the amount borrowed during the last twenty years of his reign.

¹ This simple method of reconciling the account before us with the apparently discrepant notice in the Chronicles, concerning which even Movers (*die biblische Chronik*, p. 159) observes, that the chronicler interpolated it from a second (?) source, is so natural, that it is difficult to conceive how Bertheau can object to it; since he admits that the accounts in the books of Kings and Chronicles are incomplete extracts from common and more elaborate sources.

Vers. 15-23. *Solomon's tribute service, and the building of the cities.* (Cf. 2 Chron. viii. 3-10.) The other means by which Solomon made it possible to erect so many buildings, was by compelling the remnants of the Canaanitish population that were still in the land to perform tributary labour. *וְהָיָה כֵּן הַתְּרִיבָה*, "this is the case with regard to the tribute." For *הַתְּרִיבָה*, compare ch. v. 27. To the announcement of the object which Solomon had in view in raising tributary labourers, namely, to build, etc., there is immediately appended a list of all the buildings completed by him (vers. 15-19); and it is not till ver. 20 that we have more precise details concerning the tribute itself. *Millo*, the wall of Jerusalem, and the cities enumerated, are for the most part not new buildings, but simply fortifications, or the completion of buildings already in existence. David had already built the castle of *Millo* and the wall of Jerusalem (2 Sam. v. 9); so that Solomon's building was in both cases merely fortifying more strongly. On *Millo* see the fuller remarks at 2 Sam. v. 9; and on the building of the wall, those at ch. iii. 1 and xi. 27. As Solomon thereby closed the breach of the city of David according to ch. xi. 27, he probably extended the city wall so as to enclose the temple mountain; and he may possibly have also surrounded the lower city with a wall, since David had only built a fortification round about the upper city upon Zion (see at 2 Sam. v. 9).—*Hazor*: an old royal city of the Canaanites above Lake *Huleh*, which has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xi. 1). *Megiddo*; i.e. *Lejun* (see at ch. iv. 12). *Gezer*: also an old Canaanitish royal city, which stood close to the Philistian frontier, probably on the site of the present village of *el Kubab* (see at Josh. x. 33).—Ver. 16. This city had been taken and burned down by the king of Egypt; its Canaanitish inhabitants had been put to death; and the city itself had been given as a marriage portion to his daughter who was married to Solomon. Nothing is known concerning the occasion and object of Pharaoh's warlike expedition against this city. The conjecture of Thenius, that the Canaanitish inhabitants of Gezer had drawn upon themselves the vengeance of Pharaoh, mentioned here, through a piratical raid upon the Egyptian coast, is open to this objection, that according to all accounts concerning its situation, Gezer was not situated near the sea-coast, but very far inland.—Ver. 17. This city Solomon built: i.e. he not only rebuilt it, but also fortified it. He did the same also to *Lower*

Bethhoron, i.e. *Beit-Ur Tachta*, on the western slope of the mountains, four hours' journey from Gibeon. According to 2 Chron. viii. 5, Solomon also fortified *Upper Bethhoron*, which was separated by a deep wady from Lower Bethhoron, that lay to the west (see Comm. on Josh. x. 10 and xvi. 3). The two Bethhorons and Gezer were very important places for the protection of the mountainous country of Benjamin, Ephraim, and Judah against hostile invasions from the Philistian plain. The situation of Megiddo on the southern edge of the plain of Jezreel, through which the high road from the western coast to the Jordan ran, was equally important; and so also was Hazor as a border fortress against Syria in the northern part of the land.—Ver. 18. Solomon also built, i.e. fortified, *Baalath* and *Tadmor* in the desert. According to Josh. xix. 44, *Baalath* was a city of Dan, and therefore, as Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 1) justly observes, was not far from Gezer; and consequently is not to be identified with either Baalgad or Baalbek in Coele-syria (Iken, Mich. Rosenm.; cf. Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* p. 519). חֶתֶּיב (*Chethib*) is either to be read חֶתֶּיב, or according to Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 344) חֶתֶּיב, palm, a palm-city. The *Keri* requires חֶתֶּיב (Tadmor, after 2 Chron. viii. 4), a pronunciation which may possibly have simply arisen from Aramæan expansion, but which is still the name for the city current among the Arabs even in the present day (تَدْمُر, *locus palmarum ferax*). The

Greeks and Romans called it *Palmyra*. It was situated in what is certainly now a very desolate oasis of the Syrian desert, on the caravan road between Damascus and the Euphrates,—according to modern accounts, not more than seventeen hours' journey from that river; and there are still magnificent ruins which attest the former glory of this wealthy and, under queen Zenobia, very powerful city (cf. Ritter, *Erdk.* xvii. 2, p. 1486 sqq., and E. Osiander in Herzog's *Cycl.*). The correctness of this explanation of the name is placed beyond all doubt by the words "in the wilderness;" and consequently even Movers has given up his former opinion, viz. that it was the city of *Thamar* in southern Judah (Ezek. xlvii. 19, xlviii. 28), which Thenius has since adopted, and has decided in favour of Palmyra, without being led astray by the attempt of Hitzig to explain the name from the Sanscrit (*vid. Deutsche morgld. Ztschr.* viii. p. 222 sqq.). The expression חֶתֶּיב appears superfluous, as all the cities

named before were situated in the land or kingdom of Solomon, and *Tadmor* is sufficiently defined by *בְּמִדְבָּר* (in the desert). The text is evidently faulty, and either the name of the land, namely *Hamath* (according to 2 Chron. viii. 4), has dropped out, or *בְּנֶאֱמָר* is to be taken in connection with what follows (according to the Cod. Al. of the LXX.), and the cop. ו before *בְּנֶאֱמָר* must be erased and inserted before *בְּנֶאֱמָר* ("and in the land of all the magazine-cities").—Ver. 19. The "magazine-cities" (*עָרֵי הַמִּסְכְּנֹת*) were fortified cities, in which the produce of the land was collected, partly for provisioning the army, and partly for the support of the rural population in times of distress (2 Chron. xvii. 12, xxxii. 28), similar to those which Pharaoh had built in the land of Goshen (Ex. i. 11). If they were situated on the great commercial roads, they may also have served for storing provisions for the necessities of travellers and their beasts of burden. The cities for the war-chariots (*הָרֶכֶב*) and cavalry (*הַפָּרָשִׁים*) were probably in part identical with the magazine-cities, and situated in different parts of the kingdom. There were no doubt some of these upon Lebanon, as we may on the one hand infer from the general importance of the northern frontier to the security of the whole kingdom, and still more from the fact that Solomon had an opponent at Damascus in the person of Rezin (ch. xi. 24), who could easily stir up rebellion in the northern provinces, which had only just been incorporated by David into the kingdom; and as we may on the other hand clearly gather from 2 Chron. xvi. 4, according to which there were magazine-cities in the land of Naphtali. Finally, the words "and what Solomon had a desire to build" embrace all the rest of his buildings, which it would have occupied too much space to enumerate singly. That the words *אֵת הַשֵּׁן* are not to be so pressed as to be made to denote simply "the buildings undertaken for pure pleasure," like the works mentioned in Eccles. ii. 4 sqq., as Thenius and Bertheau suppose, is evident from a comparison of ver. 1, where all Solomon's buildings except the temple and palace, and therefore the fortifications as well as others, are included in the expression "all his desire."—Fuller particulars concerning the tributary workmen are given in ver. 20 sqq. The Canaanitish population that was left in the land were made use of for this purpose,—namely, the descendants of the Canaanites who had not been entirely exterminated by the Israelites. "Their children,"

etc., supplies a more precise definition of the expression "all the people," etc., in ver. 20. (For the fact itself, see the commentary on ch. v. 27, 28.)—Ver. 22. Solomon did not make Israelites into tributary slaves; but they were warriors, ministers, and civil and military officers. שָׂרִים are the king's servants; שָׂרֵי צֶהָרִים, the heads of the military and civil service; שָׂרֵי רֶכֶב וַיַּחֲשָׁיו, royal adjutants (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8); שָׂרֵי רֶכֶב וַיַּחֲשָׁיו, captains over the royal war-chariots and cavalry.—For ver. 23 compare ch. v. 30.

Vers. 24 and 25 contain two notices, with which the account of Solomon's buildings is brought to a close. Both verses point back to ch. iii. 1–4 (viz. ver. 24 to ch. iii. 1, and ver. 25 to ch. iii. 2–4), and show how the incongruities which existed at the commencement of Solomon's reign were removed by his buildings. When Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, he brought her into the city of David (ch. iii. 1), until he should have finished his palace and built her a house of her own within it. After this building was completed, he had her brought up from the city of David into it. וַיָּבֵא, came up, inasmuch as the palace stood upon the loftier summit of Zion. וַיָּבֵא is to be connected with וַיָּבֵא which follows, in the sense of *only* or *just as*: as soon as Pharaoh's daughter had gone up into the house built for her, Solomon built Millo.¹—Ver. 25. After the building of the temple, the practice of sacrificing upon the altars of the high places could be brought to an end (ch. iii. 2). Solomon now offered burnt-offerings and thank-offerings three times a year upon the altar which he had built to the Lord, i.e. upon the altar of burnt-offering in the temple, or as 2 Chron. viii. 12 adds by way of explanation, "before the porch." "Three times in the year:" i.e. at the three great yearly feasts—passover, the feast of weeks, and the feast of tabernacles

¹ Nothing certain can be gathered from this notice as to the situation of this castle. The remark made by Thenius, to the effect that it must have joined that portion of the palace in which the harem was, rests upon the assumption that Millo was evidently intended to shelter the harem,—an assumption which cannot be raised into a probability, to say nothing of a certainty. The building of Millo immediately after the entrance of Pharaoh's daughter into the house erected for her, may have arisen from the fact that David (? Solomon—Tr.) could not undertake the fortification of Jerusalem by means of this castle till after his own palace was finished, because he had not the requisite labour at command for carrying on all these buildings at the same time.

(2 Chron. viii. 13). The words which follow, וְהִקְטִיר אֹתוֹ, "and indeed burning (the sacrifice) at the (altar) which was before Jehovah," cannot be taken as parallel to the preceding clause, and understood as referring to the incense, which was offered along with the bleeding sacrifices, because הִקְטִיר is not a preterite, but an inf. absol., which shows that this clause merely serves as an explanation of the preceding one, in the sense of, "namely, burning the sacrifices at the altar which was before Jehovah." הִקְטִיר is the technical expression here for the burning of the portions of the sacrificial flesh upon the altar, as in Ex. xxix. 18, Lev. i. 9, etc. On the use of אֶשֶׁר after אֹתוֹ, which Thenius and Böttcher could not understand, and on which they built up all kinds of conjectures, see Ewald, § 333, a, note.—וַיִּשְׁלֵם אֶת־הַבַּיִת, "and made the house complete," i.e. he put the temple into a state of completion, by offering the yearly sacrifices there from that time forward, or, as Böttcher explains it, gave it thereby its full worth as a house of God and place of worship. וַיִּשְׁלֵם is to be taken grammatically as a continuation of the inf. abs. הִקְטִיר.

Vers. 26-28. *He sends ships to Ophir.*—Solomon built a fleet (אֲרָיִם is collective, ships or fleet; the *nom. unitatis* is אֲרִיָּה) at Eziongeber, near Eloth, on the coast of the Red Sea (יַם־סוּף: see at Ex. x. 19), in the land of Edom; and Hiram sent in the fleet "shipmen that had knowledge of the sea" along with Solomon's servants to Ophir, whence they brought to king Solomon 420 talents of gold. *Eziongeber*, a harbour at the north-eastern end of the Elanitic Gulf, was probably the "large and beautiful town of *Asziun*" mentioned by Makrizi (see at Num. xxxiii. 35), and situated on the great bay of *Wady Emrag* (see Rüppell, *Reisen in Nubien*, pp. 252-3). *Eloth* (lit. trees, a grove, probably so named from the large palm-grove in the neighbourhood), or *Elath* (Deut. ii. 8; 2 Kings xiv. 22: see at Gen. xiv. 6), the *Aila* and *Elana* of the Greeks and Romans, Arab. *Aileh*, was situated at the northern point of the (Elanitic) gulf, which took its name from the town; and in the time of the Fathers it was an important commercial town. It was not far from the small modern fortress of *Akaba*, where heaps of rubbish still show the spot on which it formerly stood (compare Rüppell, *Nub.* p. 248, with plates 6 and 7, and Robinson, *Pal.* i. p. 251 sqq.).—The corresponding text, 2 Chron. viii. 17, 18, differs in many respects from the account before us. The state-

ment in the Chronicles, that Solomon went to Eziongeber and Elath, is but a very unimportant deviation; for the building of the fleet makes it a very probable thing in itself that Solomon should have visited on that account the two towns on the Elanitic Gulf, which were very near to one another, to make the requisite arrangements upon the spot for this important undertaking. There is apparently a far greater deviation in ver. 27, where, in the place of the statement that Hiram sent יָמָא, in the (or a) fleet, his servants as sailors who had knowledge of the sea, the chronicler affirms that Hiram sent by his servants ships and men who had knowledge of the sea. For the only way in which Hiram could send ships to Eziongeber was either by land or (as Ritter, *Erdk.* xiv. p. 365, supposes) out of the Persian Gulf, supposing that the Tyrians had a fleet upon that sea at so early a date as this. The statement in the Chronicles receives an apparent confirmation from 1 Kings x. 22, "The king had a Tarshish fleet upon the sea with the fleet of Hiram," if indeed this passage also refers to the trade with Ophir, as is generally supposed; for then these words affirm that Hiram sent ships of his own to Ophir along with those of Solomon. We do not think it probable, however, that the words "Hiram sent ships by his own men" are to be so pressed as to be taken to mean that he had whole ships, or ships taken to pieces, conveyed to Eziongeber either from Tyre or out of the Mediterranean Sea, although many cases might be cited from antiquity in support of this view.¹ In all probability the words affirm nothing more than that Hiram supplied the ships for this voyage, that is to say, that he had them built at Eziongeber by his own men, and the requisite materials conveyed thither, so

¹ Thus, for example, according to Arriani *exped. Alex.* l. v. p. 329, and vii. p. 485 (ed. Blanc), Alexander the Great had ships transported from Phœnicia to the Euphrates, and out of the Indus into the Hydaspes, the ships being taken to pieces for the land transport (*τμήματα*), and the pieces (*τμήματα*) afterwards joined together again. Plutarch relates (*vita Anton.* p. 948, ed. Frkf. 1620) that Cleopatra would have had her whole fleet carried across the isthmus which separates Egypt from the Red Sea, and have escaped by that means, had not the Arabs prevented the execution of her plan by burning the first ships that were drawn up on the land. According to Thucydides, *bell. Pelop.* iv. 8, the Peloponnesians conveyed sixty ships which lay at Corcyra across the Leucadian isthmus. Compare also Polyæni *strateg.* v. 2, 6, and Ammian. Marcell. xxiv. 7, and from the middle ages the account of Makrizi in Burckhardt's *Reisen in Syrien*, p. 381.

far as they were not to be obtained upon the spot. At any rate, Solomon was obliged to call the Tyrians to his help for the building of the ships, since the Israelites, who had hitherto carried on no maritime trade at all, were altogether inexperienced in shipbuilding. Moreover, the country round Ezion-geber would hardly furnish wood adapted for the purpose, as there are only palms to be found there, whose spongy wood, however useful it may be for the inside of houses, cannot be applied to the building of ships. But if Hiram had ships built for Solomon by his own men and sent him sailors who were accustomed to the sea, he would certainly have some of his own ships engaged in this maritime trade; and this explains the statement in ch. x. 22.

The destination of the fleet was *Ophir*, whence the ships brought 420 or (according to the Chronicles) 450 talents of gold. The difference between 420 and 450 may be accounted for from the substitution of the numeral letter 3 (50) for 2 (20). The sum mentioned amounted to eleven or twelve million dollars (from £1,600,000 to £1,800,000—Tr.), and the question arises, whether this is to be taken as the result of one voyage, or as the entire profits resulting from the expeditions to *Ophir*. The words admit of either interpretation, although they are more favourable to the latter than to the former, inasmuch as there is no allusion whatever to the fact that they brought this amount all at once or on every voyage. (See also at ch. x. 14 and 22.) The question as to the situation of *Ophir* has given rise to great dispute, and hitherto no certain conclusion has been arrived at; in fact, it is possible that there are no longer any means of deciding it. Some have endeavoured to prove that it was in southern Arabia, others that it was on the eastern coast of Africa, and others again that it was in Hither India.¹ The decision is dependent upon a

¹ Compare the thorough examination of the different views concerning *Ophir* in C. Ritter's *Erdk.* xiv. pp. 348-431, with the briefer collection made by Gesenius in his *Thes.* p. 141 sq. and in the *Allgem. Encyclop. der Wissenschaft u. Künste*, 3 Sect. Bd. 4, p. 201 sqq., and by Pressel, art. "*Ophir*," in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*.—We need not dwell upon the different opinions held by the earlier writers. But among modern authors, Niebuhr, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, and Seetzen decide in favour of Arabia; Quatremère (*Mémoire sur le pays d'Ophir* in *Mém. de l'Institut. roy.* 1845, t. xv. P. ii. p. 350 sqq.) and Movers, who takes *Ophir* to be the name of an emporium on the eastern coast of Africa, in favour of *Sofala*; while Chr. Lassen (*Indische Alterthumskunde*,

previous question, whether ch. x. 22, "The king had a Tarshish fleet upon the sea with the fleet of Hiram; once in three years came the Tarshish fleet, bringing gold, silver," etc., also applies to the voyage to Ophir. The expression "Tarshish fleet;" the word **יָם** ("on the sea"), which naturally suggests that sea to which the Israelites applied the special epithet **יָם**, namely the Mediterranean; and lastly, the difference in the cargoes,—the ships from Ophir bringing gold and *algummim* wood (ver. 28 and ch. x. 11), and the Tarshish fleet bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks (ch. x. 22),—appear to favour the conclusion that the Tarshish fleet did not sail to Ophir, but upon the Mediterranean Sea to Tarshish, i.e. Tartessus in Spain; to which we may add the fact that **אֲנִי תַרְשִׁישׁ** is reproduced in 2 Chron. ix. 21 by **אֲנִיּוֹת הַלְכוֹת תַרְשִׁישׁ**, "ships going to Tarshish." Nevertheless, however plausible these arguments may appear, after a renewed investigation of the subject I cannot regard them as having decisive weight: for (1) the expression "Tarshish fleet" is used in ch. xxii. 49 in connection with ships that were intended to go to Ophir; (2) **יָם** (upon the sea) might receive its more precise definition from what precedes; and (3) the difference in the cargoes reduces itself to this, that in addition to the gold, which was the chief production of Ophir, there are a few other articles of trade mentioned, so that the account in ch. x. 22 is more complete than that in ch. ix. 28 and x. 11. The statement concerning the Tarshish fleet in ch. x. 22 contains a passing remark, like that in ch. x. 11, from which we must infer that both passages treat in the same manner simply of the voyage to Ophir, and therefore that the term "Tarshish ships," like our *Indiamen* (*Indienfahrer*), was applied to ships intended for long voyages. If, in addition to the ships sailing to Ophir, Solomon had also had a fleet upon the Mediterranean Sea which sailed with the Phœnicians to Tartessus, this would certainly have been mentioned here (ch. ix. 27, 28) at the same time as the Ophir voyage. On all

i. p. 537 sqq., ii. p. 552 sqq.) and C. Ritter are the principal supporters of India. On the other hand, Albr. Roscher (*Ptolemäus und die Handelsstrassen in Central-Africa*, Gotha 1857, p. 57 sqq.) has attempted to connect together all these views by assuming that the seamen of Hiram and Solomon fetched the gold of Western Africa from the island of Dahlak in the Red Sea, and having taken it to India to exchange, returned at the end of a three years' voyage enriched with gold and the productions of India.

these grounds we can come to no other conclusion than that the expression in 2 Chron. ix. 21, "ships going to Tarshish," is simply a mistaken exposition of the term "Tarshish fleet,"—a mistake which may easily be explained from the fact, that at the time when the Chronicles were written, the voyages not only of the Israelites but also of the Tyrians both to Ophir and Tarshish had long since ceased, and even the geographical situation of these places was then unknown to the Jews (see my *Introduction to the Old Test.* p. 442, ed. 2).

The name *Ophir* occurs first of all in Gen. x. 29 among the tribes of Southern Arabia, that were descended from Joktan, between Seba and Havilah, i.e. the Sabæans and Chaulotæans. Hence it appears most natural to look for the gold-land of Ophir in Southern Arabia. But as there is still a possibility that the Joktanide tribe of Ophir, or one branch of it, may subsequently have emigrated either to the eastern coast of Africa or even to Hither India, and therefore that the Solomonian Ophir may have been an Arabian colony outside Arabia, the situation of this gold country cannot be determined without further evidence from Gen. x. 29 alone; but before arriving at an actual decision, we must first of all examine the arguments that may be adduced in support of each of the three countries named. *Sofala* in Eastern Africa, in the Mozambique Channel, has nothing in

common with the name *Ophir*, but is the Arabic *أفريق* (Heb.

אֶפְרַיִם), i.e. lowland or sea-coast; and the old Portuguese accounts of the gold mines in the district of *Fura* there, as well as the pretended walls of the queen of Saba, have far too little evidence to support them, to have any bearing upon the question before us.

The supposed connection between the name *Ophir* and the city of *Σουπρά* mentioned by Ptolemæus, or *Οὔππαρα* by Periplus (*Geogr. min.* i. p. 30), in the neighbourhood of *Goa*, or the shepherd tribe of *Abhira*, cannot be sustained. *Σουπρά* or *Sufâra* (Edrisi) answers to the Sanscrit *Supâra*, i.e. beautiful coast (cf. Lassen, *Ind. Alterthk.* i. p. 107); and *Οὔππαρα* in Periplus is no doubt simply a false reading for *Σουπρά*, which has nothing in common with *אֶפְרַיִם*. And the shepherd tribe of *Abhira* can hardly come into consideration, because the country which they inhabited, to the south-east of the mouths of the Indus, has no gold.—Again, the hypothesis that India is intended derives just as little support from the circumstance that, with

the exception of Gen. x. 29, the LXX. have always rendered יִפְתִּי either *Σωφίρα* or *Σουφίρ*, which is, according to the Coptic lexicographers, the name used by the Copts for India, and that Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 4), who used the Old Test. in the Alexandrian version, has given India as the explanation of Ophir, as it does from this supposed resemblance in the names. For, according to the geographical ideas of the Alexandrians and later Greeks, India reached to Ethiopia, and Ethiopia to India, as Letronne has conclusively proved (see his *Mémoire sur une mission arienne*, etc., in *Mém. de l'Institut. Acad. des Inscript. et Bell. Lettres*, t. x. p. 220 sqq.).

Greater stress has been laid upon the duration of the voyages to Ophir,—namely, that the Tarshish fleet came once in three years, according to ch. x. 22, and brought gold, etc. But even Lassen, who follows Heeren, observes quite truly, that “this expression need not be understood as signifying that three whole years intervened between the departure and return, but simply that the fleet returned once in the course of three years.” Moreover, the stay in Ophir is to be reckoned in as part of the time occupied in the voyage; and that this is not to be estimated as a short one, is evident from the fact that, according to Homer, *Odys.* xv. 454 sqq., a Phœnician merchantman lay for a whole year at one of the Cyclades before he had disposed of his wares of every description, in return for other articles of commerce, and filled his roomy vessel. If we add to this the slowness of the voyage,—considering that just as at the present day the Arabian coasters go but very slowly from port to port, so the combined fleet of Hiram and Solomon would not be able to proceed with any greater rapidity, inasmuch as the Tyrians were not better acquainted with the dangerous Arabian Sea than the modern Arabians are, and that the necessary provisions for a long voyage, especially the water for drinking, could not be taken on board all at once, but would have to be taken in at the different landing-places, and that on these occasions some trade would be done,—we can easily understand how a voyage from Eziongeber to the strait of Bab el Mandeb and the return might occupy more than a year,¹ so that the time occupied in

¹ It is no proof to the contrary, that, according to the testimony of ancient writers, as collected by Movers (*Phœniz.* ii. 3, p. 190 sqq.), the Phœnicians sailed almost as rapidly as the modern merchant ships; for this evidence simply applies to the voyages on the Mediterranean Sea with which they were

the voyage as given here cannot furnish any decisive proof that the fleet sailed beyond Southern Arabia to the East Indies.

And lastly, the same remarks apply to the goods brought from Ophir, which many regard as decisive evidence in favour of India. The principal article for which Ophir became so celebrated, viz. the gold, is not found either in *Sufāra* near Goa, or in the land of *Abhira*. Even if India be much richer in gold than was formerly supposed (cf. Lassen, ii. p. 592), the rich gold country lies to the north of Cashmir (see Lassen, ii. pp. 603-4). Moreover, not only is it impossible to conceive what goods the Phœnicians can have offered to the Indian merchants for their gold and the other articles named, since large sums of gold were sent to India every year in the Roman times to pay for the costly wares that were imported thence (see Roscher, pp. 53, 54); but it is still less possible to comprehend how the shepherd tribe of *Abhira* could have come into possession of so much gold as the Ophir fleet brought home. The conjecture of Ritter (*Erdk.* xiv. p. 399) and Lassen (ii. p. 592), that this tribe had come to the coast not very long before from some country of their own where gold abounded, and that as an uncultivated shepherd tribe they attached but very little value to the gold, so that they parted with it to the Phœnicians for their purple cloths, their works in brass and glass, and for other things, has far too little probability to appear at all admissible. If the *Abhira* did not know the value of the gold, they would not have brought it in such quantities out of their original home into these new settlements. We should therefore be obliged to assume that they were a trading people, and this would be at variance with all the known accounts concerning this tribe.—As a rule, the gold treasures of Hither Asia were principally obtained from Arabia in the most ancient times. If we leave *Havilah* (Gen. ii. 11) out of the account, because its position cannot be determined

familiar, and to the period when the Phœnician navigation had reached its fullest development, so that it has no bearing upon the time of Solomon and a voyage upon the Arabian Sea, with which the Phœnicians were hitherto quite unacquainted.—Again, the calculation made by Lassen (ii. pp. 590-1), according to which a voyage from *Eziongeber* to the mouth of the *Indus* could have been accomplished in a hundred days, is founded upon the assumption that the Phœnicians were already acquainted with the monsoon and knew what was the best time for the navigation of the Red Sea,—an assumption which can neither be proved nor shown to be probable.

with certainty, the only other place specially referred to in the Old Testament besides Ophir as being celebrated as a gold country is Saba, in the south-western portion of Yemen. The Sabæans bring gold, precious stones, and incense (Isa. lx. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 22); and the queen of Saba presented Solomon with 120 talents of gold, with perfumes and with precious stones (1 Kings x. 10). This agrees with the accounts of the classical writers, who describe Arabia as very rich in gold (cf. Strabo, xvi. 777 sq. and 784; Diod. Sic. ii. 50, iii. 44; also Bochart, *Phaleg*, l. ii. c. 27). These testimonies, which we have already given in part at Ex. xxxviii. 31, are far too distinct to be set aside by the remark that there is no gold to be found in Arabia at the present time. For whilst, on the one hand, the wealth of Arabia in gold may be exhausted, just as Spain no longer yields any silver, on the other hand we know far too little of the interior of Southern Arabia to be able distinctly to maintain that there is no gold in existence there.—Silver, the other metal brought from Ophir, was also found in the land of the Nabatæans, according to Strabo, xvi. p. 784, although the wealth of the ancient world in silver was chiefly derived from Tarshish or Tartessus in Spain (cf. Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 36 sqq., where the different places are enumerated in which silver was found).—That precious stones were to be found in Arabia is evident from the passages cited above concerning the Sabæans.—On the other hand, however, it has been supposed that the remaining articles of Ophir could only have been brought from the East Indies.

According to ch. x. 12, the Ophir ships brought a large quantity of עֵץ אֱלִיָּהוּ (almuggim wood: 2 Chron. ii. 7, אֱלִיָּהוּ). According to Kimchi (on 2 Chron. ii. 7), the אֱלִיָּהוּ or אֱלִיָּהוּ is *arbor rubri coloris, dicta lingua arabica albakam* (البقم), *vulgo brasilica*. This tree, according to Abulfadl (Celsius, *Hierob.* i. p. 176), is a native of India and Ethiopia; and it is still a question in dispute, whether we are to understand by this the *Pterocarpus Santal.*, from which the true sandal-wood comes, and which is said to grow only in the East Indies on Malabar and Java, or the *Cæsalpinia Sappan L.*, a tree which grows in the East Indies, more especially in Ceylon, and also in different parts of Africa, the red wood of which is used in Europe chiefly for dyeing. Moreover the true explanation of the Hebrew name

is still undiscovered. The derivation of it from the Sanscrit *Valgu*, i.e. *pulcher* (Lassen and Ritter), has been set aside by Gesenius as inappropriate, and *mocha*, *mochâta*, which is said to signify sandal-wood in Sanscrit, has been suggested instead. But no evidence has been adduced in its favour, nor is the word to be found in Wilson's *Sanscrit Lexicon*. If, however, this derivation were correct, מך would be the Arabic article, and the introduction of this article in connection with the word *mocha* would be a proof that the sandal-wood, together with its name, came to the Hebrews through merchants who spoke Arabic.—The other articles from Ophir mentioned in ch. x. 22 are שֶׁנְהָבִים, ὀδόντες ἐλεφάντινοι (LXX.), *dentes elephantorum* or *ebur* (Vulg.), שֵׁן דָּבִיל, elephants' teeth (Targ.). But however certain the meaning of the word may thus appear, the justification of this meaning is quite as uncertain. In other cases ivory is designated by the simple term שֵׁן (ch. x. 18, xxii. 39; Ps. xlv. 9; Amos iii. 15, etc.), whereas Ezekiel (xxvii. 15) calls the whole tusk שֵׁן קַרְנֹת, horns of the tooth. הָבִים is said to signify elephants here; and according to Benary it is contracted from הַאֲבִים, the Sanscrit word *ibha*, elephant; according to Ewald, from הַלְבִים, from the Sanscrit *Kalabha*; and according to Hitzig, from הָבִים = לִיבִים, *Libyi*; or else שֶׁנְהָבִים is a false reading for שֵׁן הַבִּנִּים, ivory and ebony, according to Ezek. xxvii. 15 (see *Ges. Thes.* p. 1453). Of these four derivations the first two are decidedly wrong: the first, because *ibha* as a name for the elephant only occurs, according to Weber, in the later Indian writings, and is never used in the earlier writings in this sense (*vid.* Roediger, *Addenda ad Ges. thes.* p. 115); the second, because *Kalabha* does not signify the elephant, but *catulum elephanti*, before it possesses any teeth available for ivory. The third is a fancy which its originator himself has since given up; and the fourth a conjecture, which is not raised to a probability even by the attempt of Böttcher to show that הָבִים is a case of backward assimilation from הַבִּנִּים, because the asyndeton שֵׁן הָבִים between two couples connected by ו is without any analogy, and the passages adduced by Böttcher, viz. Deut. xxix. 22, Josh. xv. 54 sqq., and even Ezek. xxvii. 33, are to be taken in quite a different way.—The rendering of לָפִים by apes, and the connection of the name not only with the Sanscrit and Malabar *kapi*, but also with the Greek κῆπος and κῆβος, also κείβος, are much surer; but, on the other hand, the assumption

that the Greeks, like the Semitic nations, received the word from the Indians along with the animals, is very improbable: for *κῆπος* in Greek does not denote the ape (*πίθηκος*) generally, but simply a species of long-tailed apes, the native land of which, according to the testimony of ancient writers, was Ethiopia,¹ and the Ethiopian apes are hardly likely to have sprung from India.—And lastly, even in the case of *פִּינְיָן*, according to the ancient versions *peacocks*, the derivation from the Malabaric or Tamul *tógai* or *tóghai* (cf. Roediger in *Ges. Thes.* p. 1502) is not placed beyond the reach of doubt.

If, in conclusion, we look through all the articles of commerce that were brought to Jerusalem from the Ophir voyages, apart from the gold and silver, which were not to be found in the land of Abhira, the ivory and ebony (supposing that we ought to read *יָבֵן* *יָבֵן* for *יָבֵן* *יָבֵן*) furnish no evidence in support of India, inasmuch as both of them could have been brought from Ethiopia, as even Lassen admits (ii. p. 554). And even if the words *Almuggim*, *Kophim*, and *Tucchiyim* really came from India along with the objects to which they belonged, it would by no means follow with certainty from this alone that Ophir was situated in India.—For since, for example, there are indisputable traces of very early commercial intercourse between India and Hither Asia and Africa, especially Southern Arabia and Ethiopia, reaching far beyond the time of Solomon, the seamen of Hiram and Solomon may have obtained these articles either in Arabia or on the Ethiopian coast. For even if the statements of Herodotus and Strabo, to the effect that the Phœnicians emigrated from the islands of the Erythræan Sea, Tylos (or Tyros?) and Arados, to the Phœnician coast, do not prove that the Phœnicians had already extended their commercial enterprise as far as India even before the twelfth century, as Lassen (ii. 597 and 584–5) supposes; if the Tyrians and Aradians, who were related to them by tribe, still continued to dwell upon the islands of the Persian Gulf, from which they could much more easily find the way to

¹ Compare Aristoteles, *hist. animal.* ii. 8: *ἔστι δὲ ὁ μὲν κῆπος πίθηκος ἔχων οὐράν.* Strabo, xvii. p. 812: *ἔστι δὲ ὁ κῆπος τὸ μὲν πρόσωπον ἰοικώς Σατύρῳ, τ' ἄλλα δὲ κυνὸς καὶ ἀρκτου μεταξὺ γιννᾶται δ' ἐν Αἰθιοπία.* Plinius, h. n. viii. 19 (28): *lidem* (the games of Pompey the Great) *ostenderunt ex Æthiopia quas vocant κῆπους, quarum pedes posteriores pedibus humanis et cruribus, priores manibus fuere similes.* Solinus Polyh. says the same (Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. lib. iii. c. 31).

India by sea,—since the historical character of these statements has been disputed by Movers (*Phönizier*, ii. 1, p. 38 sqq.) on very weighty grounds; yet it is evident that there was a very early intercourse between East India and Africa, reaching far beyond all historical testimony, from the following well-established facts: that the Egyptians made use of indigo in the dyeing of their stuffs, and this could only have been brought to them from India; that muslins, which were likewise of Indian origin, are found among the materials in which the mummies are enveloped; and that in the graves of the kings of the eighteenth dynasty, who ceased to reign in the year 1476 B.C., there have been discovered vases of Chinese porcelain (cf. Lassen, ii. p. 596). And the intercourse between the southern coast of Arabia and Hither India may have been quite as old, if not older; so that Indian productions may have been brought to Hither Asia by the Sabæans long before the time of Solomon (*vid.* Lassen, ii. pp. 593-4, and Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 3, pp. 247, 256). But the commercial intercourse between Arabia and the opposite coast of Ethiopia, by which African productions reached the trading inhabitants of Arabia, was unquestionably still older than the trade with India. If we weigh well all these points, there is no valid ground for looking outside Arabia for the situation of the Solomonian Ophir. But we shall no doubt be obliged to give up the hope of determining with any greater precision that particular part of the coast of Arabia in which Ophir was situated, inasmuch as hitherto neither the name Ophir nor the existence of gold-fields in Arabia has been established by modern accounts, and moreover the interior of the great Arabian peninsula is still for the most part a *terra incognita*.¹

¹ If the notice of Eupolemus contained in a fragment in Eusebius (*præpar. ev.* ix. 30), to the effect that *David* (a mistake for Solomon) sent miners to the island of *Οὐφῶν* (for which Gesenius conjectures that we should read *Οὐφῶν* or *Οὐφῶρ*) in the Red Sea, which was rich in gold mines, and that they brought gold thence to Judæa, could be proved to be historical through any earlier testimony, Ophir would have been an island of the Erythræan Sea, either *Dahlak* inside Bab el Mandeb, or *Diu Zokatara* (the Sanscrit *Dwipa Sukhatara*, i.e. the happy island) by the present Cape Guardafui. But this notice is evidently simply a conjecture founded upon the Old Testament, having no historical value.

CHAP. X. THE QUEEN OF SABA. SOLOMON'S WEALTH AND SPLENDOUR.

Vers. 1-13. VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF SABA (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 1-12).—When the fame of Solomon's great wisdom came to the ears of the queen of Saba, probably through the Ophir voyages, she undertook a journey to Jerusalem, to convince herself of the truth of the report which had reached her, by putting it to the test by means of enigmas. שַׁבָּא, *Sabá*, is not Ethiopia or Meroë, as Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 5), who confounds שַׁבָּא with אֲבִיִּי, and the Abyssinian Christians suppose (*vid.* Ludolfi *hist. Æth.* ii. 3), but the kingdom of the *Sabæans*, who were celebrated for their trade in incense, gold, and precious stones, and who dwelt in Arabia Felix, with the capital *Saba*, or the *Μαριάβα* of the Greeks. This queen, who is called *Balkis* in the Arabian legend (cf. Koran, *Sur.* 27, and Pococke, *Specim. hist. Arab.* p. 60), heard the fame of Solomon יְהוֹשָׁפָט; i.e. not "at the naming of the name of Jehovah" (Böttcher), nor "in respect of the glory of the Lord, with regard to that which Solomon had instituted for the glory of the Lord" (Thenius); nor even "serving to the glorification of God" (de Wette and Maurer); but literally, "belonging to the name of the Lord;" in other words, the fame which Solomon had acquired through the name of the Lord, or through the fact that the Lord had so glorified Himself in him (Ewald and Dietrich in *Ges. Lex. s.v.* ?). "She came to try him with riddles," i.e. to put his wisdom to the test by carrying on a conversation with him in riddles. The love of the Arabs for riddles, and their superiority in this *jeu d'esprit*, is sufficiently well known from the immense extent to which the Arabic literature abounds in *Mashals*. We have only to think of the large collections of proverbs made by Ali ben Abi Taleb and Meidani, or the *Makamen* of Hariri, which have been made accessible to all by F. Rückert's masterly translation into German, and which are distinguished by an amazing fulness of word-play and riddles. חֵידָה, a riddle, is a pointed saying which merely hints at the deeper truth and leaves it to be guessed.—Vers. 2, 3. As the queen of a wealthy country, she came with a very large retinue. חֵיָל does not mean a military force or an armed escort (Thenius), but riches, property; namely, her numerous retinue of men (עֲבָדָיו, ver. 13), and camels laden with valuable treasures. The words יִקְרָה . . . נִסְלִים are an explanatory circumstantial clause, both here and also in the Chronicles,

where the cop. *Vav* stands before מַלְכִּי (cf. Ewald, § 341, *a*, *b*). "And spake to Solomon all that she had upon her heart," *i.e.* in this connection, whatever riddles she had it in her mind to lay before him; "and Solomon told her all her sayings," *i.e.* was able to solve all her riddles. There is no ground for thinking of sayings of a religious nature, as the earlier commentators supposed, but simply of sayings the meaning of which was concealed, and the understanding of which indicated very deep wisdom.—Vers. 4, 5. She saw מַלְכִּי, *i.e.* Solomon's palace, not the temple, and "the food of his table," *i.e.* both the great variety of food that was placed upon the king's table (ch. v. 2, 3), and also the costly furniture of the table (ver. 21), and "the seat of his retainers and the standing of his servants," *i.e.* the places in the palace assigned to the ministers and servants of the king, which were contrived with wisdom and arranged in a splendid manner. מַלְכִּי are the chief officers of the king, *viz.* ministers, counsellors, and *aides de camp*; מַלְכִּי, the court servants; מַלְכִּי, the rooms of the courtiers in attendance; מַלְכִּי, the standing-place, *i.e.* the rooms of the inferior servants, "and their clothing," which they received from the king; and מַלְכִּי, not his cup-bearers (LXX, Vulg.), but as in Gen. xl 21, the drink, *i.e.* probably the whole of the drinking arrangements; מַלְכִּי, and his ascent, by which he was accustomed to go into the house of Jehovah. מַלְכִּי does not mean burnt-offering here, as the older translators have rendered it, but ascent, as in Ezek. xl 26, and as the Chronicles have correctly explained it by מַלְכִּי. For burnt-offering is not to be thought of in this connection, because the queen had nothing to see or to be astonished at in the presentation of such an offering. מַלְכִּי is most likely "the king's outer entrance" into the temple, mentioned in 2 Kings xvi 18; and the passage before us would lead us to suppose that this was a work of art, or an artistic arrangement. וְלֹא הָיָה רוּחַ, "and there was no more spirit in her:" she was beside herself with amazement, as in Josh. v. 1, ii. 11.—Vers. 6-9. She then said with astonishment to Solomon, that of what her eyes now saw she had not heard the half, through the report which had reached her of his affairs and of his wisdom, and which had hitherto appeared incredible to her; and not only congratulated his servants, who stood continually near him and could hear his wisdom, but also praised Jehovah his God, that out of His eternal love to His people Israel He had given them a king

to do justice and righteousness. The earlier theologians inferred from this praising of Jehovah, which involved faith in the true God, when taken in connection with Matt. xii. 42, that this queen had been converted to the true God, and conversed with Solomon on religious matters. But, as we have already observed at ch. v. 21, an acknowledgment of Jehovah as the God of Israel was reconcilable with polytheism. And the fact that nothing is said about her offering sacrifice in the temple, shows that the conversion of the queen is not to be thought of here.—Ver. 10. She thereupon presented to Solomon a hundred and twenty talents of gold (more than three million thalers [nearly half a million sterling—Tr.]), and a very large quantity of spices and precious stones. The בְּשָׁמִים probably included the genuine balsam of Arabia, even if בָּשָׂם was not the specific name of the genuine balsam. “There never more came so much of such spices to Jerusalem.” Instead of עוֹר לָרִיב בָּא . . . we find in the Chronicles, ver. 9, simply לֹא הָיָה, “there was nothing like this balsam,” which conveys the same meaning though expressed more indefinitely, since בְּבָשָׂם הָיָה points back to the preceding words, “balsam (spices) in great quantity.”¹—Vers. 11, 12. The allusion to these costly presents leads the historian to introduce the remark here, that the Ophir fleet also brought, in addition to gold, a large quantity of *Algummim* wood (see at ch. ix. 28) and precious stones. Of this wood Solomon had מִסְעָר or מִסְלֹת made for the temple and palace. מִסְעָר, from סָעַר, signifies a support, and מִסְלָה may be a later form for מִסְלָה, a flight of steps or a staircase, so that we should have to think of steps with bannisters. This explanation is at any rate a safer one than that of “divans” (Thenius), which would have been quite out of place in the temple, or “narrow pannelled stripes on the floor” (Bertheau), which cannot in the smallest degree be deduced from מִסְעָר, or “support=moveables, viz. tables, benches, footstools, boxes, and drawers” (Böttcher), which neither harmonizes with the temple, where there was no such furniture, nor with the מִסְלֹת of the Chronicles. “And guitars and harps for the singers,” probably for the temple singers. בָּנֹר and נָבֵל are string instruments; the former resembling our guitar

¹ It was this which gave rise to the legend in Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 6), that it was through this queen that the root of the true balsam (*Opobalsamum*), which was afterwards cultivated in gardens at Jericho and Engedi, was first of all brought to Palestine (cf. Movers, *Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 226 sqq.).

rather than the harp, the strings being carried over the sounding-board upon a bridge, the latter being of a pitcher shape without any sounding bridge, as in the case of the harps.—Ver. 13. Solomon gave the queen of Saba all that she wished and asked for, beside what he gave her “according to the hand,” i.e. the might, of the king; that is to say, in addition to the presents answering to his might and his wealth, which he was obliged to give as a king, according to the Oriental custom. In the Chronicles (ver. 12) we find “beside that which she had brought (הַכִּיָּאָה) to the king,” which is an abbreviated expression for “beside that which he gave her in return for what she had brought to him,” or beside the return presents corresponding to her gifts to him, as it has been already correctly paraphrased by the Targum.

Vers. 14-22. SOLOMON'S WEALTH AND THE USE HE MADE OF IT (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 13-21).—Ver. 14. The gold which Solomon received in one year amounted to 666 talents,—more than seventeen million thalers (two million and a half sterling—Tr.). 666 is evidently a round number founded upon an approximative valuation. בִּשְׁנֵי אֶחָת is rendered in the Vulg. *per annos singulos*; but this is hardly correct, as the Ophir fleet, the produce of which is at any rate included, did not arrive every year, but once in three years. Thenius is wrong in supposing that this revenue merely applies to the direct taxes levied upon the Israelites. It includes all the branches of Solomon's revenue, whether derived from his commerce by sea and land (cf. vers. 28, 29) or from the royal domains (1 Chron. xxvii. 26-31), or received in the form of presents from foreign princes, who either visited him like the queen of Saba or sent ambassadors to him (vers. 23, 24), excepting the duties and tribute from conquered kings, which are specially mentioned in ver. 15. לְבַד מֵאֲנָשֵׁי הָאֶרֶץ, beside what came in (בָּא לְשִׁלְמָה) from the travelling traders and the commerce of the merchants, and from all the kings, etc. אֲנָשֵׁי הָאֶרֶץ (a combination resembling our merchantmen; cf. Ewald, § 287, e, p. 721) are probably the tradesmen or smaller dealers who travelled about in the country, and רִבְלִים the wholesale dealers. This explanation of אֲנָשֵׁי הָאֶרֶץ cannot be rendered doubtful by the objection that אֲנָשֵׁי only occurs elsewhere in connection with the wandering about of spies; for רִבְלִי signified originally to go about, spy out, or retail scandal, and after that to trade, and go about as a tradesman. מְלָכֵי הָעָרֹב are not kings of the auxiliary

and allied nations (Chald., Ges.), but kings of the mixed population, and according to Jer. xxv. 24, more especially of the population of Arabia Deserta (הַשִּׁבְיִים בְּמִדְבָּר), which bordered upon Palestine; for עָרֵב is a mixed crowd of all kinds of men, who either attach themselves to a nation (Ex. xii. 38), or live in the midst of it as foreigners (Neh. xiii. 3), hence a number of mercenaries (Jer. l. 37). In 2 Chron. ix. 14, הָעָרֵב is therefore correctly explained by the term עָרֵב, which does not mean the whole of Arabia, but "only a tract of country not very extensive on the east and south of Palestine" (Gesenius), as these tribes were tributary to Solomon. פְּחוּתֵי הָאָרֶץ, the governors of the land, are probably the officers named in ch. iv. 7-19. As they collected the duties in the form of natural productions and delivered them in that form, so also did the tradesmen and merchants pay their duties, and the subjugated pastoral tribes of Arabia their tribute, *in natura*. This explains in a very simple manner why these revenues are separated from the revenue of Solomon which came in the form of money. פְּחוּתָהּ is a foreign word, which first found its way into the Hebrew language after the times of the Assyrians, and sprang from the Sanscrit *paksha*, a companion or friend, which took the form of *pakkha* in Prakrit, and probably of *pakha* in the early Persian (*vid.* Benfey and Stern, *die Monatsnamen*, p. 195).—Vers. 16, 17. Solomon had 500 ornamental shields made, 200 larger ones (צִיָּים, *scuta*, targets), and 300 smaller (מִיָּים, *clypei*). These shields, like all the shields of the ancients, were made of wood or basket-work, and covered with gold plate instead of leather (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. pp. 296 sqq.). זָהָב שְׁחָט does not mean *aurum jugulatum*, i.e. gold mixed with metal of a different kind, but, as Kimchi has shown, *aurum diductum*, beaten gold, from שָׁחַט, to stretch; since Solomon would certainly use pure gold for these ornamental shields. "Six hundred shekels of gold he spread upon one target," that is to say, he used for gilding one target. Six hundred shekels would weigh about 17½ lbs., so that the value of the gold upon a target would be more than 5000 thalers (£750), supposing that the Mosaic shekel is meant. But this is rendered doubtful by the fact that the gold upon the small shields is estimated at three minæ. If, for example, the three minæ are equal to three hundred shekels, according to 2 Chron. ix. 16, as is generally assumed, a hundred shekels are reckoned as one mina; and as the mina only contained fifty Mosaic shekels, according to Ezek.

xliv. 12, the reference must be to shekels after the king's weight (2 Sam. xiv. 26), which were only half the sacred shekel (see my *bibl. Archæol.* ii. p. 135). Consequently the gold plate upon one target was not quite 9 lbs., and that upon a shield not quite $4\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. These shields were intended for the body-guard to carry on state occasions (ch. xiv. 27, 28; 2 Chron. xii. 10), and were kept in the house of the forest of Lebanon (ch. vii. 2). —Vers. 18-20. Solomon had a great throne of ivory made, and had it overlaid with fine gold. כִּסֵּא־אֵיִן is not a throne made of ivory, but one merely ornamented with ivory; and we are to imagine the gilding as effected by laying the gold simply upon the wood, and inserting the ivory within the gold plate. מִנֶּחֱפָל, a *hophal* participle of נָחַף: *aurum depuratum*, hence = מְהוֹר in 2 Chron. ix. 17. The throne had six steps, and a "rounded head on the hinder part thereof," i.e. a back which was arched above or rounded off,¹ and זְרֵית, arms, i.e. arms on both sides of the seat (מְקוֹם הַשֵּׁבֶרֶת), and two lions standing by the side of the arms. Beside this there were twelve lions upon the six steps, namely two upon each step, one on this side and one on that. Instead of מַאֲחִזִּים (ver. 20) we find מַאֲרִיִּים in ver. 19, just as we do in both verses of the Chronicles, not because the reference is to artificial, inanimate figures and not to natural lions, as Thenius supposes, but because the plural ending יִם is an unusual one with this word; and even where natural lions are spoken of, we always find מַאֲרִיִּים in other passages (cf. Judg. xiv. 5; 2 Sam. i. 23; 2 Kings xvii. 25; Song of Sol. iv. 8, etc.). The lions were symbols of the ruler's authority; and the twelve lions upon the steps may possibly have pointed to the rule over the twelve tribes of Israel, which was concentrated in the throne; not "watchers of the throne," as Thenius thinks. This throne was so splendid a work, that the historian observes that nothing of the kind had ever been made for any other kingdom. Upon the

¹ Instead of מַאֲחִזִּים לְכִסֵּא עֲנֹל we have in the Chronicles וּבִשְׁבֶּשֶׁת לְכִסֵּא מַאֲחִזִּים, בְּצִוְהָב, "and a footstool in gold fastened to the throne" (the plural מַאֲחִזִּים refers to the footstool and the steps). Now, however easily מַאֲחִזִּים may have been written by mistake for מַאֲחִזִּים, כִּסֵּא מַאֲחִזִּים cannot have grown out of עֲנֹל רִאשׁ by any such mistake. The *quid-pro-quo* of the LXX. for עֲנֹל, ἀποστομὴ μὲν, in which עֲנֹל is certainly confounded with עֲנֹל, does not warrant the conjecture of Thenius, that the Chronicler found עֲנֹל in his original and substituted כִּסֵּא (lamb), whereupon כִּסֵּא (lamb) was changed by another hand into כִּסֵּא, footstep, and רִאשׁ was dropped altogether.

early Assyrian monuments we do indeed find high seats depicted, which are very artistically worked, and provided with backs and arms, and some with the arms supported by figures of animals (see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 301), but none resembling Solomon's throne. It is not till a later age that the more splendid thrones appear (*vid.* Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenland*, iii. pp. 176 sqq.).—Vers. 21, 22. The drinking vessels of Solomon also were all of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon of costly gold (כֶּזָבִיב: see at ch. vi. 20). Silver was counted as nothing, because the Tarshish fleet arrived once in three years, bringing gold, silver, etc. (see at ch. ix. 28).

In vers. 23–29 everything that had to be stated concerning the wealth, wisdom, and revenue of Solomon is summed up as a conclusion (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 22–28 and i. 14–17).—Vers. 23 and 24 point back to ch. v. 9–14. וַיִּהְיֶה: Solomon became greater, not was greater, on account of the *Váv* consec. כָּל־הָאָרֶץ, all the world, corresponds to כָּל־הָעָם in ch. v. 14. The foreigners out of all lands, who came on account of his wisdom, brought Solomon presents: gold and silver vessels, clothes (שָׂמֶיךָ, court dresses, which are still customary presents in the East), שָׁרָב, armour, spices, horses and mules.—Ver. 26 is simply a repetition of ch. v. 6 (compare also ch. ix. 19); and ver. 27 is merely a further extension of ver. 21. The words of ver. 27, “Solomon made silver like stones in Jerusalem, and cedars like the sycamores in the lowland for abundance,” are a hyperbolical description of his collection of enormous quantities of precious metals and costly wood. סִימְרִים, *sycomori*, mulberry fig-trees, are very rare in Palestine in its present desolate state (see Rob. *Pal.* iii. 27), and are only met in any abundance in Egypt; but in ancient times they abounded in the lowlands of Palestine to such an extent, that they were used as common building wood (*vid.* Isa. ix. 9, on which Theodoret observes, *τούτων (συκαμίνων) ἡ Παλαιστίνη πεπλήρωται*). According to 1 Chron. xxvii. 28, the sycamore forests in the lowland of Judah were royal domains.—Vers. 28, 29 (cf. 2 Chron. i. 16, 17). “And (as for) the going out of horses from Egypt for Solomon, a company of king's merchants fetched (horses) for a definite price.” This is the only possible explanation of the verse according to the Masoretic punctuation; but to obtain it, the first בָּקָה must be connected with בָּרָה in opposition to the accents, and the second must be pointed בָּקָה. This is the rendering adopted by Ge-

senius in his *Thesaurus* and *Lexicon* (ed. Dietr. s. v. סָקָה). The meaning company or troop may certainly be justified from Gen. i. 10, Ex. vii. 19, and Lev. xi. 36, where the word signifies an accumulation of water. Still there is something very strange not only in the application of the word both to a company of traders and also to a troop of horses, but also in the omission of סָקָה (horses) after the second סָקָה. Hence the rendering of the LXX. and Vulgate deserves attention, and may possibly be the one to be preferred (as Michaelis, Bertheau *on Chron.*, and Movers assume). The translators of these versions have taken סָקָה as the name of a place, ἐξ Ἐκουέ, or rather ἐκ Κουέ, *de Coa*.¹ According to this, the rendering would be: "And as for the going out of horses from Egypt and Koa (or Kawe) for Solomon, the king's traders fetched them from Koa (Kawe) for a fixed price." It is true that the situation of *Koa* cannot be more precisely defined; but there seems to be very little doubt that it was a place for the collection of customs upon the frontier of Egypt.—Ver. 29. "And there came up and went out a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty shekels; and so (in the same manner as for Solomon) they led them out for all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram through their hand." מִרְכָּבָה, like רֶכֶב in 2 Sam. viii. 4, x. 18, and Ezek. xxxix. 20, denotes a chariot with the team of horses belonging to it, possibly three horses (see at ch. v. 6), not *quadriga* (Clericus and others), or two draught horses and two as a reserve (Thenius). For the inference, that if a horse cost 150 shekels, a team of four would be obtained for 600, is not quite a certain one, since the chariot itself would certainly not be given in. A hundred and fifty shekels are a little more than 130 thalers (£19, 10s.—Tr.), and 600 would be 525 thalers (£78, 15s.). These amounts are sufficient to show how untenable the opinion of Movers is, that the sums mentioned are not the prices paid for horses and chariots, but the payment made for their exit, or the customs duty. And his other opinion is equally erroneous, namely that the chariots and horses were state carriages and horses of luxury intended for the king.—The merchants are called the king's

¹ That *Koué* or *Kaí* is the earliest reading of the LXX., and not the ἐκουέ of the Cod. Vat. and Alex., is very evident from the statement which we find in the *Onomast.* of Eusebius (ed. Larsow et Parth. p. 260), Κώδ, πλεῖστον Αἰγύπτου; for which Jerome has *Coa, quæ est juxta Ægyptum*, after the Vulgate.

traders, not because a portion of their profits went into the royal treasury as the tax upon trade (Bertheau), nor as the brokers who bought for the king (Thenius), but because they carried on their trade for the king's account. יָדָם cannot be adduced as evidence to the contrary; for linguists require no proof that this cannot mean "*auf ihre Hand*," as Thenius assumes. Böttcher's explanation is the right one, namely, "through their hand," inasmuch as they brought the horses and chariots themselves even to those kings who lived at a greater distance, without employing intermediate agents. The kings of the חֵתִים, the Hittites in the wider sense (= Canaanites, as in Josh. i. 4, 2 Kings vii. 6, Ezek. xvi. 3), and of Aram, were in part Solomon's vassals, since his rule extended over all the Canaanites with the exception of the Phoenicians, and over several kingdoms of Aram.

CHAP. XL. SOLOMON'S POLYGAMY AND IDOLATRY. HIS OPPONENTS,
AND HIS DEATH.

The idolatry into which Solomon fell in his old age appears so strange in a king so wise and God-fearing as Solomon showed himself to be at the dedication of the temple, that many have been quite unable to reconcile the two, and have endeavoured to show either that Solomon's worship of idols was psychologically impossible, or that the knowledge of God and the piety attributed to him are unhistorical. But great wisdom and a refined knowledge of God are not a defence against the folly of idolatry, since this has its roots in the heart, and springs from sensual desires and the lust of the flesh. The cause assigned in the biblical account for Solomon's falling away from the Lord, is that he loved many strange, i.e. foreign or heathen, wives, who turned his heart from Jehovah to their own gods in his old age. Consequently the falling away did not take place suddenly, but gradually, as Solomon got old, and was not a complete renunciation of the worship of Jehovah, to whom he offered solemn sacrifices three times a year, and that certainly to the day of his death (ch. ix. 25), but consisted simply in the fact that his heart was no longer thoroughly devoted to the Lord (ch. xi. 4), and that he inclined towards the idols of his foreign wives and built them altars (vers. 5-8); that is to say, it consisted merely in a syncretic mixture of Jehovah-worship and idolatry, by which the worship which should be paid solely

and exclusively to the true God was not only injured, but was even turned into idolatry itself, Jehovah the only true God being placed on a level with the worthless gods of the heathen. —Love to foreign wives no doubt presupposed an inclination to foreign customs ; it was not, however, idolatry in itself, but was still reconcilable with that sincere worship of Jehovah which is attributed to Solomon in the earlier years of his reign. At the same time it was a rock on which living faith and true adherence to the Lord might at last suffer shipwreck. And we may even infer from the repeated warnings of God (ch. iii. 14, vi. 12, ix. 4), that from the earliest years of his reign Solomon was in danger of falling into idolatry. This danger did, indeed, spring in his case from his inclination to foreign customs ; but this inclination was again influenced by many of the circumstances of his reign, which we must regard as contributing more remotely to his eventual fall. And among the first of these we must place the splendour and glory of his reign. Through long and severe conflicts David had succeeded in conquering all the enemies of Israel, and had not only helped his people to peace and prosperity, but had also raised the kingdom to great power and glory. And Solomon inherited these fruits of his father's reign. Under the blessings of peace he was not only able to carry out the work of building a splendid temple, which his father had urged upon him, but was also able, by a wise use of the sources already existing and by opening new ones, still further to increase the treasures which he had collected, and thereby to exalt the splendour of his kingdom. The treaty with Hiram of Tyre, which enabled him to execute the intended state buildings in Jerusalem, was followed by alliances for the establishment of a widespread commerce both by sea and land, through which ever increasing treasures of gold and silver, and other costly goods, were brought to the king. As this accumulation of riches helped to nourish his inclination to a love of show, and created a kind of luxury which was hardly reconcilable with the simplicity of manners and the piety of a servant of God, so the foreign trade led to a toleration of heathen customs and religious views which could not fail to detract from the reverence paid to Jehovah, however little the trade with foreigners might be in itself at variance with the nature of the Old Testament kingdom of God. And again, even the great wisdom of king Solomon might also become a rock en-

dangering his life of faith, not so much in the manner suggested by J. J. Hess (*Gesch. Dav. u. Sal.* ii. p. 413), namely, that an excessive thirst for inquiry might easily seduce him from the open and clearer regions of the kingdom of truth into the darker ones of the kingdom of lies, *i.e.* of magic, and so lead him to the paths of superstition; as because the widespread fame of his wisdom brought distinguished and wise men from distant lands to Jerusalem and into alliance with the king, and their homage flattered the vanity of the human heart, and led to a greater and greater toleration of heathen ways. But these things are none of them blamed in the Scriptures, because they did not of necessity lead to idolatry, but might simply give an indirect impulse to it, by lessening the wall of partition between the worship of the true God and that of heathen deities, and making apostasy a possible thing. The Lord Himself had promised and had given Solomon wisdom, riches, and glory above all other kings for the glorification of his kingdom; and these gifts of God merely contributed to estrange his heart from the true God for the simple reason, that Solomon forgot the commandments of the Lord and suffered himself to be besotted by the lusts of the flesh, not only so as to love many foreign wives, but so as also to take to himself wives from the nations with which Israel was not to enter into any close relationship whatever.

Vers. 1-13. SOLOMON'S LOVE OF MANY WIVES AND IDOLATRY.—Vers. 1, 2. "Solomon loved many foreign wives, and that along with the daughter of Pharaoh." *וְאֶת־בִּתּוֹ*, standing as it does between *נָשִׁים נִכְרִיּוֹת* and *מוֹאָבִיּוֹת*, cannot mean "and especially the daughter of P.," as Thenius follows the earlier commentators in supposing, but must mean, as in ver. 25, "and that with, or along with," *i.e.* actually beside the daughter of Pharaoh. She is thereby distinguished from the foreign wives who turned away Solomon's heart from the Lord, so that the blame pronounced upon those marriages does not apply to his marriage to the Egyptian princess (see at ch. iii. 1). All that is blamed is that, in opposition to the command in Deut. xvii. 17, Solomon loved (1) *many* foreign wives, and (2) Moabitish, Ammonitish, and other wives, of the nations with whom the Israelites were not to intermarry. All that the law expressly prohibited was marriage with Canaanitish women (Deut. vii. 1-3; Ex. xxxiv. 16); consequently the words "of the nations," etc., are

not to be taken as referring merely to the Sidonian and Hittite women (J. D. Mich.); but this prohibition is extended here to all the tribes enumerated in ver. 2, just as in Ezra ix. 2 sqq., x. 3, Neh. xiii. 23; not from a rigour surpassing the law, but in accordance with the spirit of the law, namely, because the reason appended to the law, *ne in idololatriam a superstitionis mulieribus pellicerentur* (Clericus), applied to all these nations. The Moabites and Ammonites, moreover, were not to be received into the congregation at all, not even to the tenth generation, and of the Edomites only the children in the third generation were to be received (Deut. xxiii. 4, 8, 9). There was all the less reason, therefore, for permitting marriages with them, that is to say, so long as they retained their nationality or their heathen ways. The words בָּבָם . . . לֹא־חָבְאוּ are connected in form with Josh. xxiii. 12, but, like the latter, they really rest upon Ex. xxxiv. 16 and Deut. vii. 1-3. In the last clause בָּבָם is used with peculiar emphasis: Solomon clave to these nations, of which God had said such things, to love, *i.e.* to enter into the relation of love or into the marriage relation, with them. בָּבָם is used of the attachment of a man to his wife (Gen. ii. 4) and also to Jehovah (Deut. iv. 4, x. 20, etc.).—Vers. 3-8 carry out still further what has been already stated. In ver. 3 the taking of *many* wives is first explained. He had seven hundred נָשִׁים שָׂרוֹת, women of the first rank, who were exalted into princesses, and three hundred concubines. These are in any case round numbers, that is to say, numbers which simply approximate to the reality, and are not to be understood as affirming that Solomon had all these wives and concubines at the same time, but as including all the women who were received into his harem during the whole of his reign, whereas the sixty queens and eighty concubines mentioned in Song of Sol. vi. 8 are to be understood as having been present in the court at one time. Even in this respect Solomon sought to equal the rulers of other nations, if not to surpass them.¹—These women “inclined his heart,” *i.e.* determined the inclina-

¹ Nevertheless these numbers, especially that of the wives who were raised to the rank of princesses, appear sufficiently large to suggest the possibility of an error in the numeral letters, although Oriental rulers carried this custom to a very great length, as for example Darius Codomannus, of whom it is related that he took with him 360 *pellices* on his expedition against Alexander (see Curtius, iii. 3, 24; Athen. *Deipnos.* iii. 1).

up the supposed gaps by emendations of the text. וַיֵּצֵא הָרֵעַ וְנֹ, as in Judg. ii. 11, iii. 7, etc. מִלֵּא אֲחֵרֵי יי, a pregnant expression for מִלֵּא לְלֶבֶת אֲחֵרֵי יי, as in Num. xiv. 24, xxxii. 11, 12, etc. —These places of sacrifice (בְּמָקוֹם, see at ch. iii. 2) Solomon built upon the mountain in front, i.e. to the east, of Jerusalem, and, according to the more precise account in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, to the right, that is to say, on the southern side, of the Mount of Corruption,—in other words, upon the southern peak of the Mount of Olives; and consequently this peak has been called in church tradition from the time of Brocardus onwards, either *Mons Offensionis*, after the Vulgate rendering of הַר הַמְּסִיחָה in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, or *Mons Scandali*, Mount of Offence (*vid.* Rob. Pal. i. 565 and 566).—Ver. 8. “So did he for all his foreign wives,” viz. built altars for their gods; for instance, in addition to those already named, he also built an altar for Astarte. These three altars, which are only mentioned in the complete account in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, were sufficient for all the deities of the foreign wives. For the Hittites and Edomites do not appear to have had any deities of their own that were peculiar to themselves. The Hittites no doubt worshipped Astarte in common with the Sidonians, and the Edomites probably worshipped Milcom. In the whole of the Old Testament the only place in which gods of the Edomites are mentioned is 2 Chron. xxv. 20, and there no names are given. Of course we must except Pharaoh’s daughter, according to ver. 1, and the remarks already made in connection with that verse; for she brought no idolatrous worship to Jerusalem, and consequently even in later times we do not find the slightest trace of Egyptian idolatry in Jerusalem and Judah.¹ Burning incense (מִקְטֹרֶת) is mentioned before sacrificing (מִזְבֵּחַ), because vegetable offerings took precedence of animal sacrifices in the nature-worship of Hither Asia (*vid.* Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 237 sqq.).—Vers. 9 sqq. Through this apostasy from the Lord his God, who had appeared

¹ From the fact that these places of sacrifice still existed even in the time of Josiah, notwithstanding the reforms of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, and Hezekiah, which rooted out all public idolatry, at least in Jerusalem, Movers infers (*Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 207), and that not without reason, that there was an essential difference between these sacred places and the other seats of Israelitish idolatry which were exterminated, namely, that in their national character they were also the places of worship for the foreigners settled in and near Jerusalem, e.g. the Sidonian, Ammonitish, and Moabitish merchants, which were under the protection of treaties, since this is the only ground on which

to him twice (ch. iii. 5 sqq. and ix. 2 sqq.) and had warned him against idolatry (הִנֵּנִי is a continuation of the participle הִנֵּנִי), Solomon drew down upon himself the anger of Jehovah. The emphasis lies upon the fact that God had appeared to him Himself for the purpose of warning him, and had not merely caused him to be warned by prophets, as Theodoret has explained. In consequence of this, the following announcement is made to him, no doubt through the medium of a prophet, possibly Ahijah (ver. 29): "Because this has come into thy mind, and thou hast not kept my covenant, . . . I will tear the kingdom from thee and give it to thy servant; nevertheless I will not do it in thy lifetime for thy father David's sake: howbeit I will not tear away the whole kingdom; one tribe I will give to thy son." In this double limitation of the threatened forfeiture of the kingdom there is clearly manifested the goodness of God (δείκνυσαι τὴν ἀμετρον ἀγαθότητα—Theodoret); not, however, with reference to Solomon, who had forfeited the divine mercy through his idolatry, but with regard to David and the selection of Jerusalem: that is to say, not from any special preference for David and Jerusalem, but in order that the promise made to David (2 Sam. vii.), and the choice of Jerusalem as the place where His name should be revealed which was connected with that promise, might stand immoveably as an act of grace, which no sin of men could overturn (*vid.* ver. 36). For שָׁבַט אֶחָד see the Comm. on vers. 31, 32.

Vers. 14–40. SOLOMON'S OPPONENTS.—Although the punishment with which Solomon was threatened for his apostasy was not to be inflicted till after his death, the Lord raised up several adversaries even during his lifetime, who endangered the peace of his kingdom, and were to serve as constant reminders that he owed his throne and his peaceable rule over the whole of the kingdom inherited from his father solely to the mercy, the fidelity, and the long-suffering of God.—The rising up of Hadad and Rezon took place even before the com-

we can satisfactorily explain their undisturbed continuance at Jerusalem. But this would not preclude their having been built by Solomon for the worship of his foreign wives; on the other hand, it is much easier to explain their being built in the front of Jerusalem, and opposite to the temple of Jehovah, if from the very first regard was had to the foreigners who visited Jerusalem. The objection offered by Thenius to this view, which Bertheau had already adopted (*zur Gesch. der Isr.* p. 323), has been shown by Böttcher (*N. exeg. Ährenl.* ii. p. 95) to be utterly untenable.

mencement of Solomon's idolatry, but it is brought by **הָאֵלֹהִים** (ver. 14) into logical connection with the punishment with which he is threatened in consequence of that idolatry, because it was not till a later period that it produced any perceptible effect upon his government, yet it ought from the very first to have preserved him from self-security.

Vers. 14-22. The *first* adversary was *Hadad* the Edomite, a man of royal birth. The name **הָדָד** (**הָדָד** in ver. 17, according to an interchange of **ה** and **א** which is by no means rare) was also borne by a præ-Mosaic king of Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 35), from which we may see that it was not an uncommon name in the royal family of the Edomites. But the conjecture of Ewald and Thenius, that our Hadad was a grandson of Hadar, the last of the kings mentioned there, is quite a groundless one, since it rests upon the false assumption that Hadar (called Hadad in the Chronicles by mistake) reigned in the time of David (see the Comm. on Gen. xxxvi. 31 sqq.). **הָאֵלֹהִים** before **בְּאֶדוֹם** stands in the place of the relative **הַיְּהוּדִי**: "of royal seed he = who was of the royal seed in Edom" (cf. Ewald, § 332, a).—Vers. 15 sqq. When David had to do with the Edomites, . . . Hadad fled. **הָיָה אִתּוֹ** is analogous to **עָמַד אִתּוֹ**, to have to do with any one, though in a hostile sense, as in the phrase to go to war with (**אִתּוֹ**) a person, whereas **עָמַד אִתּוֹ** generally means to be upon the side of any one. The correctness of the reading **בְּהִיטָה** is confirmed by all the ancient versions, which have simply paraphrased the meaning in different ways. For Böttcher has already shown that the LXX. did not read **בְּהִיטָה**, as Thenius supposes. The words from **בְּהִיטָה** to the end of ver. 16 form explanatory circumstantial clauses. On the circumstance itself, compare 2 Sam. viii. 13, 14, with the explanation given there. "The slain," whom Joab went to bury, were probably not the Israelites who had fallen in the battle in the Salt valley (2 Sam. viii. 13), but those who had been slain on the invasion of the land by the Edomites, and still remained unburied. After their burial Joab defeated the Edomites in the valley of Salt, and remained six months in Edom till he had cut off every male. "All Israel" is the whole of the Israelitish army. "Every male" is of course only the men capable of bearing arms, who fell into the hands of the Israelites; for "Hadad and others fled, and the whole of the Idumæan race was not extinct" (Clericus). Then *Hadad* fled, while yet a little boy, with some of his father's

Edomitish servants, to go to Egypt, going first of all to Midian and thence to Paran. The country of *Midian* cannot be more precisely defined, inasmuch as we meet with Midianites sometimes in the peninsula of Sinai on the eastern side of the Elanitic Gulf, where Edrisi and Abulfeda mention a city of Madian (see at Ex. ii. 15), and sometimes on the east of the Moabitish territory (see at Num. xxii. 4 and Judg. vi. 1). Here, at any rate, we must think of the neighbourhood of the Elanitic Gulf, though not necessarily of the city of Madian, five days' journey to the south of Aela; and probably of the country to which Moses fled from Egypt. *Paran* is the desert of that name between the mountains of Sinai and the south of Canaan (see at Num. x. 12), through which the Haj route from Egypt by Elath to Mecca still runs. Hadad would be obliged to take the road by Elath in order to go to Egypt, even if he had taken refuge with the Midianites on the east of Moab and Edom.—Vers. 18 sqq. From Paran they took men with them as guides through the desert. Thus Hadad came to Egypt, where Pharaoh received him hospitably, and gave them a house and maintenance (מִסְכָּן), and also assigned him land (שָׂדֶה) to cultivate for the support of the fugitives who had come with him, and eventually, as he found great favour in his eyes, gave him for a wife the sister of his own wife, queen *Tachpenes*, who bare him a son, *Genubath*. This son was weaned by Tachpenes in the royal palace, and then brought up among (with) the children of Pharaoh, the royal princes. According to Rosellini and Wilkinson (*Ges. Thez.* p. 1500), Tachpenes was also the name of a female deity of Egypt. The wife of Pharaoh is called מִלְכִּיָּה, i.e. the mistress among the king's wives, as being the principal consort. In the case of the kings of Judah this title is given to the king's mother, probably as the president in the harem, whose place was taken by the reigning queen after her death. The weaning, probably a family festival as among the Hebrews (Gen. xxi. 8) and other ancient nations (*vid.* Douglæi *Analecta* ss. i. 22 sq.), was carried out by the queen in the palace, because the boy was to be thereby adopted among the royal children, to be brought up with them.—Vers. 21, 22. When Hadad heard in Egypt of the death of David and Joab, he asked permission of Pharaoh to return to his own country. Pharaoh replied, "What is there lacking to thee with me?" This answer was a pure expression

of love and attachment to Hadad, and involved the request that he would remain. But Hadad answered, "No, but let me go." We are not told that Pharaoh then let him go, but this must be supplied; just as in Num. x. 32 we are not told what Hobab eventually did in consequence of Moses' request, but it has to be supplied from the context. The return of Hadad to his native land is clearly to be inferred from the fact that, according to vers. 14 and 25, he rose up as an adversary of Solomon.¹

Vers. 23-25. A *second* adversary of Solomon was *Rezon*, the son of Eliadah (for the name see at ch. xv. 18), who had fled from his lord Hadadezer, king of Zobah, and who became the captain of a warlike troop (חֲיָיִל), when David smote *them* (אֹיְבָיו), i.e. the troops of his lord (2 Sam. viii. 3, 4). Rezon probably fled from his lord for some reason which is not assigned,

¹ The LXX. have supplied what is missing *e conjectura*: καὶ ἀνίστησιν Ἀδερ (i.e. Hadad) εἰς τὴν γῆν αὐτοῦ αὐτὴ ἡ κακία ἣν ἐποίησεν Ἀδερ καὶ ἱβάρυθυσεν Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ ἰβασίλευσεν ἐν γῇ Ἐδὼμ. Thenius proposes to alter the Hebrew text accordingly, and draws this conclusion, that "shortly after the accession of Solomon, Hadad, having returned from Egypt, wrested from the power of the Israelites the *greatest* part of Edom, probably the true mountain-land of Edom, so that certain places situated in the plain, particularly Ezion-geber, remained in the hands of the Israelites, and intercourse could be maintained with that port through the *Arabah*, even though not quite without disturbance." This conclusion, which is described as "historical," is indeed at variance with 1 Kings xxii. 48, according to which Edom had no king even in the time of Jehoshaphat, but only a vicegerent, and also with 2 Kings viii. 20, according to which it was not till the reign of Jehoshaphat's son Joram that Edom fell away from Judah. But this discrepancy Thenius sets aside by the remark at 1 Kings xxii. 48, that in Jehoshaphat's time the family of Hadad had probably died out, and Jehoshaphat prudently availed himself of the disputes which arose concerning the succession to enforce Judah's right of supremacy over Edom, and to appoint first a vicegerent and then a new king, though perhaps one not absolutely dependent upon him. But this conjecture as to the relation in which Jehoshaphat stood to Edom is proved to be an imaginary fiction by the fact that, although the history does indeed mention a revolt of the Edomites from Judah (2 Chron. xx.; see at 1 Kings xxii. 48), it not only says nothing whatever about the dying out of the royal family of Hadad or about disputes concerning the succession, but it does not even hint at them.—But with regard to the additions made to this passage by the LXX., to which even Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 276) attributes historical worth, though without building upon them such confident historical combinations as Thenius, we may easily convince ourselves of their critical worthlessness, if we only pass our eye over the whole section (vers. 14-25), instead of merely singling out those readings of the LXX. which support our preconceived opinions, and overlooking all the rest, after the thoroughly unscientific mode of criticism adopted by a Thenius or Böttcher.

when the latter was engaged in war with David, before his complete overthrow, and collected together a company from the fugitives, with which he afterwards marched to Damascus, and having taken possession of that city, made himself king over it. This probably did not take place till towards the close of David's reign, or even after his death, though it was at the very beginning of Solomon's reign; for "he became an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon (*i.e.* during the whole of his reign), and that with (beside) the mischief which Hadad did, and he abhorred Israel (*i.e.* became disgusted with the Israelitish rule), and became king over Aram." אֲדָרִי הָיָה is an abbreviated expression, to which אֲדָרִי may easily be supplied, as it has been by the LXX. (*vid.* Ewald, § 292, *b*, *Anm.*). It is impossible to gather from these few words in what the mischief done by Hadad to Solomon con-

For example, the LXX. have connected together the two accounts respecting the adversaries Hadad and Rezon who rose up against Solomon (ver. 14 and ver. 23), which are separated in the Hebrew text, and have interpolated what is stated concerning Rezon in vers. 23 and 24 after הָאֲדָרִי in ver. 14, and consequently have been obliged to alter וְהָיָה שָׁמָּה in ver. 25 into καὶ ἦσαν Σαράν, because they had previously cited Hadad and Rezon as adversaries, whereas in the Hebrew text these words apply to Rezon alone. But the rest of ver. 25, namely the words from וְאֶת־הָרֶעָה onwards, they have not given till the close of ver. 22 (LXX.); and in order to connect this with what precedes, they have interpolated the words καὶ ἀνίστασθαι Ἀδερ εἰς τὴν γῆν αὐτοῦ. The Alexandrians were induced to resort to this intertwining of the accounts concerning Hadad and Rezon, which are kept separate in the Hebrew text, partly by the fact that Hadad and Rezon are introduced as adversaries of Solomon with the very same words (vers. 14 and 23), but more especially by the fact that in ver. 25 of the Hebrew text the injury done to Solomon by Hadad is merely referred to in a supplementary manner in connection with Rezon's enterprise, and indeed is inserted parenthetically within the account of the latter. The Alexandrian translators did not know what to make of this, because they did not understand וְאֶת־הָרֶעָה and took וְאֶת for וְאֵת, αὐτὴ ἡ κακία. With this reading וְאֵת which follows was necessarily understood as referring to Hadad; and as Hadad was an Edomite, וְאֵת־הָרֶעָה had to be altered into ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν γῇ Ἐδóm. Consequently all the alterations of the LXX. in this section are simply the result of an arbitrary treatment of the Hebrew text, which they did not really understand, and consist of a collocation of all that is homogeneous, as every reader of this translation who is acquainted with the original text must see so clearly even at the very beginning of the chapter, where the number of Solomon's wives is taken from ver. 3 of the Hebrew text and interpolated into ver. 1, that, as Thenius observes, "the true state of the case can only be overlooked from superficiality of observation or from preconceived opinion."

sisted.¹ Rezon, on the other hand, really obtained possession of the rule over Damascus. Whether at the beginning or not till the end of Solomon's reign cannot be determined, since all that is clearly stated is that he was Solomon's adversary during the whole of his reign, and attempted to revolt from him from the very beginning. If, however, he made himself king of Damascus in the earliest years of his reign, he cannot have maintained his sway very long, since Solomon afterwards built or fortified Tadmor in the desert, which he could not have done if he had not been lord over Damascus, as the caravan road from Gilead to Tadmor (Palmyra) went past Damascus.²

Vers. 26-40. *Attempted rebellion of Jeroboam the Ephraimite.*—Hadad and Rezon are simply described as adversaries (אֲדֵרְבָּאִים) of Solomon; but in the case of Jeroboam it is stated that "he lifted up his hand against the king," i.e. he stirred up a tumult or rebellion. הָרָם יָדָּב is synonymous with הָרָם יָדָּב in 2 Sam. xviii. 28, xx. 21. It is not on account of this rebellion, which was quickly suppressed by Solomon, but on account of the later enterprise of Jeroboam, that his personal history is so minutely detailed. Jeroboam was an Ephraimite (אֶפְרַיִם), as in 1 Sam. i. 1, Judg. xii. 5) of Zereda, i.e. Zarthan, in the Jordan valley (see ch. vii. 46), son of a widow, and עָבֵד, i.e. not a subject (Then), but an officer, of Solomon. All that is related of his rebellion against the king is the circumstances under which it took place. הָרָם יָדָּב, this is how it stands with, as in Josh. v. 4. Solomon built Millo (ch. ix. 15), and closed the rent (the defile?) in the city of David. בְּרִירָה, *ruptura*, cannot be a rent or breach in the wall of the city of David, inasmuch as חוֹמָה is not added, and since the fortification of the city by David (2 Sam. v. 9) no

¹ What Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 7, 6) relates concerning an alliance between Hadad and Rezon for the purpose of making hostile attacks upon Israel, is merely an inference drawn from the text of the LXX., and utterly worthless.

² Compare Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 276. It is true that more could be inferred from 2 Chron. viii. 3, if the conquest of the city of Hamath by Solomon were really recorded in that passage, as Bertheau supposes. But although חָזַק is used to signify the conquest of tribes or countries, we cannot infer the conquest of the city of Hamath from the words, "Solomon went to Hamath Zobah וַיִּחַזַּק עָלֶיהָ and built Tadmor," etc., since all that וַיִּחַזַּק עָלֶיהָ distinctly expresses is the establishment of his power over the land of Hamath Zobah. And this Solomon could have done by placing fortifications in that province, because he was afraid of rebellion, even if Hamath Zobah had not actually fallen away from his power.

hostile attack had ever been made upon Jerusalem; but in all probability it denotes the ravine which separated Zion from Moriah and Ophel, the future *Tyropæon*, through the closing of which the temple mountain was brought within the city wall, and the fortification of the city of David was completed (Thenius, Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 330). Compare חֲפֵר, a gap in the coast, a bay. On the occasion of this building, Jeroboam proved himself a גִּבּוֹר הָיִל, i.e. a very able and energetic man; so that when Solomon saw the young man, that he was doing work, i.e. urging it forward, he committed to him the oversight over all the heavy work of the house of Joseph. It must have been while occupying this post that he attempted a rebellion against Solomon. This is indicated by וְהָהִירָב וְהָיָה in ver. 27. According to ch. xii. 4, the reason for the rebellion is to be sought for in the appointment of the Ephraimites to heavy works. This awakened afresh the old antipathy of that tribe to Judah, and Jeroboam availed himself of this to instigate a rebellion.—Vers. 29 sqq. At that time the prophet Ahijah met him in the field and disclosed to him the word of the Lord, that he should become king over Israel. בָּעֵת הַהִיא: at that time, viz. the time when Jeroboam had become overseer over the heavy works, and not after he had already stirred up the rebellion. For the whole of the account in vers. 29–39 forms part of the explanation of וְהָיָה בָּעֵת הַהִיא which commences with ver. 27b, so that וְהָיָה בָּעֵת הַהִיא is closely connected with וַיִּפְקֹד אֹתוֹ in ver. 28, and there is no such gap in the history as is supposed by Thenius, who builds upon this opinion most untenable conjectures as to the intertwining of different sources. At that time, as Jeroboam was one day going out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah of Shilo (Seilun) met him by the way (בַּדֶּרֶךְ), with a new upper garment wrapped around him; and when they were alone, he rent the new garment, that is to say, his own, not Jeroboam's, as Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 388) erroneously supposes, into twelve pieces, and said to Jeroboam, "Take thee ten pieces, for Jehovah saith, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and give thee ten tribes; and one tribe shall remain to him (Solomon) for David's sake," etc. The new שִׁלְטָה was probably only a large four-cornered cloth, which was thrown over the shoulders like the *Heik* of the Arabs, and enveloped the whole of the upper portion of the body (see my *bibl. Archæol.* ii. pp. 36, 37). By the tearing of the new garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam

was to take ten for himself, the prophetic announcement was symbolized in a very emphatic manner. This symbolical action made the promise a completed fact. "As the garment was torn in pieces and lay before the eyes of Jeroboam, so had the division of the kingdom already taken place in the counsel of God" (O. v. Gerlach). There was something significant also in the circumstance that it was a *new* garment, which is stated twice, and indicates the newness, *i.e.* the still young and vigorous condition, of the kingdom (Thenius).

In the word of God explaining the action it is striking that Jeroboam was to receive *ten* tribes, and the *one* tribe was to remain to Solomon (vers. 31, 32, 35, 36, as in ver. 13). The nation consisted of twelve tribes, and Ahijah had torn his garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam was to take ten; so that there were two remaining. It is evident at once from this, that the numbers are intended to be understood symbolically and not arithmetically. *Ten* as the number of completeness and totality is placed in contrast with *one*, to indicate that all Israel was to be torn away from the house of David, as is stated in ch. xii. 20, "they made Jeroboam king over *all* Israel," and only one single fragment was to be left to the house of Solomon out of divine compassion. This one tribe, however, is not Benjamin, the one tribe beside Judah, as Hupfeld (on Ps. lxxx.), C. a Lap., Mich., and others suppose, but, according to the distinct statement in ch. xii. 20, "the tribe of Judah only." Nevertheless Benjamin belonged to Judah; for, according to ch. xii. 21, Rehoboam gathered together the whole house of Judah *and the tribe of Benjamin* to fight against the house of Israel (which had fallen away), and to bring the kingdom again to himself. And so also in 2 Chron. xi. 3 and 23 Judah and Benjamin are reckoned as belonging to the kingdom of Rehoboam. This distinct prominence given to Benjamin by the side of Judah overthrows the explanation suggested by Seb. Schmidt and others, namely, that the description of the portion left to Rehoboam as *one* tribe is to be explained from the fact that Judah and Benjamin, on the border of which Jerusalem was situated, were regarded in a certain sense as one, and that the little Benjamin was hardly taken into consideration at all by the side of the great Judah. For if Ahijah had regarded Benjamin as one with Judah, he would not have torn his garment into twelve pieces, inasmuch as if Benjamin was to be merged in Judah, or was not

to be counted along with it as a distinct tribe, the whole nation could only be reckoned as eleven tribes. Moreover the twelve tribes did not so divide themselves, that Jeroboam really received ten tribes and Rehoboam only one or only two. In reality there were three tribes that fell to the kingdom of Judah, and only nine to the kingdom of Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh being reckoned as two tribes, since the tribe of Levi was not counted in the political classification. The kingdom of Judah included, beside the tribe of Judah, both the tribe of Benjamin and also the tribe of Simeon, the territory of which, according to Josh. xix. 1-9, was within the tribe-territory of Judah and completely surrounded by it, so that the Simeonites would have been obliged to emigrate and give up their tribe-land altogether, if they desired to attach themselves to the kingdom of Israel. But it cannot be inferred from 2 Chron. xv. 9 and xxxiv. 6 that an emigration of the whole tribe had taken place (see also at ch. xii. 17). On the other hand, whilst the northern border of the tribe of Benjamin, with the cities of Bethel, Ramah, and Jericho, fell to the kingdom of Jeroboam (ch. xii. 29, xv. 17, 21, xvi. 34), several of the cities of the tribe of Dan were included in the kingdom of Judah, namely, Ziklag, which Achish had presented to David, and also Zorea and Ajalon (2 Chron. xi. 10, xxviii. 18), in which Judah obtained compensation for the cities of Benjamin of which it had been deprived.¹ Consequently there

¹ On the other hand, the fact that in Ps. lxxx. 2 Benjamin is placed between Ephraim and Manasseh is no proof that it belonged to the kingdom of Israel; nor can this be inferred from the fact that Benjamin, as the tribe to which Saul belonged, at the earlier split among the tribes took the side of those which were opposed to David, and that at a still later period a rebellion originated with Benjamin. For in Ps. lxxx. 2 the exposition is disputed, and the jealousy of Benjamin towards Judah appears to have become extinct with the dying out of the royal house of Saul. Again, the explanation suggested by Oehler (Herzog's *Cycl.*) of the repeated statement that the house of David was to receive only *one* tribe, namely, that there was not a single whole tribe belonging to the southern kingdom beside Judah, is by no means satisfactory. For it cannot be proved that any portion of the tribe of Simeon ever belonged to the kingdom of Israel, although the number ten was not complete without it. And it cannot be inferred from 2 Chron. xv. 9 that Simeonites had settled outside their tribe-territory. And, as a rule, single families or households that may have emigrated cannot be taken into consideration as having any bearing upon the question before us, since, according to the very same passage of the Chronicles, many members of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh had emigrated to the kingdom of Judah.

only remained nine tribes for the northern kingdom. For לָמַעַן עֲבַדְי וְנִי see at ver. 13. For ver. 33 compare vers. 4-8. The plurals עֲבַדְי, יִשְׁתַּחֲוִי, and הָלַכְי are not open to critical objection, but are used in accordance with the fact, since Solomon did not practise idolatry alone, but many in the nation forsook the Lord along with him. צִיִּיִן, with a Chaldaic ending (see Ges. § 87, 1, a). In vers. 34-36 there follows a more precise explanation: Solomon himself is not to lose the kingdom, but to remain prince all his life, and his son is to retain one tribe; both out of regard to David (*vid.* vers. 12 and 13). כִּי נָשִׂיא אֲשַׁתִּי, "but I will set him for prince," inasmuch as leaving him upon the throne was not merely a divine permission, but a divine act. "That there may be a light to my servant David always before me in Jerusalem." This phrase, which is repeated in ch. xv. 4, 2 Kings viii. 19, 2 Chron. xxi. 7, is to be explained from 2 Sam. xxi. 17, where David's regal rule is called the light which God's grace had kindled for Israel, and affirms that David was never to want a successor upon the throne.—Vers. 37-39. The condition on which the kingdom of Jeroboam was to last was the same as that on which Solomon had also been promised the continuance of his throne in ch. iii. 14, vi. 12, ix. 4, namely, faithful observance of the commandments of God. The expression, "be king over all that thy soul desireth," is explained in what follows by "all Israel." It is evident from this that Jeroboam had aspired after the throne. On the condition named, the Lord would build him a lasting house, as He had done for David (see at 2 Sam. vii. 16). In the case of Jeroboam, however, there is no allusion to a lasting duration of the מַמְלָכָה (kingdom) such as had been ensured to David; for the division of the kingdom was not to last for ever, but the seed of David was simply to be chastised. לָמַעַן זֶה, for this, i.e. because of the apostasy already mentioned; "only not all the days," i.e. not for ever. וְאֶעֱנֶה is explanatory so far as the sense is concerned: "for I will humble." Jeroboam did not fulfil this condition, and therefore his house was extirpated at the death of his son (ch. xv. 28 sqq.).—Ver. 40 is a continuation of יָרַם בְּמִלְכּוֹ in ver. 26; for vers. 27-39 contain simply an explanation of Jeroboam's lifting up his hand against Solomon. It is obvious from this that Jeroboam had organized a rebellion against Solomon; and also, as ver. 29 is closely connected with ver. 28, that this did not take place till after the

prophet had foretold his reigning over ten tribes after Solomon's death. But this did not justify Jeroboam's attempt; nor was Ahijah's announcement an inducement or authority to rebel. Ahijah's conduct was perfectly analogous to that of Samuel in the case of Saul, and is no more to be attributed to selfish motives than his was, as though the prophetic order desired to exalt itself above the human sovereign (Ewald; see, on the other hand, Oehler's article in Herzog's *Cycl.*). For Ahijah expressly declared to Jeroboam that Jehovah would let Solomon remain prince over Israel during the remainder of his life. This deprived Jeroboam of every pretext for rebellion. Moreover the prophet's announcement, even without this restriction, gave him no right to seize with his own hand and by means of rebellion upon that throne which God intended to give to him. Jeroboam might have learned how he ought to act under these circumstances from the example of David, who had far more ground, according to human opinion, for rebelling against Saul, his persecutor and mortal foe, and who nevertheless, even when God had delivered his enemy into his hand, so that he might have slain him, did not venture to lay his hand upon the anointed of the Lord, but waited in pious submission to the leadings of his God, till the Lord opened the way to the throne through the death of Saul. By the side of David's behaviour towards Saul the attempt of Jeroboam has all the appearance of a criminal rebellion, so that Solomon would have been perfectly justified in putting him to death, if Jeroboam had not escaped from his hands by a flight into Egypt.—On *Shishak* see at ch. xiv. 25.

Vers. 41–43. *Conclusion of the history of Solomon.*—Notice of the original works, in which further information can be found concerning his acts and his wisdom (see the Introduction); the length of his reign, viz. forty years; his death, burial, and successor. Solomon did not live to a very great age, since he was not more than twenty years old when he ascended the throne.—Whether Solomon turned to the Lord again with all his heart, a question widely discussed by the older commentators (see Pfeifferi *Dubia vex.* p. 435; Buddei *hist. eccl.* ii. p. 273 sqq.), cannot be ascertained from the Scriptures. If the Preacher (*Kohleth*) is traceable to Solomon so far as the leading thoughts are concerned, we should find in this fact an evidence of his conversion, or at least a proof that at the close of his life Solomon

discovered the vanity of all earthly possessions and aims, and declared the fear of God to be the only abiding good, with which a man can stand before the judgment of God.

II.—HISTORY OF THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FORMER.

CHAP. XII.—2 KINGS XVII.

After the death of Solomon the Israelitish kingdom of God was rent asunder, through the renunciation of the Davidic sovereignty by the ten tribes, into the two kingdoms of Israel (the ten tribes) and Judah; and through this division not only was the external political power of the Israelitish state weakened, but the internal spiritual power of the covenant nation was deeply shaken. And whilst the division itself gave rise to two small and weak kingdoms in the place of one strong nation, the power of both was still further shaken by their attitude towards each other.—The history of the two kingdoms divides itself into three epochs. In the *first* epoch, i.e. the period from Jeroboam to Omri in Israel, and from Rehoboam to Asa in Judah (1 Kings xii.—xvi.), they maintained a hostile attitude towards each other, until Israel sustained a severe defeat in a great war with Judah; and on the renewal of its attacks upon Judah, king Asa called the Syrians to his help, and thereby entangled Israel in long and severe conflicts with this powerful neighbouring state. The hostility terminated in the *second* epoch, under Ahab and his sons Ahaziah and Joram in Israel, and under Jehoshaphat, Joram, and Ahaziah of Judah, since the two royal families connected themselves by marriage, and formed an alliance for the purpose of a joint attack upon their foreign foes, until the kings of both kingdoms, viz. Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah, were slain at the same time by Jehu (1 Kings xvii.—2 Kings x. 27). This period of union was followed in the *third* epoch, from Jehu in Israel and Joash in Judah onwards, by further estrangement and reciprocal attacks, which led eventually to the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians through the untheocratical policy of Ahaz.

If we take a survey of the attitude of the two kingdoms towards the Lord, the invisible God-King of His people, during these three epochs, to all appearance the idolatry was stronger in the kingdom of Judah than in the kingdom of Israel. For in the latter it is only under Ahab and his two sons, under whom the worship of Baal was raised into the state religion at the instigation of Jezebel the Phœnician wife of Ahab, that we meet with the actual worship of idols. Of the other kings both before and afterwards, all that is related is, that they walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and did not desist from his sin, the worship of the calves. In the kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, out of thirteen kings, only five were so truly devoted to the Lord that they promoted the worship of Jehovah and opposed idolatry (viz. Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham, and Hezekiah). Of the others, it is true that Joash and Amaziah walked for a long time in the ways of the Lord, but in the closing years of their reign they forsook the God of their fathers to serve idols and worship them (2 Chron. xxiv. 18 and xxv. 14 sqq.). Even Rehoboam was strengthened at the outset in the worship of Jehovah by the Levites who emigrated from the kingdom of the ten tribes to Judah; but in the course of three years he forsook the law of the Lord, and Judah with him, so that altars of high places, Baal columns, and Asherah idols, were set up on every hill and under every green tree, and there were even male prostitutes in the land, and Judah practised all the abominations of the nations that were cut off before Israel (1 Kings xiv. 23, 24; 2 Chron. xi. 13–17, xii. 1). In all these sins of his father Abijam also walked (1 Kings xv. 3). At a later period, in the reign of Joram, the worship of Baal was transplanted from Israel to Judah and Jerusalem, and was zealously maintained by Ahaziah and his mother Athaliah. It grew still worse under Ahaz, who even went so far as to set up an idolatrous altar in the court of the temple and to close the temple doors, for the purpose of abolishing altogether the legal worship of Jehovah. But notwithstanding this repeated spread of idolatry, the apostasy from the Lord was not so great and deep in the kingdom of Judah as in the kingdom of Israel. This is evident from the fact that idolatry could not strike a firm root there, inasmuch as the kings who were addicted to it were always followed by pious and God-fearing rulers, who abolished the idolatrous abominations, and nearly all of whom had long

reigns ; so that during the 253 years which intervened between the division of the kingdom and the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, idolatry did not prevail in Judah for much more than fifty-three years,¹ and for about 200 years the worship of the true God was maintained according to the commandment of the law. This constant renewal of a victorious reaction against the foreign deities shows very clearly that the law of God, with its ordinances and institutions for divine worship, had taken firm and deep root in the people and kingdom, and that the reason why idolatry constantly revived and lifted up its head afresh was, that the worship of Jehovah prescribed in the law made no concessions to the tendency to idolatry in hearts at enmity against God. It was different with the kingdom of the ten tribes. There the fact that idolatry only appeared in the reigns of Ahab and his sons and successors, is to be accounted for very simply from the attitude of that kingdom towards the Lord and His lawful worship. Although, for instance, the secession of the ten tribes from the house of David was threatened by God, as a punishment that would come upon Solomon and his kingdom on account of Solomon's idolatry ; on the part of the rebellious tribes themselves it was simply the ripe fruit of their evil longing for a less theocratic and more heathen kingdom, and nothing but the work of opposition to the royal house appointed by Jehovah, which had already shown itself more than once in the reign of David, though it had been suppressed again by the weight of his government, which was strong in the Lord.

This opposition became open rebellion against the Lord, when Jeroboam, its head, gave the ten tribes a religious constitution opposed to the will of God for the purpose of establishing his throne, and not only founded a special sanctuary for his subjects, somewhat after the model of the tabernacle or of the temple at Jerusalem, but also set up golden calves as symbols and images of Jehovah the invisible God, to whom no likeness can be made. This image-worship met the wishes and religious cravings of the sensual and carnally-minded people, because it so far filled up the gap between the legal

¹ Namely, fourteen years under Rehoboam, three under Abijah, six under Joram, one under Ahaziah, six under Athaliah, and sixteen under Ahaz,—in all forty-six years ; to which we have also to add the closing years of the reigns of Joash and Amaziah.

worship of Jehovah and the worship of the nature-deities, that the contrast between Jehovah and the Baalim almost entirely disappeared, and the principal ground was thereby removed for the opposition on the part of the idolatrous nation to the stringent and exclusive worship of Jehovah. In this respect the worship of the calves worked more injuriously upon the religious and moral life of the nation than the open worship of idols. This sin of Jeroboam is therefore "the ground, the root and cause of the very sinful development of the kingdom of Israel, which soon brought down the punishment of God, since even from the earliest time one judgment after another fell openly upon the kingdom. For beside the sin of Jeroboam, that which was the ground of its isolation continued to increase, and gave rise to tumult, opposing aspirants to the throne, and revolutionary movements in the nation, so that the house of Israel was often split up within itself" (Ziegler). Therefore the judgment, with which even from the time of Moses the covenant nation had been threatened in case of obstinate rebellion against its God, namely the judgment of dispersion among the heathen, fell upon the ten tribes much earlier than upon Judah, because Israel had filled up the measure of sin earlier than Judah.

The chronological computation of this period, both as a whole and in its separate details, is one of the more difficult features connected with this portion of the history of the Israelitish kingdom. As our books give not only the length of time that every king both of Israel and Judah reigned, but also the time when every king of Israel ascended the throne, calculated according to the year of the reign of the contemporaneous king of Judah, and *vice versa*, these accounts unquestionably furnish us with very important help in determining the chronology of the separate data; but this again is rendered difficult and uncertain by the fact, that the sum-total of the years of the several kings is greater, as a rule, than the number of years that they can possibly have reigned according to the synchronistic accounts of the contemporaneous sovereigns in the other kingdom. Chronologists have therefore sought from time immemorial to reconcile the discrepancies by assuming inaccuracies in the accounts, or regencies and interregna. The necessity for such assumptions is indisputable, from the fact that the discrepancies, in the numbers of the years are absolutely

irreconcilable without them.¹ But if the application of them in the several cases is not to be dependent upon mere caprice, the reconciliation of the sum-totals of the years that the different kings reigned with the differences which we obtain from the chronological data in the synchronistic accounts must be effected upon a fixed and well-founded historical principle, regencies and interregna being only assumed in cases where there are clear indications in the text. Most of the differences can be reconciled by consistently observing and applying the principle pointed out in the Talmud, viz. that the years of the kings are reckoned from Nisan to Nisan, and that with such precision, that even a single day before or after Nisan is reckoned as equal to a year,—a mode of reckoning which is met with even in the New Testament, e.g. in the statement that Jesus rose from the dead after three days, or on the third day, and also in the writings of Josephus, so that it is no doubt an early Jewish custom,²—for, according to this, it is not necessary to assume a single interregnum in the kingdom of Judah, and only one regency (that

¹ This is indirectly admitted even by O. Wolff (in his *Versuch die Widersprüche in den Jahrreihen der Könige Juda's und Israel's und andere Differenzen in der bibl. Chronologie auszugleichen*; *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1858, p. 625 sqq.), though for the most part he declares himself opposed to such assumptions as arbitrary loopholes, inasmuch as, with his fundamental principle to adhere firmly to the years of the reigns of the kings of Judah as normative, he is only able to effect a reconciliation by shortening at his pleasure the length of the reigns given in the text for the kings of Israel in the period extending from Rehoboam to the death of Ahaziah of Judah, and in the following period by arbitrarily interpolating a thirty-one years' interregnum of the Israelitish kings in the kingdom of Judah between Amaziah and Uzziah.

² Compare *Gemara babyl. tract. ראש השנה*, c. i. fol. 3, p. 1, ed. Amstel.: אין מניין להם למלכים אלא מניסן, "non numerant in regibus nisi a Nisano" (i.e. *regum annos non nisi a Nisano numerant*). After quoting certain passages, he says as a proof of this, אמר ר' חסדא לא שני אלא למלכי ישראל, "dixit R. Chasda: hoc non docent nisi de regibus Israelitarum."—*Ibid.* fol. 2, p. 2: ניסן ראש השנה למלכים ויום אחד בשנה חשוב שנה, "*Nisanus initium anni regibus, ac dies quidem unus in anno (videl. post calendas Nisani) instar anni computatur.*"—*Ibid.*: יום אחד בסוף שנה חשוב שנה, "*unus dies in fine anni pro anno computatur.*" For the examples of the use of this mode of calculation in Josephus, see Wieseler, *chronol. Synopse der vier Evangelien* (Hamb. 1852), p. 52 sqq. They are sufficient of themselves to refute the assertion of Joach. Hartmann, *Systema chronol. bibl.*, Rostoch. 1777, p. 253 sq., that this is a mere invention of the Rabbins and later commentators, even though the biblical writers may not have carried it out to such an extent as to reckon one single day before or after the commencement of Nisan as equal to a whole year, as is evident from 2 Kings xv. 17 and 23.

of Joram with his father Jehoshaphat), which is clearly indicated in the text (2 Kings viii. 16); and in the kingdom of Israel there is no necessity to assume a single regency, and only two interregna (the first after Jeroboam II., the second between Pekah and Hoshea). — If, for example, we arrange the chronological data of the biblical text upon this principle, we obtain for the period between the division of the kingdom and the Babylonian captivity the following table, which only differs from the statements in the text in two instances,¹ and has a guarantee of its correctness in the fact that it coincides with the well-established chronological data of the universal history of the ancient world.²

¹ Namely, in the fact that the commencement of the reign of Jehoahaz of Israel is placed in the twenty-second year of Joash of Judah, and not in the twenty-third, according to 2 Kings xiii. 1, and that that of Azariah or Uzziah of Judah is placed in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam of Israel, and not the twenty-seventh, according to 2 Kings xv. 1. The reasons for this will be given in connection with the passages themselves.

² Not only with the ordinary chronological calculation as to the beginning and end of this entire period, which has been adopted in most text-books of the biblical history, and taken from Usserii *Annales Vet. et Novi Test.*, but also with such data of ancient history as have been astronomically established. For the fourth year of Jehoiakim, with which the captivity or seventy years' servitude of the Jews in Babylon commences, coincides with the twenty-first year of the reign of Nabopolassar, in the fifth year of whose reign an eclipse of the moon, recorded in *Almagest*, was observed, which eclipse, according to the calculation of Ideler (in the *Abhdl. der Berliner Academie der Wissensch. für histor. Klasse* of the year 1814, pp. 202 and 224), took place on April 22 of the year 621 B.C. Consequently the twenty-first year of Nabopolassar, in which he died, coincides with the year 605 B.C.; and the first conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, which occurred before the death of Nabopolassar, took place in the year 606 B.C.—Compare with this Marc. Niebuhr's *Geschichte Assurs und Babels*, p. 47. Among other things, this scholar observes, at p. 5, note 1, that "the whole of the following investigation has given us no occasion whatever to cherish any doubts as to the correctness of the narratives and numbers in the Old Testament;" and again, at p. 83 sqq., he has demonstrated the agreement of the chronological data of the Old Testament from Azariah or Uzziah to the captivity with the Canon of Ptolemy, and in so doing has only deviated two years from the numbers given in our chronological table, by assigning the battle at Carchemish to the year 143 *æra Nabonas.*, i.e. 605 B.C., the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, 144 *æra Nab.*, or 604 B.C., and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple to the year 162 *æra Nab.*, or 586 B.C.,—a difference which arises chiefly from the fact that Niebuhr reckons the years of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar given in the Old Test. from the death of Nabopolassar in the year 605, and assumes that the first year of Nebuchadnezzar corresponded to the year 605 B.C.

*Chronological View of the Principal Events from the Division of
the Kingdom to the Babylonian Captivity.*

Year from the division of the Kingdom.	Kingdom of Judah.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Judah.	Kingdom of Israel.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Israel.	Kingdoms of the World.	Year before the birth of Christ.
1	Rehoboam, reigned 17 years	1	Jeroboam, reigned 22 years	1	Shishak of Egypt, plunders Jeru- salem	975
18	Abijam, r. 3 y.	—	. . . . .	18	. . . . .	971
20	Asa, r. 41 y.	—	. . . . .	20	. . . . .	957
22	. . . . .	12	Nadab, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	955
23	. . . . .	13	Baasha, r. 24 y.	—	. . . . .	953
					Serah the Cushite	952
					Benhadad I. of Syria	940
45	. . . . .	26	Ela, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	939
46	. . . . .	27	Simri, r. 7 days	—	. . . . .	930
46	. . . . .	27	Tibni & Omri, r. 4 years	—	. . . . .	929
50	. . . . .	31	Omri alone, r. 8 y.	—	. . . . .	929
					Ithobal, king of Tyre and Sidon.	925
57	. . . . .	38	Ahab, r. 22 y.	—	. . . . .	918
61	Jehoshaphat, r. 25 years	—	. . . . .	4	. . . . .	914
					Benhadad II. in Syria.	
78	. . . . .	17	Ahaziah, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	897
79	. . . . .	18	Joram, r. 12 y.	—	. . . . .	896
	Joram, regent 2 y.	(23)	. . . . .	5	. . . . .	891
86	Jehoshaphat †.	—	. . . . .	(7)	. . . . .	889
	Joram r. 6 y. more	—	. . . . .	12	. . . . .	884
91	Ahaziah, r. 1 y.	—	. . . . .		Hazael in Syria.	
92	Athaliah, r. 6 y.	—	Jehu, r. 28 y.	—	. . . . .	883
98	Joash, r. 40 y.	—	. . . . .	7	. . . . .	877
119	. . . . .	22?	Jehoahaz, r. 17 y.	—	. . . . .	856
135	. . . . .	37	Jehoash, r. 16 y.	—	. . . . .	840
					Benhadad III. in Syria.	
137	Amaziah, r. 29 y.	—	. . . . .	2	. . . . .	838
151	. . . . .	15	Jeroboam II. r. 41 y.	—	. . . . .	824
165	Uzziah, r. 52 y.	—	. . . . .	15?	. . . . .	810
192	. . . . .	(27)	Jeroboam †. An- archy 11 years	—	. . . . .	783
203	. . . . .	38	Zechariah, r. 6 months	—	. . . . .	772
204	. . . . .	39	Shallum, r. 1 mon.	—	. . . . .	771
204	. . . . .	39	Menahem, r. 10 y.	—	. . . . .	771
					Pul, king of As- syria.	
215	. . . . .	50	Pekahiah, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	760
216	. . . . .	52	Pekah, r. 20 y.	—	. . . . .	759

Year from the division of the Kingdom.	Kingdom of Judah.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Judah.	Kingdom of Israel.	Year of the reign Kings of Israel.	Kingdoms of the World.	Year before the birth of Christ.
217	Jotham, r. 16 y.	—	. . . . .	2		758
					Building of Rome	753
233	Ahaz, r. 16 y.	—		17	Nabonassar . . .	747
236	. . . . .	4	Pekah †. Anarchy	—	Tiglath-pileser,	742
			8½ months		king of Assyria	739
245	. . . . .	12	Hoshea, r. 9 y.	—	So, king of Egypt	730
248	Hezekiah, r. 29 y.	—		3		727
253	. . . . .	6	Destruction of the Kingdom	—	Salmanassar, king of Assyria	722
261	. . . . .		Sennacherib, king of Assyria, besieges Jerusalem			714
			Merodach-Baladan's embassy.			
277	Manasseh, r. 55 y.		Esarhaddon sends colonists to Samaria.			698
332	Amon, r. 2 y.		. . . . .			648
334	Josiah, r. 31 y.		. . . . .			641
			Nabopolassar, king of Babylon			626
365	Jehoahaz, r. 3 mon.		Battle at Megiddo with Pharaoh-Necho . . .			610
365	Jehoiakim, r. 11 y.					610
369	Beginning of the Captivity		Battle at Carchemish and conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar			606
			Nabopolassar †			605
376	Jehoiachin, r. 3 months		Second conquest of Jerusalem and deportation			599
376	Zedekiah, r. 11 y.		Pharaoh-Hophra, king of Egypt.			599
387	Destruction of Jerusalem		. . . . .			588
	Jehoiachin's ele- vation		Evil-merodach			562
	End of the Cap- tivity		Cyrus sole ruler			536

1. FROM THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM TO THE ASCENT OF THE THRONE BY AHAB IN THE 38TH YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH.

CHAP. XII.—XVI. 28.

This epoch embraces only fifty-seven years, which are filled up in the kingdom of Judah by the reigns of three kings, and in the kingdom of Israel by six rulers from four different houses, Jeroboam's sin of rebellion against the ordinance and commandment of God having produced repeated rebellions, so that one

dynasty was ever rising up to overthrow and exterminate another.—Commencing with the secession of the ten tribes from Rehoboam, we have first of all an account of the founding of the kingdom of Israel (ch. xii.), and of the predictions of the prophets concerning the introduction of the calf-worship (ch. xiii.) and the rejection of Jeroboam and his house by God (ch. xiv. 1-20); and after this the most important facts connected with the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijam, and Asa are given (ch. xiv. 21-xv. 24); and, finally, a brief history of the kingdom of Israel from the ascent of the throne by Nadab to the death of Omri (ch. xv. 25-xvi. 28).

CHAP. XII. SECESSION OF THE TEN TRIBES FROM THE HOUSE
OF DAVID, AND FOUNDING OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

The jealousy which had prevailed from time immemorial between Ephraim and Judah, the two most powerful tribes of the covenant nation, and had broken out on different occasions into open hostilities (Judg. viii. 1 sqq.; 2 Sam. ii. 9, xix. 42 sqq.), issued, on the death of Solomon, in the division of the kingdom; ten tribes, headed by Ephraim, refusing to do homage to Rehoboam, the son and successor of Solomon, and choosing Jeroboam the Ephraimite as their king. Now, although the secession of the ten tribes from the royal house of David had been ordained by God as a punishment for Solomon's idolatry, and not only had Solomon been threatened with this punishment, but the sovereignty over ten tribes had been promised to Jeroboam by the prophet Ahijah, whilst the secession itself was occasioned by Rehoboam's imprudence; yet it was essentially a rebellion against the Lord and His anointed, a conspiracy on the part of these tribes against Judah and its king Rehoboam. For apart from the fact that the tribes had no right to choose at their pleasure a different king from the one who was the lawful heir to the throne of David, the very circumstance that the tribes who were discontented with Solomon's government did not come to Jerusalem to do homage to Rehoboam, but chose Sichem as the place of meeting, and had also sent for Jeroboam out of Egypt, showed clearly enough that it was their intention to sever themselves from the royal house of David; so that the harsh reply given by Rehoboam to their petition that the service imposed upon them might be lightened, furnished them with the

desired opportunity for carrying out the secession upon which they had already resolved, and for which Jeroboam was the suitable man. And we have already shown at ch. xi. 40 that the promise of the throne, which Jeroboam had already received from God, neither warranted him in rebelling against Solomon, nor in wresting to himself the government over the tribes that were discontented with the house of David after Solomon's death. The usurpation of the throne was therefore Jeroboam's first sin (vers. 1-24), to which he added a second and much greater one immediately after his ascent of the throne, namely, the establishment of an unlawful worship, by which he turned the political division into a religious schism and a falling away from Jehovah the God-King of His people (vers. 25-33).

VERS. 1-24. SECESSION OF THE TEN TRIBES (cf. 2 Chron. x. 1-xi. 4).—Vers. 1-4. Rehoboam went to Shechem, because all Israel had come thither to make him king. "All Israel," according to what follows (cf. vers. 20 and 21), was the ten tribes beside Judah and Benjamin. The right of making king the prince whom God had chosen, *i.e.* of anointing him and doing homage to him (compare 1 Chron. xii. 38, where הַמֶּלֶךְ alternates with לְמַעַן, 2 Sam. ii. 4, v. 3), was an old traditional right in Israel, and the tribes had exercised it not only in the case of Saul and David (1 Sam. xi. 15; 2 Sam. ii. 4, v. 3), but in that of Solomon also (1 Chron. xxix. 22). The ten tribes of Israel made use of this right on Rehoboam's ascent of the throne; but instead of coming to Jerusalem, the residence of the king and capital of the kingdom, as they ought to have done, and doing homage there to the legitimate successor of Solomon, they had gone to Sichem, the present Nablus (see at Gen. xii. 6 and xxxiii. 18), the place where the ancient national gatherings were held in the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xxiv. 1), and where Abimelech the son of Gideon had offered himself as king in the time of the Judges (Judg. ix. 1 sqq.). On the choice of Sichem as the place for doing homage Kimchi has quite correctly observed, that "they sought an opportunity for transferring the government to Jeroboam, and therefore were unwilling to come to Jerusalem, but came to Sichem, which belonged to Ephraim, whilst Jeroboam was an Ephraimite." If there could be any further doubt on the matter, it would be removed by the fact that they had sent for Jeroboam the son of Nebat to come from Egypt, whither he had

fled from Solomon (ch. xi. 40), and attend this meeting, and that Jeroboam took the lead in the meeting, and no doubt suggested to those assembled the demand which they should lay before Rehoboam (ver. 4).¹—The construction of vers. 2 and 3 is a complicated one, since it is only in יִבְאִי in ver. 3 that the apodosis occurs to the protasis וְהָיָה בְּשֹׁמֶעַ וְנֹכַח, and several circumstantial clauses intervene. “And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard, *sc.* that Solomon was dead and Rehoboam had been made king . . . he was still in Egypt, however, whither he had fled from king Solomon; and as Jeroboam was living in Egypt, they had sent and called him . . . that Jeroboam came and the whole congregation of Israel,” etc. On the other hand, in 2 Chron. x. 2 the construction is very much simplified, and is rendered clearer by the alteration of וַיָּשָׁב יִרְמְיָהוּ, “and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt,” into וַיָּשָׁב יִרְמְיָהוּ מִמִּצְרָיִם, “that Jeroboam returned from Egypt.”²—Ver. 4. The persons assembled desired that the burdens which Solomon had laid upon them should be lightened, in which case they would serve Rehoboam, *i.e.* would yield obedience to him as their king. הִקְלָם מִעֲבֹדָתוֹ אָבִדָּה, “make light away from the service of thy father,”

¹ “This pretext was no doubt furnished to the people by Jeroboam, who, because he had formerly been placed above Ephraim as superintendent of the works, could most craftily suggest calumnies, from the things which he knew better than others.”—(Seb. Schmidt.)

² At the same time, neither this explanation in the Chronicles, nor the fact that the Vulgate has the same in our text also, warrants our making alterations in the text, for the simple reason that the deviation in the Chronicles and Vulgate is so obviously nothing but an elucidation of our account, which is more obscurely expressed. There is still less ground for the interpolation, which Thénius has proposed, from the clauses contained in the Septuagint partly after ch. xi. 43, partly in ch. xii. between vers. 24 and 25, and in an abbreviated form once more after ch. xiii. 34, so as to obtain the following more precise account of the course of the rebellion which Jeroboam instigated, and of which we have not a very minute description in ch. xi. 26: “Solomon having appointed Jeroboam superintendent of the tributary labour in Ephraim, for the purpose of keeping in check the Schemites, who were probably pre-eminently inclined to rebel, directed him to make a fortress, which already existed upon Mount Gerizim under the name of *Millo*, into a strong prison (צִרְיָה), from which the whole district of Gerizim, the table-land, received the name of the land of *Zerirah*, and probably made him governor of it and invested him with great power. When holding this post, Jeroboam rebelled against Solomon, but was obliged to flee. Having now returned from Egypt, he assembled the members of his own tribe, and with them he first of all besieged this prison, for the purpose of making himself lord of the surrounding district.

i.e. reduce what was imposed upon us by thy father. Solomon had undoubtedly demanded greater performances from the people than they had previously been accustomed to, not only to meet the cost of maintaining the splendour of his court, but also and principally to carry out his large and numerous buildings. But in return for this, he had secured for his people not only the blessings of undisturbed peace throughout his whole reign, but also great wealth from the trade and tribute of the subjugated nations, so that there cannot have been any well-grounded occasion for complaint. But when, as is too often the case, men overlooked the advantages and blessings which they owed to his government, and fixed their attention in a one-sided manner merely upon the performances which the king demanded, it might appear as though he had oppressed his people with excessive burdens.

Vers. 5-24. In order that the request of the tribes might be maturely weighed, Rehoboam directed them to appear before him again in three days, and in the meantime discussed the matter with the older counsellors, who had served his father.—Ver. 7. These counsellors said (the singular יִצְרָיִל is

Now this castle was the citadel of the city in which Jeroboam was born, to which he had just returned, and from which they fetched him to take part in the negotiations with Rehoboam. Its ruins are still in existence, according to Robinson (*Pal.* iii. p. 99), and from all that has been said it was not called Zeredah (ch. xi. 26), but (after the castle) Zerira." This is what Thenius says. But if we read the two longer additions of the LXX. quite through, we shall easily see that the words *ἠκοδόμησε τῇ Σαλωμών τὴν ἐν ὄρει Ἐφραίμ* do not give any more precise historical information concerning the building of the Millo mentioned in ch. xi. 27, since this verse is repeated immediately afterwards in the following form: *οὗτος ἠκοδόμησε τὴν ἀκρὰν ἐν ταῖς ἀροσίαις οἴκου Ἐφραίμ, οὗτος συνέκλμασε τὴν πόλιν Δαβίδ*,—but are nothing more than a legendary supplement made by an Alexandrian, which has no more value than the statement that Jeroboam's mother was named *Sarira* and was *γυνὴ πόρνη*. The name of the city *Σαριρά* is simply the Greek form of the Hebrew צֶרִירָה, which the LXX. have erroneously adopted in the place of צֶרֶת as the reading in ch. xi. 26. But in the additional clauses in question in the Alexandrian version, *Σαριρά* is made into the residence of king Jeroboam and confounded with *Thirza*; what took place at *Thirza* according to ch. xiv. 17 (of the Hebrew text) being transferred to *Sarira*, and the following account being introduced, viz. that Jeroboam's wife went *ἐκ Σαριρά* to the prophet Ahijah to consult him concerning her sick son, and on returning heard of the child's death as she was entering the city of *Sarira*.—These remarks will be quite sufficient to prove that the Alexandrian additions have not the least historical worth.

used, because one of them spoke in the name of the whole), "If thou wilt be subservient to this people to-day (now), and servest them, and hearkenest to them, . . . they will serve thee for ever."—Vers. 8 sqq. But Rehoboam forsook this advice, and asked the younger ministers who had grown up with him. They advised him to overawe the people by harsh threats. "My little finger is stronger than my father's loins." קַטְנִי, from קָטַן, littleness, i.e. the little finger (for the form, see Ewald, § 255, b),—a figurative expression in the sense of, I possess much greater might than my father. "And now, my father laid a heavy yoke upon you, and I will still further add to your yoke (lay still more upon you): my father chastised you with whips, I will chastise you with scorpions." עֲקָרִים, *scorpiones*, are whips with barbed points like the point of a scorpion's sting.¹ This advice was not only imprudent, "considering all the circumstances" (Seb. Schmidt), but it was unwise in itself, and could only accelerate the secession of the discontented. It was the language of a tyrant, and not of a ruler whom God had placed over His people. This is shown in vers. 13, 14: "The king answered the people harshly, and forsook the counsel of the old men," i.e. the counsellors who were rich in experience, and spoke according to the counsels of the young men, who flattered his ambition. It is very doubtful, indeed, whether the advice of the old men would have been followed by so favourable a result; it might probably have been so for the moment, but not for a permanency. For the king could not become the עֲבָד of the people, *serve* the people, without prejudicing the authority entrusted to him by God; though there is no doubt that if he had consented to such condescension, he would have deprived the discontented tribes of all pretext for rebellion, and not have shared in the sin of their secession.—Ver. 15. "And the king hearkened not to the people (to their request for their burdens to be reduced), for it was סָבָה עֲלֵיהֶם, a turning from the Lord, that He might establish His word" (ch. xi. 31 sqq.), i.e. by a divine decree, that Rehoboam

¹ The Rabbins give this explanation: *virgæ spinis instructæ*. Isidor. Hispal. *Orig.* v. c. 27, explains it in a similar manner: *virga si est nodosa vel aculeata, scorpio vocatur*. The Targ. and Syr., on the other hand, סְרַנְיִן, סְרַנְיִן, i.e. the Greek *μάστιγνα*, a whip. See the various explanations in Bochart, *Hieroz.* iii. p. 554 sq. ed. Ros.

contributed to the fulfilment of the counsel of God through his own folly, and brought about the accomplishment of the sentence pronounced upon Solomon.—Ver. 16. The harsh word supplied the discontented with an apparently just occasion for saying, “What portion have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse! To thy tents, O Israel! Now see to thy house, David!” i.e. take care of thy house. David, the tribe-father, is mentioned in the place of his family. These words, with which Sheba had once preached rebellion in the time of David (2 Sam. xx. 1), give expression to the deep-rooted aversion which was cherished by these tribes towards the Davidic monarchy, and that in so distinct and unvarnished a manner, that we may clearly see that there were deeper causes for the secession than the pretended oppression of Solomon’s government; that its real foundation was the ancient jealousy of the tribes, which had been only suppressed for the time by David and Solomon, but had not been entirely eradicated, whilst this jealousy again had its roots in the estrangement of these tribes from the Lord, and from His law and righteousness.—Ver. 17. But the sons of Israel, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, over these Rehoboam became king. These “sons of Israel” are members of the ten tribes who had settled in Judah in the course of ages (cf. ver. 23); and the Simeonites especially are included, since they were obliged to remain in the kingdom of Judah from the very situation of their tribe-territory, and might very well be reckoned among the Israelites who dwelt in the cities of Judah, inasmuch as at first the whole of their territory was allotted to the tribe of Judah, from which they afterwards received a portion (Josh. xix. 1). The verse cannot possibly mean that “the tribe of Judah declared in favour of their countryman Rehoboam as king” (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 399).—Ver. 18. In order to appease the agitated tribes and commence negotiations with them, Rehoboam sent Adoram, the superintendent of the tribute, to them (see at ch. iv. 6). Rehoboam entrusted him with the negotiation, because the tribes had complained that the tribute burdens were too severe, and the king was no doubt serious in his wish to meet the demands of the people. But the very fact that he sent this man only increased the bitterness of feeling, so that they stoned him to death, and Rehoboam himself was obliged to summon up all his strength (וְהִתְאַמֵּץ) to escape a similar fate by

a speedy flight to his chariot.—Ver. 19. Thus Israel fell away from the house of David “unto this day” (for this formula, see p. 13).—Ver. 20. The secession was completed by the fact that all Israel (of the ten tribes) called Jeroboam to the assembly of the congregation and made him king “over all Israel,” so that the tribe of Judah alone adhered to the house of David (see at ch. xi. 32). Ver. 20 commences in the same manner as ver. 2, to indicate that it closes the account commenced in ver. 2.—Vers. 21-24. But after the return of Rehoboam to Jerusalem he was still desirous of bringing back the seceders by force of arms, and raised for that purpose an army of 180,000 men out of all Judah, the tribe of Benjamin, and the rest of the people, *i.e.* the Israelites dwelling in the cities of Judah,—a number which does not appear too large according to 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. But the prophet Shemaiah, a prophet who is not mentioned again, received instructions from God to forbid the king to go to war with their brethren the Israelites, “for this thing was from the Lord.” הָיָה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, “this thing, *i.e.* his being deprived of the sovereignty over ten tribes, but not their rebellion” (Seb. Schmidt). For the fact itself, see the remark on ver. 15. The king and the people hearkened to this word. וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ וַיָּשׁוּבוּ, “they turned to go,” *i.e.* they gave up the intended expedition and returned home. In 2 Chron. xi. 4 we have the explanatory phrase וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ וַיָּשׁוּבוּ.

Vers. 25-33. FOUNDING OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.—

Ver. 25. When Jeroboam had become king, it was his first care to give a firmer basis to his sovereignty by the fortification of Sichem and Pnuel. בָּנָה, to build, is used here in the sense of fortifying, because both cities had stood for a long time, and nothing is known of their having been destroyed under either Solomon or David, although the tower of Sichem had been burnt down by Abimelech (Judg. ix. 49), and the tower of Pnuel had been destroyed by Gideon (Judg. viii. 17). *Sichem*, a place well known from the time of Abraham downwards (Gen. xii. 6), was situated upon the mountains of Ephraim, between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, and still exists under the name of *Nabulus* or *Nablús*, a name corrupted from *Flavia Neapolis*. Jeroboam dwelt therein, *i.e.* he chose it at first as his residence, though he afterwards resided in Thirza (see ch. xiv. 17). *Pnuel* was situated, according to Gen. xxxii. 31, on the

other side of the Jordan, on the northern bank of the Jabbok (not the southern side, as Thenius supposes); and judging from Gen. xxxii. 22 sqq. and Judg. viii. 8 sqq., it was on the caravan road, which led through Gilead to Damascus, and thence past Palmyra and along the Euphrates to Mesopotamia. It was probably on account of its situation that Jeroboam fortified it, to defend his sovereignty over Gilead against hostile attacks from the north-east and east.—Vers. 26 sqq. In order also to give internal strength to his kingdom, Jeroboam resolved to provide for his subjects a substitute for the sacrificial worship in the temple by establishing new *sacra*, and thus to take away all occasion for making festal journeys to Jerusalem, from which he apprehended, and that probably not without reason, a return of the people to the house of David, and consequently further danger for his own life. “If this people go up to perform sacrifice in the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, their heart will turn to their lord, king Rehoboam,” etc.—Ver. 28. He therefore consulted, *sc.* with his counsellors, or the heads of the nation, who had helped him to the throne, and made two calves of gold. וַיַּעַל יְהוָה are young oxen, not of pure gold however, or cast in brass and gilded, but in all probability like the golden calf which Aaron had cast for the people at Sinai, made of a kernel of wood, which was then covered with gold plate (see the Comm. on Ex. xxxii. 4). That Jeroboam had in his mind not merely the Egyptian *Apis*-worship generally, but more especially the image-worship which Aaron introduced for the people at Sinai, is evident from the words borrowed from Ex. xxxii. 4, with which he studiously endeavoured to recommend his new form of worship to the people: “Behold, this is thy God, O Israel, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.” וְהָיָה לָכֵן מִכָּלֵךְ, it is too much for you to go to Jerusalem; not “let your going suffice,” because וְהָיָה is not to be taken in a partitive sense here, as it is in Ex. ix. 28 and Ezek. xlv. 6. What Jeroboam meant to say by the words, “Behold thy God,” etc., was, “this is no new religion, but this was the form of worship which our fathers used in the desert, with Aaron himself leading the way” (Seb. Schmidt). And whilst the verbal allusion to that event at Sinai plainly shows that this worship was not actual idolatry, *i.e.* was not a worship of Egyptian idols, from which it is constantly distinguished in our books as well as in Hosea and Amos, but that Jehovah was worshipped under the image of the calves or

young oxen ; the choice of the places in which the golden calves were set up also shows that Jeroboam desired to adhere as closely as possible to ancient traditions. He did not select his own place of residence, but Bethel and Dan. *Bethel*, on the southern border of his kingdom, which properly belonged to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 13 and 22), the present *Beitin*, had already been consecrated as a divine seat by the vision of Jehovah which the patriarch Jacob received there in a dream (Gen. xxviii. 11, 19), and Jacob gave it the name of *Bethel*, house of God, and afterwards built an altar there to the Lord (Gen. xxxv. 7). And Jeroboam may easily have fancied, and have tried to persuade others, that Jehovah would reveal Himself to the descendants of Jacob in this sacred place just as well as He had done to their forefather.—*Dan*, in the northern part of the kingdom, on the one source of the Jordan, formerly called *Laish* (Judg. xviii. 26 sqq.), was also consecrated as a place of worship by the image-worship established there by the Danites, at which even a grandson of Moses had officiated ; and regard may also have been had to the convenience of the people, namely, that the tribes living in the north would not have to go a long distance to perform their worship.—Ver. 30. But this institution became a sin to Jeroboam, because it violated the fundamental law of the Old Testament religion, since this not only prohibited all worship of Jehovah under images and symbols (Ex. xx. 4), but had not even left the choice of the place of worship to the people themselves (Deut. xii. 5 sqq.). “ And the people went before the one to Dan.” The expression “ to Dan ” can only be suitably explained by connecting it with דָּן : the people even to Dan, i.e. the people throughout the whole kingdom even to Dan. The southern boundary as the *terminus a quo* is not mentioned ; not because it was for a long time in dispute, but because it was already given in the allusion to Bethel. הַאֵלֹהִים is neither the golden calf at Dan nor (as I formerly thought) that at Bethel, but is to be interpreted according to the preceding אֱלֹהֵי הָאֵתֶר : one of the two, or actually both the one and the other (Thenius). The sin of which Jeroboam was guilty consisted in the fact that he no longer allowed the people to go to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, but induced or compelled them to worship Jehovah before one or the other of the calves which he had set up, or (as it is expressed in ver. 31) made a house of high places, בֵּית גָּבוֹהַ (see at ch. iii. 2), instead of the

house of God, which the Lord had sanctified as the place of worship by filling it with His gracious presence. The singular **בֵּית יְהוָה** may be accounted for from the antithesis to **בֵּית יְהוָה**, upon which it rests. There was no necessity to say expressly that there was a house of high places at Bethel and Dan, *i.e.* in two places, because it followed as a matter of course that the golden calves could not stand in the open air, but were placed in a temple, by which the sacrificial altar stood. These places of worship were houses of *high places*, *Bamoth*, because the ark of the covenant was wanting, and therewith the gracious presence of God, the *Shechinah*, for which no symbol invented by men could be a substitute. Moreover Jeroboam made "priests from the mass of the people, who were not of the sons of Levi." **מִקְצוֹת הָעָם**, *i.e.* not of the poorest of the people (Luther and others), but from the last of the people onwards, that is to say, from the whole of the 'people any one without distinction even to the very last, instead of the priests chosen by God out of the tribe of Levi. For this meaning of **מִקְצוֹת** see Gen. xix. 4 and Ezek. xxxiii. 2, also Lud. de Dieu on this passage. This innovation on the part of Jeroboam appears very surprising, if we consider how the Ephraimite Micah (Judg. xvii. 10 sqq.) rejoiced that he had obtained a Levite to act as priest for his image-worship, and can only be explained from the fact that the Levites did not consent to act as priests in the worship before the golden calves, but set their faces against it, and therefore, as is stated in 2 Chron. xi. 13, 14, were obliged to leave their district towns and possessions and emigrate into the kingdom of Judah.—Ver. 32. Jeroboam also transferred to the eighth month the feast which ought to have been kept in the seventh month (the feast of tabernacles, Lev. xxiii. 34 sqq.). The pretext for this arbitrary alteration of the law, which repeatedly describes the seventh month as the month appointed by the Lord (Lev. xxiii. 34, 39, and 41), he may have found in the fact that in the northern portion of the kingdom the corn ripened a month later than in the more southern Judah (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. § 118, Anm. 3, and § 119, Anm. 2), since this feast of the ingathering of the produce of the threshing-floor and wine-press (Ex. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 39; Deut. xvi. 13) was a feast of thanksgiving for the gathering in of all the fruits of the ground. But the true reason was to be found in his intention to make the separation in a religious point of view as complete as pos-

sible, although Jeroboam retained the day of the month, the fifteenth, for the sake of the weak who took offence at his innovations. For we may see very clearly that many beside the Levites were very discontented with these illegal institutions, from the notice in 2 Chron. xi. 16, that out of all the tribes those who were devoted to the Lord from the heart went to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the God of the fathers there. "And he sacrificed upon the altar." This clause is connected with the preceding one, in the sense of: he instituted the feast and offered sacrifices thereat. In ver. 32^b (from *וְעָשָׂה* onwards) and ver. 33, what has already been related concerning Jeroboam's religious institutions is brought to a close by a comprehensive repetition of the leading points. "Thus did he in Bethel, (namely) to offer sacrifice to the calves; and there he appointed the priests of the high places which he had made, and offered sacrifice upon the altar which he had made at Bethel, on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, which he himself had devised, and so made a feast for the children of Israel and sacrificed upon the altar to burn." *מִלְכָּר* signifies *seorsum*, by himself alone, *i.e.* in this connection, *i.g.* "from his own heart." The *Keri* *מִלְכָּר* is therefore a correct explanation as to the fact; but it is a needless correction from Neh. vi. 8. The last clause, *וְהָיָה . . . לְהִקְטִיר*, leads on to what follows, and it would be more correct to take it in connection with ch. xiii. 1 and render it thus: and when he was offering sacrifice upon the altar to burn, behold there came a man of God, etc. Thenius has rendered *וְהָיָה* incorrectly, and he stood at the altar. This thought would have been expressed by *וַיַּעֲמֹד עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ*, as in ch. xiii. 1. By *וְהָיָה* we are not to understand the burning or offering of incense, but the burning of the sacrificial portions of the flesh upon the altar, as in Lev. i. 9, 13, 17, etc.

CHAP. XIII. TESTIMONY OF GOD AGAINST THE CALF-WORSHIP OF JEROBOAM.

A prophet out of Judah announces to Jeroboam the eventual overthrow of the idolatrous worship, and attests his divine mission by miraculous signs upon the altar at Bethel and the hardened king (vers. 1-10); but on the way back he allows himself to be enticed by an old prophet out of Bethel to go into his house, contrary to the express command of the Lord, and while

sitting at table with him has to hear from his mouth the divine threat, that on account of his transgression of the command of God he will not come into the sepulchre of his fathers. This threat was fulfilled on his way home; and the marvellous fulfilment made so deep an impression upon the old prophet, that he confirmed the testimony which he had given concerning the worship at the high places (vers. 11-32). These marvellous occurrences not only teach how Jeroboam brought about the overthrow of his dynasty by his thorough hardening against the word of God (vers. 33, 34), but they also show how false prophecy rose up from the very beginning in the kingdom of Israel and set itself against the true prophets of the Lord, and how it gained a victory, which merely displayed its own impotence, however, and foreshadowed its eventual and certain overthrow.

Vers. 1-10. *Prophecy against the idolatrous worship at Bethel.*—Vers. 1, 2. Whilst Jeroboam was still occupied in sacrificing by the altar at Bethel, there came a prophet (אִישׁ מֵאֲלֵהִים) out of Judah “in the word of Jehovah” to Bethel, and pronounced upon the altar its eventual destruction. בְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה does not mean “at the word of Jehovah” here, as it frequently does, but “in the word of Jehovah,” as vers. 9 and 17 more especially show; so that the word of Jehovah is regarded as a power which comes upon the prophet and drives him to utter the divine revelation which he has received. It is the same in ch. xx. 35. לִהְיוֹת is to be taken as in ch. xii. 33.—“Behold a son will be born to the house of David, named Josiah; he will offer upon thee (O altar) the priests of the high places, who burn incense (i.e. kindle sacrifices) upon thee, and men’s bones will they burn upon thee.” According to 2 Kings xxiii. 15-20, this prophecy was literally fulfilled. The older theologians found in this an evident proof of the divine inspiration of the prophets; modern theology, on the other hand, which denies the supernatural inspiration of prophecy in accordance with its rationalistic or naturalistic principles, supposes that this prophecy was not more precisely defined till after the event, and adduces in support of this the apparently just argument, that the prediction of particular historical events is without analogy, and generally that the introduction either of particular persons by name or of definite numbers is opposed to the very essence of prophecy, and turns prediction into soothsaying. The dis-

inction between soothsaying and prediction, however, is not that the latter merely utters general ideas concerning the future, whilst the former announces special occurrences beforehand: but soothsaying is the foretelling of all kinds of accidental things; prophecy, on the contrary, the foretelling of the progressive development of the kingdom of God, not merely in general, but in its several details, according to the circumstances and necessities of each particular age, and that in such a manner that the several concrete details of the prophecy rest upon the general idea of the revelation of salvation, and are thereby entirely removed from the sphere of the accidental. It is true that perfectly concrete predictions of particular events, with the introduction of names and statement of times, are much more rare than the predictions of the progressive development of the kingdom of God according to its general features; but they are not altogether wanting, and we meet with them in every case where it was of importance to set before an ungodly generation in the most impressive manner the truth of the divine threatenings or promises. The allusion to *Coresh* in Isa. xlv. 28, xlv. 1, is analogous to the announcement before us. But in both cases the names are closely connected with the destination of the persons in the prophecy, and are simply a concrete description of what God will accomplish through these men. Hence the name *יִשְׁכְּנֵהוּ* occurs primarily according to its appellative meaning alone, viz. "he whom Jehovah supports," from *אָשַׁךְ*, to support, and expresses this thought: there will be born a son to the house of David, whom Jehovah will support or establish, so that he shall execute judgment upon the priests of the high places at Bethel. This prophecy was then afterwards so fulfilled by the special arrangement of God, that the king who executed this judgment bore the name of *Joshiyahu* as his proper name. And so also *בִּזְרֹחַ* was originally an appellative in the sense of sun. The judgment which the prophet pronounced upon the altar was founded upon the *jus talionis*. On the very same altar on which the priests offer sacrifice to the *עֲלִילִים* shall they themselves be offered, and the altar shall be defiled for ever by the burning of men's bones upon it. *עֲצֻמוֹת אָדָם*, "men's bones," does not stand for "their (the priests') bones," but is simply an epithet used to designate human corpses, which defile the place where they lie (2 Kings xxiii. 16).—Ver. 3. In confirmation of his word the prophet added a miracle (*מוֹפֵת*, *τέρας*,

portentum, see at Ex. iv. 21): "this is the sign that the Lord hath spoken (through me): behold the altar will be rent in pieces, and the ashes upon it will be poured out." אֵשֶׁת is the ashes of the fat of the sacrificial animals. The pouring out of the sacrificial ashes in consequence of the breaking up of the altar was a penal sign, which indicated, along with the destruction of the altar, the desecration of the sacrificial service performed upon it.—Ver. 4. The king, enraged at this announcement, stretched out his hand against the prophet with the words, "seize him"—and his hand dried up, so that he was not able to draw it back again. יָבֵשׁ, to dry up, i.e. to become rigid in consequence of a miraculous withdrawal of the vital energy. Thus Jeroboam experienced in the limbs of his own body the severity of the threatened judgment of God.—Vers. 5, 6. The penal miracle announced in the word of Jehovah, i.e. in the strength of the Lord, also took effect immediately upon the altar; and the defiant king was now obliged to entreat the man of God, saying, "Soften, I pray, the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may return to me," i.e. that I may be able to draw it back again, to move it once more. And this also took place at once at the intercession of the prophet. וַיִּקַּח הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאֲדָמָה, lit. to stroke the face of God, i.e. to render it soft by intercession (see at Ex. xxxii. 11).—Ver. 7. As Jeroboam could do nothing by force against the prophet, he endeavoured to gain him over to his side by friendliness, that at least he might render his threat harmless in the eyes of the people. For this purpose, and not to do him honour or to make him some acknowledgment for the restoration of his hand, he invited him to his house, to strengthen himself with food (סָעַד) as in Gen. xviii. 5, Judg. ix. 5; for the form סָעַדָּה see Ewald, § 41, c) and receive from him a present.—Vers. 8 sqq. But this design was also frustrated, and the rejection of his worship on the part of God was still more strongly declared. "If thou gavest me," the man of God replied, "the half of thy house, I shall not go in with thee, nor eat bread and drink water in this place; for thus hath Jehovah commanded me," etc. The subject, *Jehovah*, is easily supplied to יְהוָה from the context (*vid.* Ewald, § 294, b). God had forbidden the prophet to eat and drink "to manifest His detestation of idolatry, and to show by that fact that the Bethelites were so detestable, and as it were excommunicated by God, that He wished none of the faithful to

join with them in eating and drinking " (C. a Lap.). He was not to return by the way by which he came, that no one might look out for him, and force him to a delay which was irreconcilable with his commission, or "lest by chance being brought back by Jeroboam, he should do anything to please him which was unworthy of a prophet, or from which it might be inferred that idolaters might hope for some favour from the Deity" (Budd.).

Vers. 11-32. *Seduction of the man of God by an old prophet, and his consequent punishment.*—Vers. 11-19. The man of God had resisted the invitations of Jeroboam, and set out by a different road to return to Judah. An old prophet at Bethel heard from his sons what had taken place (the singular **בְּנוֹ בֶּנִי** as compared with the plural **בְּנֵי בָנָיו** may be explained on the supposition that first of all one son related the matter to his father, and that then the other sons supported the account given by the first); had his ass saddled; hurried after him, and found him sitting under *the* terebinth (the tree well known from that event); invited him to come into his house and eat with him; and when the latter appealed to the divine prohibition, said to him (ver. 18), "I am a prophet also as thou art, and an angel has said to me in the word of the Lord: Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat and drink," and lied to him (**וַיֹּאמֶר** without a *copula*, because it is inserted as it were parenthetically, simply as an explanation)—then he went back with him, and ate and drank in his house.—Vers. 20-22. As they were sitting at table the word of the Lord came to the old prophet, so that he cried out to the man of God from Judah: "Because thou hast been rebellious against the command of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment, . . . thou wilt not come to the grave of thy fathers," i.e. thou wilt meet with a violent death by the way. This utterance was soon fulfilled.—Vers. 23 sqq. After he had eaten he saddled the ass for him, i.e. for the prophet whom he had fetched back, and the latter (the prophet from Judah) departed upon it. On the road a lion met him and slew him; "and his corpse was cast in the road, but the ass stood by it, and the lion stood by the corpse." The lion, contrary to its nature, had neither consumed the prophet whom it had slain, nor torn in pieces and devoured the ass upon which he rode, but had remained standing by the corpse and by the ass, that the slaying of the prophet might not be regarded as a misfortune that had

befallen him by accident, but that the hand of the Lord might be manifest therein, so that passers-by saw this marvel and related it in Bethel.—Ver. 26. When the old prophet at Bethel heard of this, he said, “It is the man of God, who was disobedient to the word of the Lord; the Lord hath delivered him to the lion, so that it hath torn him (לִשְׁנֵי לֵאָדָה, *frangere, confringere*, used of a lion which tears its prey in pieces) and slain him according to the word of the Lord, which He spake to him.”—Vers. 27–32. He thereupon had his ass saddled, and went and found the corpse and the ass standing by it, without the lion having eaten the corpse or torn the ass in pieces; and he lifted the corpse upon his ass, and brought it into his own city, and laid the corpse in his grave with the customary lamentation: אֵלֵי, alas, my brother! (cf. Jer. xxii. 18), and then gave this command to his sons: “When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried, let my bones rest beside his bones; for the word which he proclaimed in the word of Jehovah upon the altar at Bethel and upon all the houses of the high places in the cities of Samaria will take place” (i.e. will be fulfilled). The expression “cities of Samaria” belongs to the author of these books, and is used proleptically of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which did not receive this name till after the building of the city of Samaria as the capital of the kingdom and the residence of the kings of Israel (ch. xvi. 24). There is a prophetic element in the words “upon all the houses of the high places,” etc., inasmuch as the only other erection at that time beside the one at Bethel was a temple of the high places at Dan. But after such a beginning the multiplication of them might be foreseen with certainty, even without any higher illumination.

The conduct of the old prophet at Bethel appears so strange, that Josephus and the Chald., and most of the Rabbins and of the earlier commentators both Catholic and Protestant, have regarded him as a false prophet, who tried to lay a trap for the prophet from Judah, in order to counteract the effect of his prophecy upon the king and the people. But this assumption cannot be reconciled with either the divine revelation which came to him at the table, announcing to the Judæan prophet the punishment of his transgression of the commandment of God, and was so speedily fulfilled (vers. 20–24); or with the honour which he paid to the dead man after this punishment had fallen upon him, by burying him in his own grave; and still less with his con-

firmation of his declaration concerning the altar at Bethel (vers. 29-32). We must therefore follow Ephr. Syr., Theodor., Hengstenberg, and others, and regard the old prophet as a true prophet, who with good intentions, and not "under the influence of human envy" (Thenius), but impelled by the desire to enter into a closer relation to the man of God from Judah and to strengthen himself through his prophetic gifts, urged him to enter his house. The fact that he made use of sinful means in order to make more sure of securing the end desired, namely, of the false pretence that he had been directed by an angel to do this, may be explained, as Hengstenberg suggests (*Dissert.* vol. ii. p. 149), on the ground that when Jeroboam introduced his innovations, he had sinned by keeping silence, and that the appearance of the Judæan prophet had brought him to a consciousness of this sin, so that he had been seized with shame on account of his fall, and was anxious to restore himself to honour in his own eyes and those of others by intercourse with this witness to the truth. But however little the lie itself can be excused or justified, we must not attribute to him alone the consequences by which the lie was followed in the case of the Judæan prophet. For whilst he chose reprehensible means of accomplishing what appeared to be a good end, namely, to raise himself again by intercourse with a true prophet, and had no wish to injure the other in any way, the Judæan prophet allowed himself to be seduced to a transgression of the clear and definite prohibition of God simply by the sensual desire for bodily invigoration by meat and drink, and had failed to consider that the divine revelation which he had received could not be repealed by a pretended revelation from an angel, because the word of God does not contradict itself. He was therefore obliged to listen to a true revelation from God from the mouth of the man whose pretended revelation from an angel he had too carelessly believed, namely, to the announcement of punishment for his disobedience towards the commandment of God, which punishment he immediately afterwards endured, "for the destruction of the flesh, but for the preservation of the spirit: 1 Cor. xv. 5" (*Berleb. Bible*). That the punishment fell upon him alone and not upon the old prophet of Bethel also, and that for apparently a smaller crime, may be accounted for "not so much from the fact that the old prophet had lied with a good intention (this might hold good of the other also), as from the fact that it was needful to deal strictly with

the man who had just received a great and holy commission from the Lord" (O. v. Gerlach). It is true that no bodily punishment fell upon the old prophet, but this punishment he received instead, that with his lie he was put to shame, and that his conscience must have accused him of having occasioned the death of the man of God from Judah. He was thereby to be cured of his weakness, that he might give honour to the truth of the testimony of God. "Thus did the wondrous providence of God know how to direct all things most gloriously, so that the bodily destruction of the one contributed to the spiritual and eternal preservation of the soul of the other" (*Berleb. Bible*).—Concerning the design of these marvellous events, H. Witsius has the following remarks in his *Miscell.* ss. i. p. 118 (ed. nov. 1736): "So many wondrous events all concurring in one result caused the prophecy against the altar at Bethel to be preserved in the mouths and memories of all, and the mission of this prophet to become far more illustrious. Thus, although the falsehood of the old man of Bethel brought disgrace upon himself, it injured no one but the man of God whose credulity was too great; and, under the overruling providence of God, it contributed in the most signal manner to the confirmation and publication of the truth."¹ The heaping up of the marvellous corresponded to the great object of the mission of the man of God out of Judah, through which the Lord would enter an energetic protest against the idolatrous worship of Jeroboam at its first introduction, to guard those who feared God in Israel, of whom there were not a few (2 Chron. xi. 16; 2 Kings xviii. 3, xix. 18), from falling away from Him by joining in the worship of the calves, and to take away every excuse from the ungodly who participated therein.

Vers. 33 and 34. But this did not lead Jeroboam to conversion. He turned not from his evil way, but continued to make high priests from the mass of the people. וַיִּשָּׂב וַיַּעַשׂ, "he re-

¹ Compare with this the remark of Theodoret in his *quæst.* 43 in 3 *libr. Reg.*: "In my opinion this punishment served to confirm the declaration concerning the altar. For it was not possible for the statement of such a man to be concealed: and this was sufficient to fill with terror those who heard it; for if partaking of food contrary to the command of God, and that not of his own accord, but under a deception, brought such retribution upon a righteous man, to what punishments would they be exposed who had forsaken the God who made them, and worshipped the likenesses of irrational creatures?"

turned and made," i.e. he made again or continued to make. For the fact itself compare ch. xii. 31. "Whoever had pleasure (הֵחֵפֵז, cf. Ges. § 109), he filled his hand, that he might become a priest of the high places." מָלֵא אֶת־יָדוֹ, to fill the hand, is the technical expression for investing with the priesthood, according to the rite prescribed for the consecration of the priests, namely, to place sacrificial gifts in the hands of the persons to be consecrated (see at Lev. vii. 37 and viii. 25 sqq.). The plural בְּהֵי בָמֹת is used with indefinite generality: that he might be ranked among the priests of high places.—Ver. 34. "And it became in (with) this thing the sin of the house of Jeroboam, and the destroying and cutting off from the earth;" that is to say, this obstinate persistence in ungodly conduct was the guilt which had as its natural consequence the destroying of his house from the face of the earth. בִּדְרֹךְ הָיָה is not a mistake for הִדְרֹךְ הָיָה, but דִּ is used, as in 1 Chron. ix. 33, vii. 23, to express the idea of being and persisting in a thing (for this use of דִּ compare Ewald, § 295, f).

CHAP. XIV. REIGN AND DEATH OF JEROBOAM AND REHOBOAM.

Vers. 1-20. REIGN OF JEROBOAM.—Vers. 1-18. *Ahijah's prophecy against Jeroboam and the kingdom of Israel.*—As Jeroboam did not desist from his idolatry notwithstanding the threatened punishment, the Lord visited him with the illness of his son, and directed the prophet Ahijah, to whom his wife had gone to ask counsel concerning the result of the illness, to predict to him not only the cutting off of his house and the death of his sick son, but also the thrusting away of Israel out of the land of its fathers beyond the Euphrates, and in confirmation of this threat caused the sick son to die when the returning mother crossed the threshold of her house again.—Vers. 1-3. When his son fell sick, Jeroboam said to his wife: Disguise thyself, that thou mayest not be known as the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh to the prophet Ahijah, who told me that I should be king over this people; he will tell thee how it will fare with the boy. הִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, from שָׁחָה, to alter one's self, i.e. to disguise one's self. She was to go to Shiloh disguised, so as not to be recognised, to deceive the old prophet, because otherwise Jeroboam did not promise himself any favourable answer, as he had contemptuously neglected Ahijah's admonition (ch. xi. 38, 39). But he turned

to this prophet because he had spoken concerning him לְהִיכִלְךָ, to be king, i.e. that he would become king, over this people. לְהִיכִלְךָ stands for לְהִיכִלְךָ, with which the infinitive אָמַר can be omitted (*vid.* Ewald, § 336, b). As this prophecy, which was so favourable to Jeroboam, had come to pass (ch. xi. 29, 30), he hoped that he might also obtain from Ahijah a divine revelation concerning the result of his son's illness, provided that he did not know who it was who came to seek counsel concerning her sick son. To complete the deception, she was to take with her as a present for the prophet (cf. 1 Sam. ix. 8) "ten loaves and crumbs" and a jar with honey, i.e. a trifling gift such as a simple citizen's wife might take. According to the early versions and the context, a kind of plain cake, *κολλυρῖδα* (LXX.), *crustulam* (Vulg.). It is different in Josh. ix. 5.—Vers. 4, 5. Ahijah could no longer see, because his eyes were blinded with age. בְּעֵינָיו as in 1 Sam. iv. 15, an expression applied to the black cataract, *amaurosis*. It was therefore all the less possible for him to recognise in a natural manner the woman who was coming to him. But before her arrival the Lord had not only revealed to him her coming and her object, but had also told him what he was to say to her if she should disguise herself when she came. כִּי־יָבֹא; see at Judg. xviii. 4. וְיִהְיֶה כִּי־יָבֹא, "let it be if she comes and disguises herself," i.e. if when she comes she should disguise herself.—Ver. 6. When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet entering the door (the participle שָׁמָע, according to the number and gender, refers to the אִשָּׁה implied in וְיָבֹא, *vid.* Ewald, § 317, c), he addressed her by her name, charged her with her disguise of herself, and told her that he was entrusted with a hard saying to her. קָשָׁה (cf. ch. xii. 13) is equivalent to קָשָׁה; for the construction, compare Ewald, § 284, c.—Vers. 7 sqq. The saying was as follows: "Therefore, because thou hast exalted thyself from the people, and I have made thee prince over my people Israel (cf. ch. xi. 31), . . . but thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments . . . (cf. ch. xi. 34), and hast done worse than all who were before thee (*judices nimirum et duces Israelis*—Cler.), and hast gone and hast made thyself other gods (contrary to the express command in Ex. xx. 2, 3), . . . and hast cast me behind thy back: therefore I bring misfortune upon the house of Jeroboam," etc. The expression, to cast God behind the back, which only occurs here and in Ezek. xxiii. 35, denotes the most

scornful contempt of God, the strict opposite of "keeping God before the eyes and in the heart." מְשִׁחִין בָּקִיר, every male person; see at 1 Sam. xxv. 22. A synonymous expression is עָצוּר וְחָפֵז, the fettered (i.e. probably the married) and the free (or single); see at Deut. xxxii. 36. "In Israel," i.e. in the kingdom of the ten tribes. The threat is strengthened by the clause in ver. 10, "and I will sweep out after the house of Jeroboam, as one sweepeth out dung, even to the end," which expresses shameful and utter extermination; and this threat is still further strengthened in ver. 11 by the threat added from Dent. xxviii. 26, that of those cut off not one is to come to the grave, but their bodies are to be devoured by the dogs and birds of prey,—the worst disgrace that could befall the dead. Instead of wild beasts (Deut. xxviii. 26) the dogs are mentioned here, because in the East they wander out in the streets without owners, and are so wild and ravenous that they even devour corpses (*vid.* Harmar, *Beobachtungen*, i. p. 198). לְיָרֵכֶם with לְ of relationship, equivalent to of those related to Jeroboam. It is the same in ver. 13.—Vers. 12, 13. After this announcement of the judgment upon the house of Jeroboam, Ahijah gave the wife information concerning her sick son. He would die as soon as she entered the city, and of all the male members of the house of Jeroboam he only would receive the honour of a proper burial, because in him there was some good thing towards Jehovah found. Ewald (§ 247, b) regards the form בְּבִיאָה as standing for בְּבִיאָה, and refers the suffix to the following word הָעִיר (*vid.* Ewald, § 309, c). But as this use of the suffix would be very harsh, the question arises whether בְּבִיאָה is not to be regarded as a feminine form of the infinitive, after the analogy of יָעָה in Ex. ii. 4 and לָרָה in 2 Kings xix. 3, etc. From the fulfilment of this declaration in vers. 17 and 18 Jeroboam was to learn that the threatened destruction of his royal house would also be just as certainly fulfilled. The sick son appears to have been the heir-presumptive to the throne. This may be inferred partly from the lamentation of all Israel at his death (ver. 18), and partly from what follows here in the next verse. אֶל־יְהוָה means in his relation to Jehovah.—Ver. 14. "Jehovah will raise Himself up a king over Israel, who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day; but what (*sc.* do I say)? even now," *sc.* has He raised him up. This appears to be the simplest explanation of the last words of the verse, of which

very various interpretations have been given. וְ is placed before וְיִי, to give it the stronger emphasis, as in Ex. xxxii. 1 (compare Josh. ix. 12, 13, and Ewald, § 293, *b*; and for וְיִי וְיִי compare Delitzsch on *Job*, i. p. 290, transl.).—Vers. 15, 16. But in order that not only Jeroboam, but also the people who had joined in his idolatry, might perceive the severity of the divine judgment, Ahijah also announced to the nation its banishment into exile beyond the Euphrates. “Jehovah will smite Israel, as the reed shakes in the water,” is an abbreviated phrase for: Jehovah will smite Israel in such a manner that it will sway to and fro like a reed in the water moved by a strong wind, which has not a sufficiently firm hold to resist the violence of the storm. “And will thrust them out of the good land,” etc., as Moses threatened the transgressors of the law (Deut. xxix. 27), “and scatter them beyond the river (Euphrates),” i.e. banish them among the heathen, from whom God brought out and chose their forefather (Josh. xxiv. 3), “because they have made themselves Ashera-idols, to provoke Jehovah.” וְיִי is used for idols generally, among which the golden calves are reckoned. וְיִי, that He may deliver up Israel, on account of the idolatrous forms of worship introduced by Jeroboam. For the fulfilment see 2 Kings xv. 29, xvii. 23, and xviii. 11.—In vers. 17 and 18 the exact fulfilment of Ahijah’s announcement concerning the death of Jeroboam’s sick son is described. According to ver. 17, Jeroboam was then residing at *Thirza*, whereas he had at first resided at Shechem (ch. xii. 25). *Thirza* is probably the present *Talluza*, on the north of Shechem (see at Josh. xii. 24).—Vers. 19 and 20. *End of Jeroboam’s reign*. Of the wars, which were described in the annals of the kings (see p. 12), the war with Abijam of Judah is the only one of which we have any account (2 Chron. xiii. 2 sqq.). See also the Comm. on ver. 30. He was followed on the throne by his son Nadab.

Vers. 21–31. REIGN OF REHOBOAM IN JUDAH (compare 2 Chron. xi. 5–xii. 16).—Ver. 21. Rehoboam, who ascended the throne at the age of forty-one, was born a year before the accession of Solomon (see at ch. ii. 24). In the description of Jerusalem as the city chosen by the Lord (cf. ch. xi. 36) there is implied not so much an indirect condemnation of the falling away of the ten tribes, as the striking contrast to the idolatry

of Rehoboam referred to in vers. 23 sqq. The name of his mother is mentioned (here and in ver. 31), not because she seduced the king to idolatry (Ephr. Syr.), but generally on account of the great influence which the queen-mother appears to have had both upon the king personally and upon his government, as we may infer from the fact that the mother's name is given in the case of every king of Judah (*vid.* ch. xv. 2, 13, xxii. 42, etc.).—Vers. 22-24. The general characteristics of Rehoboam's reign are supplied and more minutely defined in the account in the Chronicles. According to 2 Chron. xi. 5-xii. 1, he appears to have been brought to reflection by the announcement of the prophet, that the falling away of the ten tribes had come from the Lord as a punishment for Solomon's idolatry (ch. xii. 23, 24; 2 Chron. xi. 2-4); and in the first years of his reign to have followed the law of God with earnestness, and to have been occupied in the establishment of his government partly by the fortification of different cities (2 Chron. xi. 5-12), and partly by setting in order his domestic affairs, placing his numerous sons, who were born of his many wives and concubines, in the fortified cities of the land, and thus providing for them, and naming Abijam as his successor (2 Chron. xi. 18-22); while his kingdom was still further strengthened by the priests, Levites, and pious Israelites who emigrated to Judah and Jerusalem from the ten tribes (2 Chron. xi. 13-17). But this good beginning only lasted three years (2 Chron. xi. 17). When he thought that he had sufficiently fortified his kingdom, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel (*i.e.* all the covenant nation) with him (2 Chron. xii. 1). "Judah did that which was displeasing in the sight of the Lord; they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers (*sc.* under the Judges) had done with their sins." לְהַצְרִיקוֹ, to provoke to jealousy (Num. v. 14), is to be explained, when it refers to God, from the fact that the relation in which God stood to His people was regarded under the figure of a marriage, in which Jehovah appears as the husband of the nation, who is angry at the unfaithfulness of his wife, *i.e.* at the idolatry of the nation. Compare the remarks on לְהַצְרִיקוֹ in the Comm. on Ex. xx. 5.—Ver. 23. They also (the Judæans as well as the Israelites) built themselves *bamoth*, altars of high places (see at ch. iii. 3), monuments and Asherah-idols. מַצֵּבוֹת are not actual images of gods, but stones set up as

memorials (Gen. xxxi. 13, xxxv. 20; Ex. xxiv. 4), more especially stone monuments set up in commemoration of a divine revelation (Gen. xxviii. 18, 22, xxxv. 14). Like the *bamoth*, in connection with which they generally occur, they were originally dedicated to Jehovah; but even under the law they were forbidden, partly as places of divine worship of human invention which easily degenerated into idolatry, but chiefly because the Canaanites had erected such monuments to Baal by the side of his altars (Ex. xxiii. 24, xxxiv. 13; Deut. vii. 5, etc.), whereby the worship of Jehovah was unconsciously identified with the worship of Baal, even when the *mazzeboth* were not at first erected to the Canaanitish Baal. As the מַזְבֵּה of the Canaanites were dedicated to Baal, so were the אֱלִילִים to Astarte, the female nature-deity of those tribes. אֱלִיל, however, does not mean a *grove* (see the Comm. on Deut. xvi. 21), but an idol of the Canaanitish nature-goddess, generally most likely a lofty wooden pillar, though sometimes perhaps a straight trunk of a tree, the branches and crown of which were lopped off, and which was planted upon heights and in other places by the side of the altars of Baal. The name אֱלִיל was transferred from the idol to the goddess of nature (ch. xv. 13, xviii. 19; 2 Kings xxi. 7, etc.), and was used of the image or column of the Phœnician Astarte (ch. xvi. 33; 2 Kings xiii. 6, xvii. 16, etc.), just as אֱלִילִים in Judg. iii. 7 alternates with אֱלִילִים in Judg. ii. 13. These idols the Israelites (? Judæans—Tr.) appear to have also associated with the worship of Jehovah; for the external worship of Jehovah was still maintained in the temple, and was performed by Rehoboam himself with princely pomp (ver. 28). "On every high hill," etc.; see at Deut. xii. 2. —Ver. 24. "There were also prostitutes in the land." זִמְרָן is used collectively as a generic name, including both male and female hierodylæ, and is exchanged for the plural in ch. xv. 12. The male זִמְרָן had emasculated themselves in religious frenzy in honour of the Canaanitish goddess of nature, and were called Galli by the Romans. They were Canaanites, who had found their way into the land of Judah when idolatry gained the upper hand (as indicated by זִמְרָן). "They appear here as strangers among the Israelites, and are those notorious Cinaedi more especially of the imperial age of Rome who travelled about in all directions, begging for the Syrian goddess, and even in the time of Augustine went about asking for alms in the streets of Car-

thage as a remnant of the Phœnician worship (*de civ. Dei*, vii. 26).”—Movers, p. 679. On the female *mitzra* see the Comm. on Gen. xxxviii. 21 and Deut. xxiii. 18.

This sinking into heathen abominations was soon followed by the punishment, that Judah was given up to the power of the heathen.—Vers. 25-28. King *Shishak* of Egypt invaded the land with a powerful army, conquered all the fortified cities, penetrated to Jerusalem, and would probably have put an end to the kingdom of Judah, if God had not had compassion upon him, and saved him from destruction, in consequence of the humiliation of the king and of the chiefs of the nation, caused by the admonition of the prophet *Shemaiah*, so that after the conquest of Jerusalem *Shishak* contented himself with withdrawing, taking with him the treasures of the temple and of the royal palace. Compare the fuller account of this expedition in 2 Chron. xii. 2-9. *Shishak* (𓂏𓂏𓂏) was the first king of the twenty-second (or Bubastitic) dynasty, called *Sesonchis* in Jul. Afric., *Sesonchosis* in Eusebius, and upon the monuments on which Champollion first deciphered his name, *Sheshonk* or *Sheshenk*. *Shishak* has celebrated his expedition against Judah by a bas-relief on the outer wall of the pillar-hall erected by him in the first palace at Karnak, in which more than 130 figures are led in cords by *Ammon* and the goddess *Muth* with their hands bound upon their backs. The lower portion of the figures of this long row of prisoners is covered by escutcheons, the border of which being provided with battlements, shows that the prisoners are symbols of conquered cities. About a hundred of these escutcheons are still legible, and in the names upon them a large number of the names of cities in the kingdom of Judah have been deciphered with tolerable certainty.¹ *Shishak* was probably bent chiefly upon the conquest and

¹ Compare Max Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums*, Bd. i. p. 909, ed. 3, and for the different copies of this bas-relief in the more recent works upon Egypt, Ruetschi in Herzog's *Cycl.* (art. *Rehoboam*). The latest attempts at deciphering are those by Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschriften in den ägypt. Denkmälern*, ii. p. 56 sqq., and O. Blau, *Sisaks Zug gegen Juda aus dem Denkmale bei Karnak erläutert*, in the *Deutsch. morgenl. Ztschr.* xv. p. 233 sqq. Champollion's interpretation of one of these escutcheons, in his *Précis du système hierogl.* p. 204, viz. *Juda hammalek*, "the king of Judah," has been rejected by Lepsius and Brugsch as philologically inadmissible. Brugsch writes the name thus: *Judh malk* or *Joud-hamalok*, and identifies *Judh* with *Jehudijeh*, which Robinson (*Pal.* iii. p. 45) supposes to be the ancient *Jehud* (*Josh.* xix. 45).

plundering of the cities. But from Jerusalem, beside other treasures of the temple and palace, he also carried off the golden shields that had been made by Solomon (ch. x. 16), in the place of which Rehoboam had copper ones made for his body-guard. The guard, רָצִים, runners, are still further described as הַשְׁמָרִים פָּתַח בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ, "who kept the door of the king's house," i.e. supplied the sentinels for the gate of the royal palace.—Ver. 28. Whenever the king went into the house of Jehovah, the runners carried these shields; from which we may see that the king was accustomed to go to the temple with solemn pomp. These shields were not kept in the state-house of the forest of Lebanon (ch. x. 17) as the golden shields were, but in the guard-chamber (חָמָּה; see at Ezek. xl. 7) of the runners.—Vers. 29–31. Further particulars are given in 2 Chron. xi. and xii. concerning the rest of the acts of Rehoboam. "There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam the whole time (of their reign)." As nothing is said about any open war between them, and the prophet Shemaiah prohibited the attack which Rehoboam was about to make upon the tribes who had fallen away (ch. xi. 23 sqq.), מִלְחָמָה can only denote the hostile feelings and attitude of the two rulers towards one another.—Ver. 31. *Death and burial of Rehoboam*: as in the case of Solomon (ch. xi. 43). The name of the queen-mother has already been given in ver. 21, and the repetition of it here may be explained on the supposition that in the original sources employed by the author of our books it stood in this position. The son and successor of Rehoboam upon the throne is called *Abijam* (אֲבִיָּאָם) in the account before us; whereas in the Chronicles he is always called *Abijah* (אֲבִיָּה), 2 Chron. xii. 16, xiii. 1, etc., or אֲבִיָּהוּ, 2 Chron. xiii. 21). אֲבִיָּה, i.e. father of the sea, is unquestionably the older form of the name, which was reduced to אֲבִיָּה.

This *Jehud* in the tribe of Dan, Blau (p. 238) therefore also finds in the name; and it will not mislead any one that this city is reckoned as belonging to the tribe of Dan, since in the very same chapter (Josh. xix. 42) Ajalon is assigned to Dan, though it was nevertheless a fortress of Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 10). But Blau has not given any explanation of the addition *malok* or *malok*, whereas Gust. Roesch takes it to be מֶלֶךְ, and supposes it to mean "Jehnd of the king, namely, of Rehoboam or of Jndah, on account of its being situated in Dan, which belonged to the northern kingdom." But this is certainly incorrect. For where could the Egyptians have obtained this exact knowledge of the relation in which the tribes of the nation of Israel stood to one another?

and then identified with the formation from אָבִי and יָהּ = יְהוָה (from יְהוָה).

CHAP. XV. 1-24. REIGNS OF THE TWO KINGS ABIJAM AND ASA
OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1-8. REIGN OF ABIJAM (cf. 2 Chron. xiii.).—*Abijam* reigned three years, and his mother's name was *Maacah*, daughter (i.e. grand-daughter) of Absalom. We have the same in 2 Chron. xi. 20, 21; but in 2 Chron. xiii. 2 she is called *Michajahu*, daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. If אֲבִיזָלֹם was without doubt Absalom, the well-known son of David, as we may infer from the fact that this name does not occur again in the Old Testament in connection with any other person, since Absalom had only one daughter, viz. *Thamar* (2 Sam. xiv. 27), who was fifty years old when Solomon died, Maacah must have been a daughter of this Thamar, who had married Uriel of Gibeah, and therefore a grand-daughter of Absalom. This is sustained by Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 10, 1). The form of the name אֲבִיזָלֹם is probably an error in copying for אֲבִיזָלָה, as the name is also written in 2 Chron. xi. 20 and 21, and not a different name, which Maacah assumed as queen, as Caspari supposes (*Micha*, p. 3, note 4).—Vers. 3, 4. Abijam walked as king in the footsteps of his father. Although he made presents to the temple (ver. 15), his heart was not שָׁלֵם, wholly or undividedly given to the Lord, like the heart of David (cf. ch. xi. 4); but (בִּי, after a previous negative) for David's sake Jehovah had left him a light in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him and to let Jerusalem stand, because (אֲשֶׁר) David had done right in the eyes of God, etc., i.e. so that it was only for David's sake that Jehovah did not reject him, and allowed the throne to pass to his son. For the fact itself compare ch. xi. 13 and 36; and for the words, "except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite," see 2 Sam. xi. and xii.—Ver. 6. "And there was war between *Rehoboam* and *Jeroboam* all his life;" i.e. the state of hostility which had already existed between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continued "all the days of his life," or so long as Abijam lived and reigned. If we take בְּלִי יְהוֹיָהּ in this manner (not בְּלִי יְהוֹיָהּ, ver. 16), the statement loses the strangeness which it has at first sight, and harmonizes very well with that in ver. 7, that there was also war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

Under Abijam it assumed the form of a serious war, in which Jeroboam sustained a great defeat (see 2 Chron. xiii 3-20).—The other notices concerning Abijam, in vers. 7 and 8 are the same as in the case of Rehoboam in ch. xiv. 29 and 31.

Vers. 9-24. REIGN OF ASA (cf. 2 Chron. xiv.-xvi.).—As Asa ascended the throne in the twentieth year of the reign of Jeroboam, his father Abijam, who began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam (ver. 1), can only have reigned two years and a few months, and not three full years.—Ver. 10. Asa reigned forty-one years. "The name of his mother was Maacah, the daughter of Absalom." This notice, which agrees verbatim with ver. 2, cannot mean that Abijam had his own mother for a wife; though Thenius finds this meaning in the passage, and then proceeds to build up conjectures concerning emendations of the text. We must rather explain it, as Ephr. Syr., the Rabbins, and others have done, as signifying that Maacah, the mother of Abijam, continued during Asa's reign to retain the post of queen-mother or מַלְכָּה, i.e. sultana valide, till Asa deposed her on account of her idolatry (ver. 13), probably because Asa's own mother had died at an early age.—Vers. 11 sqq. As ruler Asa walked in the ways of his pious ancestor David: he banished the male prostitutes out of the land, abolished all the abominations of idolatry, which his fathers (Abijam and Rehoboam) had introduced, deposed his grandmother Maacah from the rank of a queen, because she had made herself an idol for the Ashera, and had the idol hewn in pieces and burned in the valley of the Kidron. מַלְכָּה is a contemptuous epithet applied to idols (Lev. xxvi 30); it does not mean *stercori*, however, as the Rabbins affirm, but logs, from מָלַךְ, to roll, or masses of stone, after the Chaldee מַלְכָּה (Ezra v. 8, vi. 4), generally connected with מַלְכָּה. It is so in Deut. xxix. 16. מַלְכָּה, *formido*, from יָרָא, *terrere, timere*, hence an idol as an object of fear, and not *pudendum*, a shameful image, as Movers (*Phöniz* i. p. 571), who follows the Rabbins, explains it, understanding thereby a Phallus as a symbol of the generative and fructifying power of nature. With regard to the character of this idol, nothing further can be determined than that it was of wood, and possibly a wooden column like the מַלְכָּה (see at ch. xiv. 23). "But the high places departed not," i.e. were not abolished. By the מַלְכָּה we are not to understand, according to ver. 12,

altars of high places dedicated to idols, but unlawful altars to Jehovah. It is so in the other passages in which this formula recurs (ch. xxii. 24; 2 Kings xii. 4, xiv. 4, xv. 4; and the parallel passages 2 Chron. xv. 17, xx. 33). The apparent discrepancy between the last-mentioned passages and 2 Chron. xiv. 2, 4, and xvii. 6, may be solved very simply on the supposition that the kings (Asa and Jehoshaphat) did indeed abolish the altars on the high places, but did not carry their reforms in the nation thoroughly out; and not by distinguishing between the *bamoth* dedicated to Jehovah and those dedicated to idols, as Thénius, Bertheau, and Caspari, with many of the earlier commentators, suppose. For although 2 Chron. xiv. 2 is very favourable to this solution, since both *במות* and *במזבחות הנוכח* are mentioned there, it does not accord with 2 Chron. xvii. 6, where *הבמות* cannot be merely idolatrous altars dedicated to the Canaanitish Baal, but unquestionably refer to the unlawful altars of Jehovah, or at any rate include them. Moreover, the next clause in the passage before us, "nevertheless Asa's heart was wholly given to the Lord," shows that the expression *לֹא כָרַי* does not mean that the king allowed the unlawful Jehovah-*bamoth* to remain, but simply that, notwithstanding his fidelity to Jehovah, the *bamoth* did not depart, so that he was unable to carry the abolition of them thoroughly out—Ver. 15. He brought the sacred offerings of his father and his own sacred offerings into the house of Jehovah; probably the booty, in silver, gold, and vessels, which his father Abijam had gathered in the war with Jeroboam (2 Chron. xiii. 16, 17), and he himself on the conquest of the Cushites (2 Chron. xiv. 12, 13). The *Keri* *קָרַי* is a bad emendation of the correct reading in the *Chethab* *קָרַשׁ*, i.e. *קָרַשׁ* (*קָרַשׁ*); for *בֵּית יְהוָה* is an accusative, and is to be connected with *קָרַשׁ*—Vers. 16, 17. The state of hostility between Judah and Israel continued during the reign of Asa; and Baasha the king of Israel advanced, etc. These statements are completed and elucidated by the Chronicles. After the great victory obtained by Abijam over Jeroboam, the kingdom of Judah enjoyed rest for ten years (2 Chron. xiii. 23). Asa employed this time in exterminating idolatry, fortifying different cities, and equipping his army (2 Chron. xiv. 1-7). Then the Cushite Zerah invaded the land of Judah with an innumerable army (in the eleventh year of Asa), but was totally defeated by the help of the Lord

(2 Chron. xiv. 8-14); whereupon Asa, encouraged by the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, proceeded with fresh zeal to the extermination of such traces of idolatry as still remained in the kingdom, then renewed the altar of burnt-offering in front of the temple-hall, and in the fifteenth year of his reign held, with the whole nation, a great festival of thanksgiving and rejoicing to the Lord at Jerusalem (2 Chron. xv. 1-15). The next year, the sixteenth of his reign and the thirty-sixth from the division of the kingdom (2 Chron. xvi. 1), Baasha commenced hostilities, by advancing against Judah, taking possession of *Ramah*, the present *er Râm* (see at Josh. xviii. 25), which was only two hours and a quarter from Jerusalem, and fortifying it. The occupation of Ramah is not expressly mentioned indeed, but it is implied in *וַיִּלְכְּדוּ אֶת רָמָה*, which affirms the hostile invasion of Judah. For Ramah, from its very situation in the heart of the tribe of Benjamin and the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, can neither have been a border city nor have belonged to the kingdom of Israel. The intention of Baasha, therefore, in fortifying Ramah cannot have been merely to restrain his own subjects from passing over into the kingdom of Judah, but was evidently to cut off from the kingdom of Judah all free communication with the north. *לְבַלְלֵי* 'בָּלַל', "that they might not give one going out or one coming in to Asa;" i.e. to cut off from the others all connection with Asa, and at the same time to cut off from those with Asa all connection with this side. The main road from Jerusalem to the north passed by Ramah, so that by shutting up this road the line of communication of the kingdom of Judah was of necessity greatly disturbed. Moreover, the fortification of Ramah by Baasha presupposes the reconquest of the cities which Abijam had taken from the kingdom of Israel (2 Chron. xiii. 19), and which, according to 2 Chron. xiii. 19, were still in the possession of Asa.—Vers. 18, 19. In order to avert the danger with which his kingdom was threatened, Asa endeavoured to induce the Syrian king, Benhadad of Damascus, to break the treaty which he had concluded with Baasha and to become his ally, by sending him such treasures as were left in the temple and palace.¹ *וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַכֶּסֶף וְהַזָּהָב* may be explained from the

¹ Asa had sought help from the Lord and obtained it, when the powerful army of the Cushites invaded the land; but when an invasion of the Israelites took place, he sought help from the Syrians. This alteration in his con-

fact that the temple and palace treasures had been plundered by Shishak in the reign of Rehoboam (ch. xiv. 26); and therefore what Asa had replaced in the temple treasury (ver. 15), and had collected together for his palace, was only a remnant in comparison with the former state of these treasures. The name הַדָּד, i.e. son of *Hadad*, the sun-god (according to Macrobius, i. 23; cf. Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 196), was borne by three kings of Damascus: the one here named, his son in the time of Ahab (ch. xx. 1, 34), and the son of Hazael (2 Kings xiii. 24). The first was a son of *Tabrimmon* and grandson of *Hezyon*. According to ver. 19, his father *Tabrimmon* (good is *Rimmon*; see at 2 Kings v. 18) had also been king, and was the contemporary of Abijam. But that his grandfather *Hezyon* was also king, and the same person as the *Rezon* mentioned in ch. xi. 23, cannot be shown to be even probable, since there is no ground for the assumption that Hezyon also bore the name Rezon, and is called by the latter name here and by the former in ch. xi. 23.—Ver. 20. Benhadad consented to Asa's request, and directed his captains to advance into the kingdom of Israel: they took several cities in the north of the land, whereby Baasha was compelled to give up fortifying Ramah and withdraw to Thirza. *Ijon* (יִזְוִן) is to be sought for in all probability in Tell Dibbin, on the eastern border of *Merj Ayun*; and in *Ajun*, although Ajun is written with *Aleph*, the name *Ijon* is probably preserved, since the situation of this Tell seems thoroughly adapted for a fortress on the northern border of Israel (*vid.* Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* p. 375, and Van de Velde, *Mem.* p. 322). *Dan* is the present *Tell el Kadi*; see at Josh. xix. 47. *Abel-Beth-Maachah*, the present *Abil el Kamh*, to the north-west of Lake Huleh (see at 2 Sam. xx. 14). "All *Chinneroth*" is the district of *Chinnereth*, the tract of land on the western shore of the Lake of Gennesareth (see at Josh. xix. 35). עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ נַפְתָּלִי, together with all the land of Naphtali (for this meaning of עַל compare the Comm. on Gen. xxxii. 12). The cities named were duct may probably be explained in part from the fact, that notwithstanding the victory, his army had been considerably weakened by the battle which he fought with the Cushites (2 Chron. xiv. 9), although this by no means justified his want of confidence in the power of the Lord, and still less his harsh and unjust treatment of the prophet Hanani, whom he caused to be put in the house of the stocks on account of his condemnation of the confidence which he placed in the Syrians instead of Jehovah (2 Chron. xvi. 7-10).

the principal fortresses of the land of Naphtali, with which the whole of the country round was also smitten, *i.e.* laid waste.—Ver. 21. וַיָּשָׁב, and remained at Thirza, his place of residence (see at ch. xiv. 17).—Ver. 22: Asa thereupon summoned all Judah וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל, *nemine immuni*, *i.e.* *excepto*, no one being free (cf. Ewald, § 286, a), and had the stones and the wood carried away from Ramah; and *Geba* and *Mizpah* in Benjamin built, *i.e.* fortified, with them. *Geba* must not be confounded with *Gibeah* of Benjamin or Saul, but is the present *Jeba*, three-quarters of an hour to the north-east of Ramah (see at Josh. xviii. 24). *Mizpah*, the present *Nebi Samwil*, about three-quarters of a geographical mile to the south-west of Ramah (see at Josh. xviii. 26).—Vers. 23, 24. Of the other acts of Asa, the building of cities refers to the building of fortifications mentioned in 2 Chron. xiv. 5, 6. The disease in his feet in the time of his old age commenced, according to 2 Chron. xvi. 12, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign; and he sought help from the physicians, but not from the Lord; from which we may see, that the longer he lived the more he turned his heart away from the Lord (compare 2 Chron. xvi. 10).

CHAP. XV. 25—XVI. 28. REIGNS OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL, NADAB, BAASHA, ELAH, ZIMRI, AND OMRI

Vers. 25–32. THE REIGN OF NADAB lasted not quite two years, as he ascended the throne in the second year of Asa, and was slain in his third year.—Ver. 6. He walked in the ways of his father (Jeroboam) and in his sin, *i.e.* in the calf-worship introduced by Jeroboam (ch. xii. 28). When Nadab in the second year of his reign besieged Gibbethon, which the Philistines had occupied, Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house, *i.e.* the family or tribe, of Issachar, conspired against him and slew him, and after he became king exterminated the whole house of Jeroboam, without leaving a single soul, whereby the prediction of the prophet Ahijah (ch. xiv. 10 sqq.) was fulfilled. *Gibbethon*, which was allotted to the Danites (Josh. xix. 44), has not yet been discovered. It probably stood close to the Philistian border, and was taken by the Philistines, from whom the Israelites attempted to wrest it by siege under both Nadab and Baasha (ch. xvi. 16), though apparently without success. וַיִּשְׁמָד as in Josh. xi. 14 (see the Comm. on Deut. xx.

16).—Ver. 32 is simply a repetition of ver. 16 ; and the remark concerning Baasha's attitude towards Asa of Judah immediately after his entrance upon the government precedes the account of his reign, for the purpose of indicating at the very outset, that the overthrow of the dynasty of Jeroboam and the rise of a new dynasty did not alter the hostile relation between the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah.

Ver. 33—ch. xvi. 7. THE REIGN OF BAASHA is described very briefly according to its duration (two years) and its spirit, [?] 24. namely, the attitude of Baasha towards the Lord (ver. 34) ; there then follow in ch. xvi. 1—4 the words of the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani (2 Chron. xvi. 7), concerning the extermination of the family of Baasha ; and lastly, in vers. 5—7, his death is related with the standing allusion to the annals of the kings. The words of Jehu concerning Baasha (ch. xvi. 1—4) coincide exactly *mutatis mutandis* with the words of Ahijah concerning Jeroboam.¹ The expression “exalted thee out of the dust,” instead of “from among the people” (ch. xiv. 7), leads to the conjecture that Baasha had risen to be king from a very low position. מַגִּידָא (his might) in ver. 5 refers, as in the case of Asa (ch. xv. 23), less to brave warlike deeds, than generally to the manifestation of strength and energy in his government.—Ver. 7 adds a supplementary remark concerning the words of Jehu (vers. 2 sqq.), not to preclude an excuse that might be made, in which case מַגִּידָא would have to be taken in the sense of nevertheless, or notwithstanding (Ewald, § 354, a), but to guard against a misinterpretation by adding a new feature, or rather to preclude an erroneous inference that might be drawn from the words, “I (Jehovah) have made thee prince”

¹ “There was something very strange in the perversity and stolidity of the kings of Israel, that when they saw that the families of preceding kings were evidently overthrown by the command of God on account of the worship of the calves, and they themselves had overturned them, they nevertheless worshipped the same calves, and placed them before the people for them to worship, that they might not return to the temple and to Asa, king of Jerusalem ; though prophets denounced it and threatened their destruction. Truly the devil and the ambition of reigning blinded them and deprived them of their senses. Hence it came to pass, through the just judgment of God, that they all were executioners of one another in turn : Baasha was the executioner of the sons of Jeroboam ; Zambri was the executioner of the sons of Baasha ; and the executioner of Zambri was Omri.”—C. A LAPIDE.

(ver. 2), as though Baasha had exterminated Nadab and his house by divine command (Thenius). **וְנָדָב** simply means "*and also*," and is not to be connected specially with **וַיְהִי יְהוָה**, but to be taken as belonging to the whole sentence: "also the word of Jehovah had come to Baasha through Jehu, . . . not only because of the evil, etc., but also (**וְנָדָב** . . . **וַיְהִי יְהוָה**) because he had slain him (Jeroboam)." With regard to this last reason, we must call to mind the remark made at ch. xi. 39, viz. that the prediction of the prophet to Baasha gave him no right to put himself forward arbitrarily as the fulfiller of the prophecy. The very fact that Baasha continued Jeroboam's sin and caused the illegal worship to be perpetuated, showed clearly enough that in exterminating the family of Jeroboam he did not act under divine direction, but simply pursued his own selfish ends.

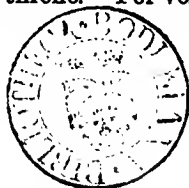
Vers. 8-14. THE REIGN OF ELAH.—As Baasha reigned from the third to the twenty-sixth year of Asa, *i.e.* not quite twenty-four years, but only twenty-three years and a few months, so his son Elah reigned from the twenty-sixth to the twenty-seventh year of Asa, *i.e.* not quite two years.—Vers. 9, 10. *Zimri*, the commander of the half of his war-chariots, conspired against him, and not only slew him, when he was intoxicated (**וַיִּשְׁכָּר**) at a drinking bout in the house of *Arza*, the prefect of his palace, but after ascending the throne exterminated the whole family of Baasha to the very last man. The prefect of the palace was no doubt a party to the conspiracy, and had probably arranged the drinking bout in his house for the purpose of carrying it out. "He did not leave him **שְׂשֵׁתֵי בָקִיר** (see at ch. xiv. 10), either his avengers (**וְאֵלֵי**, blood-relations, who might have avenged his death) or his friends." These words simply serve to explain **שְׂשֵׁתֵי בָקִיר**, and show that this phrase is to be understood as relating to males only.—Vers. 12, 13. "According to the word of the Lord;" see at vers. 1 sqq. **אֵל כָּל-הַפְּשָׁעִים**, with regard to all, *i.e.* on account of all the sins (compare ver. 7, where **עַל** is used). **בְּהַבְלֵיהֶם**, through their nothingnesses, *i.e.* their idols, by which the golden calves are meant.

Vers. 15-22. THE REIGN OF ZIMRI lasted only seven days. As soon as the people of war (**וְהַצִּבְיָה**), who were besieging Gibbethon (see at ch. xv. 27), heard of his conspiracy, his usurpation of the throne, and his murderous deeds, they proclaimed

Omri king in the camp of the military commanders, and he at once, with all Israel, *i.e.* all the army, raised the siege of Gibbethon, to lay siege to Thirza. Now when Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the castle of the royal palace and burned the king's house over his own head, as Sardanapalus did, according to Justin (*Hist.* i. 3). אֶרְמוֹן does not mean harem (Ewald), but the high castle (from אָרַם, to be high); here and in 2 Kings xv. 25, the citadel of the royal palace, which consisted of several buildings.—Ver. 19 is connected with מָתָה in ver. 18: “and so died for his sins,” *i.e.* as a punishment for them.—Vers. 21, 22. But Omri did not come into possession of an undisputed sovereignty immediately upon the death of Zimri. The nation divided itself into two halves; one half was behind *Tibni*, the son of Ginath (*i.e.* declared in favour of Tibni), to make him king, the other adhered to *Omri*. Nevertheless Omri's gained the upper hand over the party of Tibni, and the latter died, whereupon Omri became king after four years, as we may see from a comparison of vers. 15, 16 with ver. 23. The “people of Israel” (ver. 21) are probably the fighting people, so that the succession to the throne was decided by the military. הָיָה אֶתְרִי as in 2 Sam. ii. 10. הָיָה, with an accusative instead of with עַל, in the sense of to overpower, as in Jer. xx. 7. According to Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 12, 5), Tibni was slain by his opponent; but this is not contained in the words; on the contrary, all that is implied in the connection of מָתָה with מָתָה וְהָיָה is that he met with his death in the decisive engagement in which the opposing party triumphed.

Vers. 23-28. THE REIGN OF OMRI.—Ver. 23. Omri reigned twelve years, *i.e.*, if we compare vers. 15 and 23 with ver. 29, reckoning from his rebellion against Zimri; so that he only possessed the sole government for eight years (or, more exactly, seven years and a few months), viz. from the 31st to the 38th years of Asa, and the conflict with Tibni for the possession of the throne lasted about four years. “At Thirza he reigned six years,” *i.e.* during the four years of the conflict with Tibni, and after his death two years more.—Ver. 24. As soon as he had obtained undisputed possession of the throne, he purchased the hill *Shomron* (Samaria) from *Shemer* (*Semer*) for two talents of silver, about 5200 thalers (£780—Tr.), built houses upon it, and named the town which he built after the former owner of

the hill שְׁמֵרֶה, rendered by the LXX. Σειμηρόν here, but everywhere else Σαμάρεια (Samaria), after the Chaldee form שְׁמֵרֶה (Ezra iv. 10, 17). This city he made his seat (*Residenz*, place of residence, or capital), in which he resided for the last six years of his reign, and where he was buried after his death (ver. 28). *Samaria* continued to be the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes from that time forward, and the residence of all succeeding kings of Israel until the destruction of this kingdom after its conquest by Salmanasar (2 Kings xviii. 9, 10). The city was two hours and a half to the north-west of Sichem, upon a mountain or hill in a mountain-hollow (*Bergkessel*, lit. mountain-caldron) or basin of about two hours in diameter, surrounded on all sides by still higher mountains. "The mountains and valleys round about are still for the most part arable, and are alive with numerous villages and diligent cultivation." The mountain itself upon which Samaria stood is still cultivated to the very top, and about the middle of the slope is surrounded by a narrow terrace of level ground resembling a girdle. And even higher up there are marks of smaller terraces, where streets of the ancient city may possibly have run. After the captivity Samaria was retaken and demolished by John Hyrcanus, and lay in ruins till Gabinius the Roman governor rebuilt it (Joseph. *Ant.* xiii. 19, 2, 3, and xiv. 5, 3). Herod the Great afterwards decorated it in a marvellous manner, built a temple there to the emperor Augustus, and named the city after him Σεβαστή, i.e. *Augusta*, from which arose the present name *Sebuste* or *Sebustieh*, borne by a village which is still standing on the ancient site: "a pitiable hamlet consisting of a few squalid houses, inhabited by a band of plunderers, notorious as thieves even among their lawless fellow-countrymen" (V. de Velde, i. p. 378).—But by the side of this there are magnificent ruins of an ancient Johnite church, with the reputed grave of John the Baptist and remains of limestone columns at the foot of the mountain (cf. Robinson, *Pal.* iii. p. 136 sqq.; Van de Velde, *Syria and Pal.* i. p. 374 sqq.; and C. v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 159, 160).—Vers. 25, 26. Omri also walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and acted worse than his predecessors upon the throne.—For vers. 26 and 27, compare vers. 13 and 14.



2. FROM AHAB'S ASCENT OF THE THRONE TO THE DEATH OF JORAM OF ISRAEL AND AHAZIAH OF JUDAH.

CHAP. XVI. 29-2 KINGS x. 27.

In this epoch, which embraces only thirty-four years, the history of the kings of Judah falls so far into the background behind the history of the kingdom of Israel, that it seems to form merely an appendix to it; and the history of the monarchy is so controlled by the description of the labours of the prophets, that it seems to be entirely absorbed in them. These phenomena have their foundation in the development of the two kingdoms during this period. Through the alliance and affinity of Jehoshaphat with the idolatrous Ahab, the kingdom of Judah not only lost the greatest part of the blessing which the long and righteous reign of this pious king had brought, but it became so entangled in the political and religious confusion of the kingdom of Israel in consequence of the participation of Jehoshaphat in the wars between Israel and the Syrians, and other foes, and the inclination of Joram and Ahaziah to the worship of Baal, that its further development during this period was almost entirely dependent upon the history of Israel. In the latter kingdom the prophets maintained a fierce conflict with the idolatry introduced by Ahab and Jezebel, in which the worship of Baal did indeed eventually succumb, but the pure lawful worship of Jehovah did not attain to full supremacy, so that this great spiritual conflict was no more followed by a permanent blessing to the kingdom as such, than the single victories of Ahab and Joram over the Syrians by outward peace and rest from its oppressors. To guard against the spreading apostasy of the people from the living God through the exaltation of the worship of Baal into the ruling national religion in Israel, the Lord raised up the most powerful of all the prophets, Elijah the Tishbite, with his fiery zeal, who worked so mightily upon the formation of the spiritual life of the covenant nation and the fate of the kingdom, not only in his own person in the reigns of Ahab and Ahaziah (ch. xvii.-2 Kings ii.), but indirectly in the person of his successor Elisha under Joram (2 Kings iii.-ix.), and also under the succeeding kings of Israel, that the labours of these prophets and their disciples form the central and culminating point of the Old Testament kingdom of God during the period in question.

CHAP. XVI. 29-34. THE REIGN OF AHAB OF ISRAEL.

The ascent of the throne of Israel by Ahab (ver. 29) formed a turning-point for the worse, though, as a comparison of ver. 30 with ver. 25 clearly shows, the way had already been prepared by his father Omri.—Vers. 30, 31. Whereas the former kings of Israel had only perpetuated the sin of Jeroboam, *i.e.* the calf-worship, or worship of Jehovah under the image of an ox, which he had introduced, Ahab was not satisfied with this. וַיְהִי הַנֶּקֶל לְכַתּוֹ, “it came to pass, was it too little?” *i.e.* because it was too little (cf. Ewald, § 362, *a*) to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, that he took as his wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal the king of the Sidonians, and served Baal, and worshipped him. וַיֵּלֶךְ before וַיַּעֲבֹד, “he went and served,” is a pictorial description of what took place, to give greater prominence to the new turn of affairs. אֶתְחַבֵּל (*i.e.* with Baal) is the *Εἰθώβαλος* (אֶתְחַבֵּל or *Ἰθώβαλος*: Jos. *Ant.* viii. 13, 1) mentioned by Menander in Josephus, *c. Ap.* i. 18, who was king of Tyre and Sidon, and priest of Astarte, and who usurped the throne after the murder of his brother, king Pheles, and reigned thirty-two years. Jezebel (אֶתְחַבֵּל, *i.e.* probably without cohabitation, cf. Gen. xxx. 20, = untouched, chaste; not a contraction of אֶתְחַבֵּל, as Ewald, § 273, *b*, supposes) was therefore, as tyrant and murderess of the prophets, a worthy daughter of her father, the idolatrous priest and regicide. *Baal* (always אֶתְחַבֵּל with the article, *the Baal*, *i.e.* Lord κατ’ ἐξοχήν) was the principal male deity of the Phœnicians and Canaanites, and generally of the western Asiatics, called by the Babylonians בַּל = אֶתְחַבֵּל (Isa. xli. 1), *Bḡlos*, and as the sun-god was worshipped as the supporter and first principle of psychical life and of the generative and reproductive power of nature (see at Judg. ii. 13). Ahab erected an altar to this deity בַּיִת אֶתְחַבֵּל, in the house (temple) of Baal, which he had built at Samaria. The worship of Baal had its principal seat in Tyre, where Hiram, the contemporary of David and Solomon, had built for it a splendid temple and placed a golden pillar (χρυσοῦν κίονα) therein, according to Dios and Menander, in Joseph. *Ant.* viii. 5, 3, and *c. Ap.* i. 18. Ahab also erected a similar pillar (מַצֵּבָה) to Baal in his temple at Samaria (*vid.* 2 Kings iii. 2, x. 27). For statues or images of Baal are not met with in the earlier times; and the אֱלֹהִים are not statues of Baal, but different modifications of that deity. It was only in the later temple of Baal or Hercules at Tyre that there was, as

Cicero observes (*Verr.* iv. 43), *ex ære simulacrum ipsius Herculis, quo non facile quidquam dixerim me vidisse pulcrius*.—Ver. 33. “And Ahab made אֲשֶׁרֶת הָאֲשֵׁרָה, i.e. the Asherah belonging to the temple of Baal” (see at *Judg.* vi. 25 and *Ex.* xxxiv. 13), an idol of Astarte (see at *ch.* xiv. 23).—Ver. 34. In his time *Hiel* the Bethelite (בֵּית הַחֵיל; compare *Ges.* § 111, 1 with § 86, 2. 5) built Jericho: “he laid the foundation of it with Abiram his first-born, and set up its gates with Segub his youngest, according to the word of Jehovah,” etc. (for the explanation see the *Comm.* on *Josh.* vi. 26). The restoration of this city as a fortification, upon which Joshua had pronounced the curse, is mentioned as a proof how far ungodliness had progressed in Israel; whilst the fulfilment of the curse upon the builder shows how the Lord will not allow the word of His servants to be transgressed with impunity. *Jericho*, on the border of the tribe of Ephraim (*Josh.* xvi. 7), which was allotted to the Benjaminites (*Josh.* xviii. 21), had come into the possession of the kingdom of Israel on the falling away of the ten tribes from the royal house of David, and formed a border city of that kingdom, through the fortification of which Ahab hoped to secure to himself the passage across the Jordan.

The prophets Elijah and Elisha.

When Ahab, who was not satisfied with the sin of Jeroboam, had introduced the worship of Baal as the national religion in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and had not only built a temple to Baal in his capital and place of residence, but had also appointed a very numerous priesthood to maintain the worship (see *ch.* xviii. 19); and when his godless wife Jezebel was persecuting the prophets of Jehovah, for the purpose of exterminating the worship of the true God: the Lord God raised up the most powerful of all the prophets, namely Elijah the Tishbite, who by his deeds attested his name אֱלִיָּהוּ or אֱלִיָּה, i.e. whose God is Jehovah. For however many prophets of Jehovah arose in the kingdom of the ten tribes from its very commencement and bore witness against the sin of Jeroboam in the power of the Spirit of God, and threatened the kings with the extermination of their house on account of this sin, no other prophet, either before or afterwards, strove and worked in the idolatrous kingdom for the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth with anything like the same mighty power of God as the prophet Elijah. And there was no other prophet whom the Lord so gloriously acknow-

ledged by signs and wonders as Elijah, although He fulfilled the words of all His servants by executing the judgments with which they had threatened the rebellious, and whenever it was necessary accredited them as His messengers by miraculous signs. —Although, in accordance with the plan of our books, which was to depict the leading features in the historical development of the kingdom, all that is related in detail of the life and labours of Elijah is the miracles which he performed in his conflict with the worshippers of Baal, and the miraculous display of the omnipotence and grace of God which he experienced therein; yet we may see very clearly that these formed but one side of his prophetic labours from the passing notices of the schools of the prophets, which he visited once more before his departure from the earth (2 Kings ii.); from which it is obvious that this other side of his ministry, which was more hidden from the world, was not less important than his public ministry before the kings and magnates of the land. For these societies of “sons of the prophets,” which we meet with at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho (2 Kings ii. 3, 5, iv. 38), had no doubt been called into existence by Elijah, by associating together those whose souls were fitted to receive the Spirit of God for mutual improvement in the knowledge and fear of Jehovah, in order to raise up witnesses to the truth and combatants for the cause of the Lord, and through these societies to provide the godly, who would not bow the knee before Baal, with some compensation for the loss of the Levitical priesthood and the want of the temple-worship. Compare the remarks on the schools of the prophets at 1 Sam. xix. 24.—The more mightily idolatry raised its head in the kingdom of Israel, the more powerfully did the Lord show to His people that He, Jehovah, and not Baal, was God and Lord in Israel. In the prophet Elijah there were combined in a marvellous manner a life of solitude spent in secret and contemplative intercourse with God, and an extraordinary power for action, which would suddenly burst forth, and by which he acted as a personal representative of God (see at ch. xvii. 1). In his person the spirit of Moses revived; he was the restorer of the kingdom of God in Israel, of which Moses was the founder. His life recalls that of Moses in many of its features: namely, his flight into the desert, the appearance of the Lord to him at Horeb, and the marvellous termination of his life. Moses and Elijah are the Coryphæi of the Old Testament, in whose life and labours the nature and glory

of this covenant are reflected. As the thunder and lightning and the blast of trumpets and the smoking mountain bare witness to the devouring fire of the holiness of the God who had come down upon Sinai to give effect to the promises He had made to the fathers, and to make the children of Israel the people of His possession; so does the fiery zeal of the law come out so powerfully in Moses and Elijah, that their words strike the ungodly like lightning and flames of fire, to avenge the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth and maintain His covenant of grace in Israel. Moses as lawgiver, and Elijah as prophet, are, as Ziegler has well said (p. 206), the two historical anticipations of those two future witnesses, which are "the two olive-trees and two torches standing before the God of the earth. And if any one will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must therefore be slain. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with all kinds of plagues, as often as they will" (Rev. xi. 4 sqq.). Elijah was called to this office of witness to turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and of the sons to their fathers (Mal. iii. 24), so that in his ministry the prophecy of the future of the kingdom of God falls quite into the background. Nevertheless he was not only a forerunner but also a type of the Prophet promised by Moses, who was to fulfil both law and prophets (Matt. v. 17); and therefore he appeared as the representative of prophecy, along with Moses the representative of the law, upon the mount of the Transfiguration, to talk with Christ of the decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke ix. 31; Matt. xvii. 3).—To continue his work, Elijah, by command of God, called *Elisha* the son of Shaphat, of Abel-Meholah, who during the whole of his prophetic course carried on with power the restoration of the law in the kingdom of Israel, which his master had begun, by conducting schools of the prophets and acting as the counsellor of kings, and proved himself by many signs and wonders to be the heir of a double portion of the gifts of Elijah.

Modern theology, which has its roots in naturalism, has taken offence at the many miracles occurring in the history of these two prophets, but it has overlooked the fact that these miracles were regulated by the extraordinary circumstances under which Elijah and Elisha worked. At a time when the

sovereignty of the living God in Israel was not only called in question, but was to be destroyed by the worship of Baal, it was necessary that Jehovah as the covenant God should interpose in a supernatural manner, and declare His eternal Godhead in extraordinary miracles. In the kingdom of the ten tribes there were no priestly or Levitical duties performed, nor was there the regular worship of God in a temple sanctified by Jehovah Himself; whilst the whole order of life prescribed in the law was undermined by unrighteousness and ungodliness. But with all this, the kingdom was not yet ripe for the judgment of rejection, because there were still seven thousand in the land who had not bowed their knee before Baal. For the sake of these righteous men, the Lord had still patience with the sinful kingdom, and sent it prophets to call the rebellious to repentance. If, then, under the circumstances mentioned, the prophets were to fulfil the purpose of their mission and carry on the conflict against the priests of Baal with success, they needed a much greater support on the part of God, through the medium of miracles, than the prophets in the kingdom of Judah, who had powerful and venerable supports in the Levitical priesthood and the lawful worship.¹ It is only when we overlook the object of these miracles, therefore, that they can possibly appear strange. "If," as Kurtz has said,² "we take the history of our prophet as one living organic link in the whole of the grand chain of the marvellous works of God, which stretches from Sinai to Golgotha and the Mount of Olives, and bear in mind the peculiarity of the position and circumstances of Elijah, the occurrence of a miracle in itself, and even the accumulation of them and their supposed externality, will

¹ "Where the temple was wanting, and image-worship took its place, and the priesthood was an unlawful caste, it was only by extraordinary methods that the spreading evil could be met. The illegitimacy, which was represented here by the monarchy and priesthood, was opposed by the prophetic order as the representative of the law, and therefore also as a peculiarly constituted and strong body divided up into societies of considerable scope, and having a firm organization. And this prophetic order, as the only accredited representative of the law, also took the place of the law, and was therefore endowed with the power and majesty of the law which had been manifested in wonders and signs. Not only was the spirit of Moses inherited by Elijah and others, but his miraculous power also."—HAEVERNICK, *Einkl. in d. A. Test.* ii. 1, pp. 166, 167. Compare Hengstenberg, *Dissertation*, vol. i. p. 186 sqq.

² Herzog's *Cyclopædia*, Art. *Elijah*.

appear to us in a very different light.—Without miracle, without very striking, *i.e.* external miracles, their ministry would have been without basis, without a starting-point, and without hold.”—The miracles are still more numerous in the history of Elisha, and to some extent bear such a resemblance to those of Elijah, that the attempt has been made to set them down as merely legendary imitations of the latter; but considered as a whole, they are more of a helpful and healing nature, whereas those of Elijah are for the most part manifestations of judicial and punitive wrath. The agreement and the difference may both be explained from Elisha’s position in relation to Elijah and his time. By the performance of similar and equal miracles (such as the division of the Jordan, 2 Kings ii. 8 and 14; the increase of the oil, 2 Kings iv. 3 sqq. compared with 1 Kings xvii. 14 sqq.; the raising of the dead, 2 Kings iv. 34 sqq. compared with 1 Kings xvii. 19 sqq.) Elisha proved himself to be the divinely-appointed successor of Elijah, who was carrying forward his master’s work (just as Joshua by the drying up of the Jordan proved himself to be the continuer of the work of Moses), and as such performed more miracles, so far as number is concerned, than even his master had done, though he was far inferior to him in spiritual power. But the difference does not prevail throughout. For whilst the helpful and healing side of Elijah’s miraculous power is displayed in his relation to the widow at Zarephath; the judicial and punitive side of that of Elisha comes out in the case of the mocking boys at Bethel, of Gehazi, and of Joram’s knight. But the predominance of strict judicial sternness in the case of Elijah, and of sparing and helpful mildness in that of Elisha, is to be accounted for not so much from any difference in the personality of the two, as from the altered circumstances. Elijah, with his fiery zeal, had broken the power of the Baal-worship, and had so far secured an acknowledgment of the authority of Jehovah over His people that Joram and the succeeding kings gave heed to the words of the prophets of the Lord; so that Elisha had for the most part only to cherish and further the conversion of the people to their God, for which Elijah had prepared the way.

CHAP. XVII. FIRST APPEARANCE OF ELIJAH.

The prophet Elijah predicts to Ahab, as a punishment for his idolatry, the coming of a drought and famine. During their con-

tinuance he is miraculously preserved by God, first of all at the brook Cherith, and then at the house of a widow at Zarephath (vers. 1-16), whose deceased son he calls to life again (vers. 17-24).

Ver. 1. Elijah the Tishbite is introduced without the formula "The word of the Lord came to . . .," with which the appearance of the prophets is generally announced, proclaiming to king Ahab in the name of the Lord the punitive miracle of a drought that will last for years. This abrupt appearance of Elijah cannot be satisfactorily explained from the fact that we have not the real commencement of his history here; it is rather a part of the character of this mightiest of all the prophets, and indicates that in him the divine power of the Spirit appeared as it were personified, and his life and acts were the direct effluence of the higher power by which he was impelled. His origin is also uncertain. The epithet *תִּשְׁבִּי* is generally derived from a place called *Tishbeh*, since, according to Tobit i. 2, there existed in Upper Galilee a *Θισβη ἐκ δεξιῶν Κυδίου*, "on the right, i.e. to the south of *Kydios*," probably *Kedesh* in the tribe of Naphtali, from which the elder Tobias was carried away captive, although this description of the place is omitted in the Hebrew version of the book of Tobit issued by Fagius and Münster, and in the Vulgate. And to this we must adhere, and as no other *Thisbe* occurs, must accept this Galilean town as the birthplace of Elijah; in which case the expression "of the settlers of Gilead" indicates that Elijah did not live in his birthplace, but dwelt as a foreigner in Gilead. For *גֵּר* in itself by no means denotes a non-Israelite, but, like *גֵּר*, simply one who lived away from his home and tribe relations in the territory of a different tribe, without having been enrolled as a member of it, as is clearly shown by Lev. xxv. 40, and still more clearly by Judg. xvii. 7, where a Levite who was born in Bethlehem is described as *גֵּר* in the tribe of Ephraim.¹ The expression "as truly as Jehovah

¹ The supposition of Seb. Schmidt, with which I formerly agreed, namely, that Elijah was a foreigner, a Gentile by birth, after further examination I can no longer uphold, though not from the *a priori* objection raised against it by Kurtz (in Herzog's *Cycl.*), namely, that it would show a complete misapprehension of the significance of Israel in relation to sacred history and the history of the world, and that neither at this nor any other time in the Old Testament history could a prophet for Israel be called from among the Gentiles,—an assertion of which it would be difficult to find any proof,—but because we are not forced to this conclusion by either *הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִי* or *הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִי*. For

the God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand (*i.e.* whom I serve; see at ch. i. 2), there shall not fall dew and rain these years, except at my word," was a special application of the threats of the law in Deut. xi. 16, 17, xxviii. 23, 24, and Lev. xxvi. 19, to the idolatrous kingdom. הַשָּׁנִים הָאֵלֶּה, "these (ensuing) years," does not fix any definite terminus. In לִפְנֵי דְבָרִי there is involved an emphatic antithesis to others, and more especially to the prophets of Baal. "When I shall say this by divine authority and might, let others prate and lie as they may please" (*Berleb. Bibel*). Elijah thereby describes himself as one into whose power the God of Israel has given up the idolatrous king and his people. In Jas. v. 17, 18, this act of Elijah is

even if the Thisbeh in Tob. i. 2 should not be Elijah's birthplace, it would not follow that there was no other place named Thisbeh in existence. How many places in Canaan are there that are never mentioned in the Old Testament! And such cases as that described in Judg. vii. 7, where the Levite is said to have left his birthplace and to have lived in another tribe as a foreigner or settler, may not have been of rare occurrence, since the Mosaic law itself refers to it in Lev. xxv. 41.—Again, the LXX. were unable to explain מְהֻשְׁבֵּי תַּלְמֵךְ, and have paraphrased these words in an arbitrary manner by *ἐν τῇ Θασύρῃ τῇ Γαλασσίᾳ*, from which Thenius and Ewald conjecture that there was a Thisbeh in Gilead, and that it was probably the *Tsieh* (طيسيه) mentioned by Robinson (*Pal.* iii. 153) to the south of *Busra* = *Bostra*. The five arguments by which Kurtz has attempted to establish the probability of this conjecture are very weak. For (1) the defective writing מְהֻשְׁבֵּי by no means proves that the word which is written *plene* (מְהוֹשְׁבֵי) in every other case must necessarily have been so written in the *stat. constr. plur.*; and this is the only passage in the whole of the Old Testament in which it occurs in the *stat. constr. plur.*;—(2) the precise description of the place given in Tobit i. 2 does not at all lead "to the assumption that the Galilean Thisbeh was not the only place of that name," but may be fully explained from the fact that Thisbeh was a small and insignificant place, the situation of which is defined by a reference to a larger town and one better known;—(3) there is no doubt that "Gilead very frequently denotes the whole of the country to the east of the Jordan," but this does not in the least degree prove that there was a Thisbeh in the country to the east of the Jordan;—(4) "that the distinction and difference between a birthplace and a place of abode are improbable in themselves, and not to be expected in this connection," is a perfectly unfounded assumption, and has first of all to be proved;—(5) the *Tsieh* mentioned by Robinson cannot be taken into consideration, for the simple reason that the assumption of a copyist's error, the confusion of א with א (Tsieh instead of Thisbeh), founders on the long *i* of the first syllable in *Tsieh*; moreover the Arabic ب corresponds to the Hebrew פ and not to ת.

ascribed to the power of his prayers, since Elijah "was also a man such as we are," inasmuch as the prophets received their power to work solely through faith and intercourse with God in prayer, and faith gives power to remove mountains.

Vers. 2-9. After the announcement of this judgment, Elijah had to hide himself, by the command of God, until the period of punishment came to an end, not so much that he might be safe from the wrath and pursuit of Ahab and Jezebel, as to preclude all earnest entreaties to remove the punishment. "For inasmuch as the prophet had said that the rain would come at his word, how would they have urged him to order it to come!" (Seb. Schm.) He was to turn קִרְיָה, eastward, i.e. from Samaria, where he had no doubt proclaimed the divine judgment to Ahab, to the Jordan, and to hide himself at the brook *Cherith*, which is in front of the Jordan. The brook Cherith was in any case a brook emptying itself into the Jordan; but whether upon the eastern or the western side of that river, the ambiguity of עַל־פָּנֵי, which means both "to the east of" (Gen. xxv. 18) and also "in the face of," i.e. before or towards (Gen. xvi. 12, xviii. 16), it is impossible to determine with certainty. That it must signify "to the east of the Jordan" here, does not follow from קִרְיָה with anything like the certainty that Thenius supposes. An ancient tradition places the Cherith on this side of the Jordan, and identifies it with the spring *Phasaclis*, which takes its rise in the slope of the mountains into the Jordan valley above the city of *Phasaclis*, and empties itself into the Jordan (cf. Ges. *thes.* p. 719, and V. de Velde, *Reise*, ii. pp. 273-4); whereas Eusebius, in the *Onom. s.v. Chorath* (*Xoppá*), places it on the other side of the Jordan, and Thenius thinks of the apparently deep Wady *Rajib* or *Ajlun*. All that can be affirmed with certainty is, that neither the brook *Kanah* (Josh. xvi. 8, xvii. 9), which flows into the Mediterranean, nor the Wady *Kelt* near Jericho, which Robinson (*Pal.* ii. p. 288) suggests, can possibly come into consideration: the latter for the simple reason, that the locality in the neighbourhood of Jericho was unsuitable for a hiding-place. Elijah was to drink of this brook, and the ravens by divine command were to provide him with bread and meat, which they brought him, according to ver. 6, both morning and evening. It is now generally admitted that הָעֲרִבִים does not mean either Arabs or Orebites (the inhabitants of an imaginary city named Oreb), but *ravens*. Through this miracle, which unbelievers reject, because they do not acknowledge a living God, by

whom, as the Creator and Lord of all creatures, even the voracious ravens are made subservient to His plans of salvation, Elijah was not only cut off from intercourse with men, who might have betrayed his place of abode to the king, but was mightily strengthened himself, through the confidence inspired in the almighty assistance of his God, for his approaching contests with the worshippers of idols, and for the privations and sufferings which awaited him in the fulfilment of his vocation.—Vers. 7-9. After some time this brook dried up for want of rain. Then the Lord directed His servant to go to the Sidonian *Zarephath*, and to live with a widow whom He had commanded to provide for him. עֲמִיָּצָה does not mean *post annum*, for עֲמִיָּא merely derives this meaning in certain passages from the context (cf. Lev. xxv. 29; 1 Sam. xxvii. 7; Judg. xvii. 10); whereas in this instance the context does not point to the space of a year, but to a longer period of indefinite duration, all that we know being that, according to ch. xviii. 1, the sojourn of Elijah at Cherith and Zarephath lasted at least two years. Zarephath (Σαρέππα, LXX.) was situated on the Mediterranean Sea between Tyre and Sidon, where a miserable Mohammedan village with ruins and a promontory, *Sura-fend*, still preserve the name of the former town (Rob. iii. p. 413 sqq., and V. de Velde, *Syria and Palestine*, i. pp. 101-3, transl.).

Vers. 10-16. When Elijah arrived at the city gate, he met a widow engaged in gathering wood. To discover whether it was to her that the Lord had sent him, he asked her for something to drink and for a morsel of bread to eat; whereupon she assured him, with an oath by Jehovah, that she had nothing baked (אֵיֶזֶק = אֵיֶזֶק, ἐγκρυφίας, a cake baked in hot ashes), but only a handful of meal in the כֶּזַי (a pail or small vessel in which meal was kept) and a little oil in the pitcher, and that she was just gathering wood to dress this remnant for herself and her son, that they might eat it, and then die. From this statement of the widow it is evident, on the one hand, that the drought and famine had spread across the Phœnician frontier, as indeed Menander of Ephesus attests;¹ on the other hand, the widow showed by the oath, "as Jehovah thy God liveth," that she was a worshipper of the true God, who spoke of *Jehovah* as his God, אלהים.

¹ Josephus gives this statement from his Phœnician history: ἀβροχία τε ἐπ' αὐτοῦ (sc. Ἰσοβάλου) ἐγένετο ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὑπερβερεταίου μηνὸς ἰῶς τοῦ ἐρχομένου ἔτους Ὑπερβερεταίου (Ant. viii. 13, 2). *Hyperbeteus* answers to *Tishri* of the Hebrews; cf. Benfey and Stern, *die Monatsnamen*, p. 18.

because she recognised the prophet as an Israelite.—Vers. 13 sqq. In order, however, to determine with indisputable certainty whether this believing Gentile was the protectress assigned him by the Lord, Elijah comforted her, and at the same time desired her first of all to bake him a little cake כֶּמֶץ, i.e. of the last of the meal in the *Kad* and of the oil in the pitcher, and then to bake for herself and her son, adding this promise: Jehovah the God of Israel will not let the meal in the *Kad* and the oil in the pitcher fail, till He sends rain upon the earth again. And the widow did according to his word. She gave up the certain for the uncertain, because she trusted the word of the Lord, and received the reward of her believing confidence in the fact that during the whole time of the drought she suffered from no want of either meal or oil. This act of the pious Gentile woman, who had welcomed with a simple heart the knowledge of the true God that had reached her from Israel, must have been the source of strong consolation to Elijah in the hour of conflict, when his faith was trembling because of the multitude of idolaters in Israel. If the Lord Himself had raised up true worshippers of His name among the Gentiles, his work in Israel could not be put to shame. The believing widow, however, received from the prophet not only a material blessing, but a spiritual blessing also. For, as Christ tells His unbelieving contemporaries to their shame (Luke iv. 25, 26), Elijah was not sent to this widow in order that he might be safely hidden at her house, although this object was better attained thereby than by his remaining longer in Israel; but because of her faith, namely, to strengthen and to increase it, he was sent to her, and not to one of the many widows in Israel, many of whom would also have received the prophet if they had been rescued by him from the pressure of the famine. And the miraculous increase of the meal and oil did not merely subserve the purpose of keeping the prophet and the widow alive; but the relief of her bodily need was also meant to be a preparatory means of quieting her spiritual need as well. On the *Chethib* חֵתִיב, see at ch. vi. 19. In ver. 15 the *Keri* הָיָה וְהָיָה is an unnecessary emendation of the *Chethib* הָיָה; the feminine form וְהָיָה is occasioned primarily by the preceding verbs, and may be taken as an indefinite neuter: "and there ate he and she." The offence which Thenius has taken at יָמִים (days) has no foundation, if we do not understand the sentence as referring merely to their eating once of the bread just

baked, but take it generally as signifying that in consequence of their acting according to the word of Jehovah, they (Elijah, the widow, and her family) ate for days, *i.e.* until God sent rain again (ver. 14).

Vers. 17-24. *The widow's deceased son raised to life again.*—Ver. 17. After these events, when Elijah had taken up his abode in the upper room of her house, her son fell sick, so that he breathed out his life. 'עַד אֲנִי נָפַח, literally till no breath remained in him. That these words do not signify merely a death-like torpor, but an actual decease, is evident from what follows, where Elijah himself treats the boy as dead, and the Lord, in answer to his prayer, restores him to life again.—Ver. 18. The pious woman discerned in this death a punishment from God for her sin, and supposed that it had been drawn towards her by the presence of the man of God, so that she said to Elijah, "What have we to do with one another (מִי וְעִמָּךְ; cf. Judg. xi. 12; 2 Sam. xvi. 10), thou man of God? Hast thou come to me to bring my sin to remembrance (with God), and to kill my son?" In this half-heathenish belief there spoke at the same time a mind susceptible to divine truth and conscious of its sin, to which the Lord could not refuse His aid. Like the blindness in the case of the man born blind mentioned in John ix., the death of this widow's son was not sent as a punishment for particular sins, but was intended as a medium for the manifestation of the works of God in her (John ix. 3), in order that she might learn that the Lord was not merely the God of the Jews, but the God of the Gentiles also (Rom. iii. 29).—Vers. 19, 20. Elijah told her to carry the dead child up to the chamber in which he lived and lay it upon his bed, and then cried to the Lord, "Jehovah, my God! hast Thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, to slay her son?" These words, in which the word *also* refers to the other calamities occasioned by the drought, contain no reproach of God, but are expressive of the heartiest compassion for the suffering of his benefactress and the deepest lamentation, which, springing from living faith, pours out the whole heart before God in the hour of distress, that it may appeal to Him the more powerfully for His aid. The meaning is, "Thou, O Lord my God, according to Thy grace and righteousness, canst not possibly leave the son of this widow in death." Such confident belief carries within itself the certainty of being heard. The

prophet therefore proceeds at once to action, to restore the boy to life.—Ver. 21. He stretched himself (יָסַד) three times upon him, not to ascertain whether there was still any life left in him, as Paul did in Acts xx. 10, nor to warm the body of the child and set its blood in circulation, as Elisha did with a dead child (2 Kings iv. 34),—for the action of Elisha is described in a different manner, and the youth mentioned in Acts xx. 10 was only apparently dead,—but to bring down the vivifying power of God upon the dead body, and thereby support his own word and prayer.¹ He then cried to the Lord, “Jehovah, my God, I pray Thee let the soul of this boy return within it” עֲלֵךְ, inasmuch as the soul as the vital principle springs from above.—Vers. 22, 23. The Lord heard this prayer: the boy came to life again; whereupon Elijah gave him back to his mother.—Ver. 24. Through this miracle, in which Elijah showed himself as the forerunner of Him who raiseth all the dead to life, the pious Gentile woman was mightily strengthened in her faith in the God of Israel. She now not only recognised Elijah as a man of God, as in ver. 18, but perceived that the word of Jehovah in his mouth was truth, by which she confessed *implicite* her faith in the God of Israel as the true God.

CHAP. XVIII. ELIJAH'S MEETING WITH AHAB, AND VICTORY OVER
THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

As the judgment of drought and famine did not bring king Ahab to his senses and lead him to turn from his ungodly ways, but only filled him with exasperation towards the prophet who had announced to him the coming judgment; there was no other course left than to lay before the people with mighty and convincing force the proof that Jehovah was the only true God, and to execute judgment upon the priests of Baal as the seducers of the nation.

Vers. 1–19. *Elijah's meeting with Ahab.*—Vers. 1 and 2a. In the third year of his sojourn at Zarephath the word of the Lord came to Elijah to show himself to Ahab; since God was about to send rain upon the land again. The time given, “the third year,” is not to be reckoned, as the Rabbins, Clericus,

¹ “This was done, that the prophet's body might be the instrument of the miracle, just as in other cases of miracle there was an imposition of the hand.”
—SEB. SCHMIDT.

Thenius, and others assume, from the commencement of the drought, but from the event last mentioned, namely, the so-journ of Elijah at Zarephath. This view merits the preference as the simplest and most natural one, and is shown to be the oldest by Luke iv. 25 and Jas. v. 17, where Christ and James both say, that in the time of Ahab it did not rain for three years and six months. And this length of time can only be obtained by allowing more than two years for Elijah's stay at Zarephath.—From ver. 2*b* to ver. 6 we have parenthetical remarks introduced, to explain the circumstances which led to Elijah's meeting with Ahab. The verbs וַיֵּאָמֶר, וַיֵּדֹא, וַיִּקְרָא, and וַיִּהְיֶה (vers. 3, 4, 5, 6) carry on the circumstantial clauses: "and the famine was . . ." (ver. 2*b*), and "Obadiah feared . . ." (ver. 3*b*), and are therefore to be expressed by the pluperfect. When the famine had become very severe in Samaria (the capital), Ahab, with Obadiah the governor of his castle (אֲשֶׁר אֶל הַצִּיּוֹן, see at ch. iv. 6), who was a God-fearing man, and on the persecution of the prophets of Jehovah by Jezebel had hidden a hundred prophets in caves and supplied them with food, had arranged for an expedition through the whole land to seek for hay for his horses and mules. And for this purpose they had divided the land between them, so that the one explored one district and the other another. We see from ver. 4 that Jezebel had resolved upon exterminating the worship of Jehovah, and sought to carry out this intention by destroying the prophets of the true God. The hundred prophets whom Obadiah concealed were probably for the most part pupils ("sons") of the prophets. הַמְּשִׁים אֵיִשׁ must signify, according to the context and also according to ver. 13, "fifty each," so that הַמְּשִׁים must have fallen out through a copyist's error. וְלֹא נִבְרִיתָ כֵּן, that we may not be obliged to kill (a portion) of the cattle (כֵּן partitive). The *Keri* מִהֶבֶמָה is no doubt actually correct, but it is not absolutely necessary, as the *Chethib* מִן בְּהֵמָה may be taken as an indefinite phrase: "any head of cattle."—Vers. 7, 8. Elijah met Obadiah on this expedition, and told him to announce his coming to the king.—Vers. 9 sqq. Obadiah was afraid that the execution of this command might cost him his life, inasmuch as Ahab had sent in search of Elijah "to every kingdom and every nation,"—a hyperbole suggested by inward excitement and fear. וַאֲמָרֵי אֵין is to be connected with what follows in spite of the accents: "and if they said he is not

here, he took an oath," etc.—Vers. 12, 13. "And if it comes to pass (that) I go away from thee, and the Spirit of Jehovah carries thee away whither I know not, and I come to tell Ahab (*sc.* that thou art here) and he findeth thee not, he will slay me, and thy servant feareth the Lord from his youth," etc.; *i.e.* since I as a God-fearing man and a protector of the prophets cannot boast of any special favour from Ahab. מִנְּעָרִי, from *my* youth up: "thy servant" being equivalent to "I myself." From the fear expressed by Obadiah that the Spirit of Jehovah might suddenly carry the prophet to some unknown place, Seb. Schmidt and others have inferred that in the earlier history of Elijah there had occurred some cases of this kind of sudden transportation, though they have not been handed down; but the anxiety expressed by Obadiah might very well have sprung from the fact, that after Elijah had announced the coming drought to Ahab, he disappeared, and, notwithstanding all the inquiries instituted by the king, was nowhere to be found. And since he was not carried off miraculously then (compare the הֵן and הֵלֵךְ, "get thee hence" and "he went," in ch. xvii. 3, 5), there is all the less ground for imagining cases of this kind in the intermediate time, when he was hidden from his enemies. The subsequent translation of Elijah to heaven (2 Kings ii. 11, 12), and the miraculous carrying away of Philip from the chamberlain of Mauritania (Acts viii. 39), do not warrant any such assumption; and still less the passage which Clericus quotes from Ezekiel (iii. 12, 14), because the carrying of Ezekiel through the air, which is mentioned here, only happened in vision and not in external reality. If Obadiah had known of any actual occurrence of this kind, he would certainly have stated it more clearly as a more striking vindication of his fear.—Vers. 15–19. But when Elijah assured him with an oath (יְהוָה צִבְאוֹת, see at 1 Sam. i. 3) that he would show himself to Ahab that day, Obadiah went to announce it to the king; whereupon Ahab went to meet the prophet, and sought to overawe him with the imperious words, "Art thou here, thou troubler of Israel?" (עֲרִי, see at Gen. xxxiv. 30). But Elijah threw back this charge: "It is not I who have brought Israel into trouble, but thou and thy family, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah, and thou goest after Baalim." He then called upon the king to gather together all Israel to him upon Carmel, together with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of

Asherah, who ate of Jezebel's table, *i.e.* who were maintained by the queen.

CARMEL, a mountain ridge "with many peaks, intersected by hundreds of larger and smaller ravines," which stands out as a promontory running in a north-westerly direction into the Mediterranean (see at Josh. xix. 26), and some of the loftiest peaks of which rise to the height of 1800 feet above the level of the sea, when seen from the northern or outer side shows only "bald, monotonous rocky ridges, scantily covered with short and thorny bushes;" but in the interior it still preserves its ancient glory, which has procured for it the name of "fruit-field," the valleys being covered with the most beautiful flowers of every description, and the heights adorned with myrtles, laurels, oaks, and firs (cf. V. de Velde, *R. i.* p. 292 sq.). At the north-western extremity of the mountain there is a celebrated Carmelite monastery, dedicated to Elijah, whom tradition represents as having lived in a grotto under the monastery; but we are certainly not to look there for the scene of the contest with the priests of Baal described in the verses which follow. The scene of Elijah's sacrifice is rather to be sought for on one of the south-eastern heights of Carmel; and Van de Velde (*i.* p. 320 sq.) has pointed it out with great probability in the ruins of *el Mohraka*, *i.e.* "the burned place," "a rocky level space of no great circumference, and covered with old gnarled trees with a dense entangled undergrowth of bushes." For "one can scarcely imagine a spot better adapted for the thousands of Israel to have stood drawn up on than the gentle slopes. The rock shoots up in an almost perpendicular wall of more than 200 feet in height on the side of the vale of Esdraelon. On this side, therefore, there was no room for the gazing multitude; but, on the other hand, this wall made it visible over the whole plain, and from all the surrounding heights, so that even those left behind, who had not ascended Carmel, would still have been able to witness at no great distance the fire from heaven that descended upon the altar."—"There is not a more conspicuous spot on all Carmel than the abrupt rocky height of *el Mohraka*, shooting up so suddenly on the east." Moreover, the soil was thoroughly adapted for the erection of the altar described in vers. 31 and 32: "it showed a rocky surface, with a sufficiency of large fragments of rock lying all around, and, besides, well fitted for the rapid digging of a trench."

There is also water in the neighbourhood, as is assumed in ver. 34. "Nowhere does the Kishon run so close to Mount Carmel as just beneath el Mohraka," which is "1635 feet above the sea, and perhaps 1000 feet above the Kishon. This height can be gone up and down in the short time allowed by the Scripture (vers. 40-44)." But it was possible to find water even nearer than this, to pour upon the burnt-offering in the manner described in vers. 34, 35. Close by the steep rocky wall of the height, just where you can descend to the Kishon through a steep ravine, you find, "250 feet it might be beneath the altar plateau, a vaulted and very abundant fountain built in the form of a tank, with a few steps leading down into it, just as one finds elsewhere in the old wells or springs of the Jewish times."—"From such a fountain alone could Elijah have procured so much water at that time. And as for the distance between this spring and the supposed site of the altar, it was every way possible for men to go thrice thither and back again to obtain the necessary supply." Lastly, el Mohraka is so situated, that the circumstances mentioned in vers. 42-44 also perfectly coincide (Van de Velde, pp. 322-325).

Vers. 20-46. *Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal.*—Ahab sent through all Israel and gathered the prophets (of Baal) together upon Mount Carmel. According to vers. 21, 22, and 39, a number of the people ("all the people") had also come with them. On the other hand, not only is there no further reference in what follows to the 400 prophets of Asherah (cf. vers. 25 and 40), but in ver. 22 it is very obvious that the presence of the 450 prophets of Baal alone is supposed. We must therefore assume that the Asherah prophets, foreboding nothing good, had found a way of evading the command of Ahab and securing the protection of Jezebel.¹ King Ahab also appeared upon Carmel (cf. ver. 41), as he had no idea of

¹ It is true that in ver. 22 the LXX. have this clause, *καὶ οἱ προφῆται τοῦ ἄσρου;* (i.e. *אֲשֵׁרָה תַּטְרַאכֹּסִיִּים*), which Thenius regards as an original portion of the text, though without observing the character of the LXX. If the Asherah prophets had also been present, Elijah would not only have commanded the prophets of Baal to be seized and slain (ver. 40), but the Asherah prophets also. From the principle *a potiori fit*, etc., it may be possible to explain the omission of the Asherah prophets in ver. 25, but not in ver. 40.

Elijah's intention, which was by no means "to prove to the king that he (Ahab) and not Elijah had brought Israel into trouble" (Vat., Seb. Schm.), but to put before the eyes of the whole nation a convincing practical proof of the sole deity of Jehovah and of the nothingness of the Baals, that were regarded as gods, and by slaying the priests of Baal to give a death-blow to idolatry in Israel.—Ver. 21. Elijah addressed the assembled people as follows: "How long do ye limp upon both sides? Is Jehovah God, then go after Him; but if Baal be God, then go after him"—and the people answered him not a word. They wanted to combine the worship of Jehovah and Baal, and not to assume a hostile attitude towards Jehovah by the worship of Baal; and were therefore obliged to keep silence under this charge of infatuated halving, since they knew very well from the law itself that Jehovah demanded worship with a whole and undivided heart (Deut. vi. 4, 5). This dividing of the heart between Jehovah and Baal Elijah called limping על שתי הספסלים, "upon the two parties (of Jehovah and Baal)." For ספסלים the meaning "divided opinions, parties," is well established by the use of ספסלים in Ps. cxix. 113; and the rendering of the LXX. *ὀνύχαι*, the hollow of the knee, is only a paraphrase of the sense and not an interpretation of the word.—Vers. 22-25. As the people adhered to their undecided double-mindedness, Elijah proposed to let the Deity Himself decide who was the true God, Jehovah or Baal. The prophets of Baal were to offer a sacrifice to Baal, and he (Elijah) would offer one to Jehovah. And the true God should make Himself known by kindling the burnt-offering presented to Him with fire from heaven, and in this way answering the invocation of His name. This proposal was based upon the account in Lev. ix. As Jehovah had there manifested Himself as the God of Israel by causing fire to fall from heaven upon the first sacrifice presented in front of the tabernacle and to consume it, Elijah hoped that in like manner Jehovah would even now reveal Himself as the living God. And the form of decision thus proposed would necessarily appear all the fairer, because Elijah, the prophet of Jehovah, stood alone in opposition to a whole crowd of Baal's prophets, numbering no less than 450 men. And for that very reason the latter could not draw back, without publicly renouncing their pretensions, whether they believed that Baal would really do what was desired, or hoped

that they might be able to escape, through some accident or stratagem, from the difficult situation that had been prepared for them, or fancied that the God of Elijah would no more furnish the proof of His deity that was desired of Him than Baal would. In order, however, to cut off every subterfuge in the event of their attempt proving a failure, Elijah not only yielded the precedence to them on the occasion of this sacrifice, but gave them the choice of the two oxen brought to be offered; which made the fairness of his proposal so much the more conspicuous to every one, that the people willingly gave their consent.

Vers. 26-29. The prophets of Baal then proceeded to the performance of the duty required. They prepared (עָשׂוּ) the sacrifice, and called solemnly upon Baal from morning to noon: "O Baal, hear us," limping round the altar; "but there was no voice, and no one to hear (to answer), and no attention." פִּסְפֹּס is a contemptuous epithet applied to the pantomimic sacrificial dance performed by these priests round about the altar,¹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ("which one had made").—Ver. 27. As no answer had been received before noon, Elijah cried out to them in derision: "Call to him with a loud voice, for he is God (sc. according to your opinion), for he is meditating, or has gone aside (שָׁ, *secessio*), or is on the journey (בְּדֶרֶךְ, on the way); perhaps he is sleeping, that he may wake up." The ridicule lies more especially in the כִּי אֱלֹהִים הוּא (for he is a god), when contrasted with the enumeration of the different possibilities which may have occasioned their obtaining no answer, and is heightened by the earnest and threefold repetition of the כִּי. With regard to these possibilities we may quote the words of Clericus: "Although these things when spoken of God are the most absurd things possible, yet idolaters could believe such things, as we may see from Homer." The priests of Baal did actually begin therefore to cry louder than before, and scratched themselves with swords and lances, till the blood poured out, "according to their custom" (כַּמִּשְׁכָּבָם). Movers describes this as follows (*Phönizier*, i. pp. 682, 683), from statements made by ancient authors concerning the processions of the strolling

¹ The following is the description which Herodian (*hist.* v. 3), among others, gives of Heliogabalus when dancing as chief priest of the Emesinian sun-god: Ἱερουργοῦντα δὴ τοῦτον, περὶ τε τοῖς βαμοῖς χορεύοντα νόμῳ Βαρβαρῶν, ὑπὸ τε αὐλοῖς καὶ σύριγξι παντοδαπῶν τε ὀργάνων ἔχοντα.

bands of the Syrian goddess: "A discordant howling opens the scene. They then rush wildly about in perfect confusion, with their heads bowed down to the ground, but always revolving in circles, so that the loosened hair drags through the mire; they then begin to bite their arms, and end with cutting themselves with the two-edged swords which they are in the habit of carrying. A new scene then opens. One of them, who surpasses all the rest in frenzy, begins to prophesy with sighs and groans; he openly accuses himself of the sins which he has committed, and which he is now about to punish by chastising the flesh, takes the knotted scourge, which the *Galli* generally carry, lashes his back, and then cuts himself with swords till the blood trickles down from his mangled body." The climax of the Bacchantic dance in the case of the priests of Baal also was the prophesying (התנבא), and it was for this reason, probably, that they were called prophets (נביאים). This did not begin till noon, and lasted till about the time of the evening sacrifice (עַר לַעֲלוֹת, not עַר עֲלוֹת, ver. 29). עֲלוֹת הַמִּנְחָה, "the laying on (offering) of the meat-offering," refers to the daily evening sacrifice, which consisted of a burnt-offering and a meat-offering (Ex. xix. 38 sqq.; Num. xxviii. 3-8), and was then offered, according to the Rabbinical observance (see at Ex. xii. 6), in the closing hours of the afternoon, as is evident from the circumstances which are described in vers. 40 sqq. as having taken place on the same day and subsequently to Elijah's offering, which was presented at the time of the evening sacrifice (ver. 36).

Vers. 30-39. *Elijah's sacrifice*.—As no answer came from Baal, Elijah began to prepare for his own sacrifice. Ver. 30. He made the people come nearer, that he might have both eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses present at his sacrifice, and restored the altar of Jehovah which was broken down. Consequently there was already an altar of Jehovah upon Carmel, which either dated from the times anterior to the building of the temple, when altars of Jehovah were erected in different places throughout the land (see at ch. iii. 2), or, what is more probable, had been built by pious worshippers belonging to the ten tribes since the division of the kingdom (Hengstenberg, *Dissertations on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. p. 183, transl.), and judging from ch. xix. 10, had been destroyed during the reign of Ahab, when the worship of Baal gained the upper hand.—Vers. 31, 32.

Elijah took twelve stones, "according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come (Gen. xxxii. 29, xxxv. 10), Israel shall be thy name," and built these stones into an altar. The twelve stones were a practical declaration on the part of the prophet that the division of the nation into two kingdoms was at variance with the divine calling of Israel, inasmuch as according to the will of God the twelve tribes were to form *one* people of Jehovah, and to have a common sacrificial altar; whilst the allusion to the fact that Jehovah had given to the forefather of the nation the name of Israel, directs attention to the wrong which the seceding ten tribes had done in claiming the name of Israel for themselves, whereas it really belonged to the whole nation. יהוה בָּנִים (in the name of Jehovah) belongs to יְבָנָה (built), and signifies by the authority and for the glory of Jehovah. "And made a trench as the space of two seahs of seed (*i.e.* so large that you could sow two seahs¹ of seed upon the ground which it covered) round about the altar." The trench must therefore have been of considerable breadth and depth, although it is impossible to determine the exact dimensions, as the kind of seed-corn is not defined. He then arranged the sacrifice upon the altar, and had four *Kad* (pails) of water poured three times in succession upon the burnt-offering which was laid upon the pieces of wood, so that the water flowed round about the altar, and then had the trench filled with water.² Elijah adopted this course for the purpose of precluding all suspicion of even the possibility of fraud in connection with the miraculous burning of the sacrifice. For idolaters had carried their deceptions to such a length, that they would set fire to the wood of the sacrifices from

¹ *i.e.* about two Dresden pecks (*Metzen*).—THENIUS.

² Thenius throws suspicion upon the historical character of this account, on the ground that "the author evidently forgot the terrible drought, by which the numerous sources of the Carmel and the Nachal Kishon *must* have been dried up;" but Van de Velde has already answered this objection, which has been raised by others also, and has completely overthrown it by pointing out the covered well of *el Mohraka*, in relation to which he makes the following remark: "In such springs the water remains always cool, under the shade of a vaulted roof, and with no hot atmosphere to evaporate it. While all other fountains were dried up, I can well understand that there might have been found here that superabundance of water which Elijah poured so profusely over the altar" (vol. i. p. 325, transl.). But the drying up of the Kishon is a mere conjecture, which cannot be historically proved.

hollow spaces concealed beneath the altars, in order to make the credulous people believe that the sacrifice had been miraculously set on fire by the deity. Ephraem Syrus and Joh. Chrysostom both affirm this; the latter in his *Oratio in Petrum Apost. et Eliam proph.* t. ii. p. 737, ed. Montf., the genuineness of which, however, is sometimes called in question.—Vers. 36, 37. After these preparations at the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah drew near and prayed: “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (this name is used with deliberate purpose instead of Jacob: see at ver. 31), let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and I am Thy servant, and do all these things through Thy word. Hear me, Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that Thou Jehovah art God, and turnest back their hearts!” (*i.e.* back from idols to Thyself.) This clearly expresses not only the object of the miracle which follows, but that of miracles universally. The perfects עָשִׂה and הִסְבֵּה are used to denote not only what has already occurred, but what will still take place and is as certain as if it had taken place already. עָשִׂה refers not merely to the predicted drought and to what Elijah has just been doing (Thenius), but to the miracle which was immediately about to be performed; and הִסְבֵּה to the conversion of the people to the Lord their God, for which Elijah’s coming had already prepared the way, and which was still further advanced by the following miracle.—Ver. 38. Then fire of Jehovah fell and consumed the burnt-offering and the pieces of wood, etc. אֵשׁ יְהוָה, the fire proceeding from Jehovah, was not a natural flash of lightning, which could not produce any such effect, but miraculous fire falling from heaven, as in 1 Chron. xxi. 26, 2 Chron. vii. 1 (see at Lev. ix. 24), the supernatural origin of which was manifested in the fact, that it not only consumed the sacrifice with the pile of wood upon the altar, but also burned up (*in calcem redegit*—Cler.) the stones of the altar and the earth that was thrown up to form the trench, and licked up the water in the trench. Through this miracle Jehovah not only accredited Elijah as His servant and prophet, but proved Himself to be the living God, whom Israel was to serve; so that all the people who were present fell down upon their faces in worship, as they had done once before, viz. at the consecration of the altar in Lev. ix. 24, and confessed “Jehovah is God:” הָאֱלֹהִים, the true or real God.

Vers. 40-46. Elijah availed himself of this enthusiasm of

the people for the Lord, to deal a fatal blow at the prophets of Baal, who turned away the people from the living God. He commanded the people to seize them, and had them slain at the brook Kishon, and that not so much from revenge, *i.e.* because it was at their instigation that queen Jezebel had murdered the prophets of the true God (ver. 13), as to carry out the fundamental law of the Old Testament kingdom of God, which prohibited idolatry on pain of death, and commanded that false prophets should be destroyed (Deut. xvii. 2, 3, xiii. 13 sqq.).¹—Ver. 41. Elijah then called upon the king, who had eaten nothing from morning till evening in his eagerness to see the result of the contest between the prophet and the priests of Baal, to come up from the brook Kishon to the place of sacrifice upon Carmel, where his wants were provided for, and to partake of meat and drink, for he (Elijah) could already hear the noise of a fall of rain. *šp* is without a verb, as is often the case (*e.g.* Isa. xiii. 4, lii. 8, etc.); literally, it is the sound, the noise. After the occasion of the curse of drought, which had fallen upon the land, had been removed by the destruction of the idolatrous priests, the curse itself could also be removed. “But this was not to take place without the prophet’s saying it, and by means of this gift proving himself afresh to be the representative of God” (O. v. Gerlach).—Vers. 42 sqq. While the king was refreshing himself with food and drink, Elijah went up to the top of Carmel to pray that the Lord would complete His work by fulfilling His promise (ver. 1) in sending rain; and continued in prayer till the visible commencement of the fulfilment of his prayer was announced by his servant, who, after looking out upon the sea seven times, saw at last a small cloud ascend from the sea

¹ It was necessary that idolatry and temptation to the worship of idols should be punished with death, as a practical denial of Jehovah the true God and Lord of His chosen people, if the object of the divine institutions was to be secured. By putting the priests of Baal to death, therefore, Elijah only did what the law required; and inasmuch as the ordinary administrators of justice did not fulfil their obligations, he did this as an extraordinary messenger of God, whom the Lord had accredited as His prophet before all the people by the miraculous answer given to his prayer.—To infer from this act of Elijah the right to institute a bloody persecution of heretics, would not only indicate a complete oversight of the difference between heathen idolaters and Christian heretics, but the same reprehensible confounding of the evangelical standpoint of the New Testament with the legal standpoint of the Old, which Christ condemned in His own disciples in Luke ix. 55, 56.

about the size of a man's hand.¹ The peculiar attitude assumed by Elijah when praying (Jas. v. 18), viz. bowing down even to the earth (יָרָדָה) and putting his face between his knees, probably the attitude of deep absorption in God, was witnessed by Shaw and Chardin in the case of certain dervishes (*vid.* Harmar, *Beobachtungen*, iii. pp. 373-4).—Ver. 44. As soon as the small cloud ascended from the sea, Elijah sent his servant to tell the king to set off home, that he might not be stopped by the rain. יֵרָד, go down, *sc.* from Carmel to his chariot, which was standing at the foot of the mountain.²—Ver. 45. Before any provision had been made for it (עָרְבָה וְעָרְבָה: hither and thither, *i.e.* while the hand is being moved to and fro, "very speedily;" cf. Ewald, § 105, *b*) the heaven turned black with clouds and wind, *i.e.* with storm-clouds (Thenius), and there came a great fall of rain, while Ahab drove along the road to Jezreel. It was quite possible for the king to reach Jezreel the same evening from that point, namely, from the foot of Carmel below *el Mohraka*: but only thence, for every half-hour farther west would have taken him too far from his capital for it to be possible to accomplish the distance before the rain overtook him (V. de Velde, i. p. 326). *Jezreel*, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. xix. 18), was probably the summer residence of Ahab (see at Josh. xxi. 1). The distance from *el Mohraka* thither is hardly $2\frac{3}{4}$ German geographical miles (? 14 Engl. miles—Tr.) in a straight line.—Ver. 46. When Ahab drove off, the hand of the Lord came upon Elijah, so that he ran before Ahab as far as Jezreel,—not so much for the purpose of bringing the king to his residence unhurt (Seb. Schm.), as to give him a proof of his humility, and thus deepen the impression already made upon his heart, and fortify him all the more against the strong temptations of his wife, who abused his weakness to support the cause of ungodliness. This act of Elijah, whom Ahab had hitherto only

¹ V. de Velde has shown how admirably these circumstances (vers. 43 and 44) also apply to the situation of *el Mohraka*: "on its west and north-west side the view of the sea is quite intercepted by an adjacent height. That height may be ascended, however, in a few minutes, and a full view of the sea obtained from the top" (i. p. 326).

² "After three years' drought all herbage must have disappeared from the plain of Jezreel, and the loose clay composing its soil must have been changed into a deep layer of dust. Had time been allowed for the rain to convert that dust into a bed of mud, the chariot-wheels might have stuck fast in it."—V. DE VELDE, i. pp. 326-7.

known as a stern, imperious, and powerful prophet, by which he now showed himself to be his faithful subject and servant, was admirably adapted to touch the heart of the king, and produce the conviction that it was not from any personal dislike to him, but only in the service of the Lord, that the prophet was angry at his idolatry, and that he was not trying to effect his ruin, but rather his conversion and the salvation of his soul. *יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ*, the hand (i.e. the power) of the Lord, denotes the supernatural strength with which the Lord endowed him, to accomplish superhuman feats. This formula is generally applied to the divine inspiration by which the prophets were prepared for their prophesying (cf. 2 Kings iii. 15 ; Ezek. i. 3, iii. 15, etc.).

CHAP. XIX. ELIJAH'S FLIGHT INTO THE DESERT, THE REVELATION OF GOD AT HOREB, AND ELISHA'S CALL TO BE A PROPHET.

The hope of completing his victory over the idolaters and overthrowing the worship of Baal, even in the capital of the kingdom, with which Elijah may have hastened to Jezreel, was frustrated by the malice of the queen, who was so far from discerning any revelation of the almighty God in the account given her by Ahab of what had occurred on Carmel, and bending before His mighty hand, that, on the contrary, she was so full of wrath at the slaying of the prophets of Baal as to send to the prophet Elijah to threaten him with death. This apparent failure of his ministry was the occasion of a severe inward conflict, in which Elijah was brought to a state of despondency and fled from the land. The Lord allowed His servant to pass through this conflict, that he might not exalt himself, but, being mindful of his own impotence, might rest content with the grace of his God, whose strength is mighty in the weak (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9), and who would refine and strengthen him for the further fulfilment of his calling.

Vers. 1-8. *Elijah's flight into the desert and guidance to Horeb.*—Vers. 1, 2. When "Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and all, how he had slain all the prophets (of Baal)," she sent a messenger to Elijah in her impotent wrath, with a threat, which she confirmed by an oath (see at ch. ii. 23), that in the morning she would have him slain like the prophets whom he had put to death. The early commentators detected in this threat the *impotentia muliebris iracundiæ*, and saw that all that

Jezebel wanted was to get rid of the man who was so distressing and dangerous to her, because she felt herself unable to put him to death, partly on account of the people, who were enthusiastic in his favour, and partly on account of the king himself, upon whom the affair at Carmel had not remained without its salutary effect.—Vers. 3, 4. But when Elijah saw (וַיֵּרָא), *sc.* how things stood, or the audacity of Jezebel, from which the failure of his work was evident, he rose up and went to Beersheba in Judah, *i.e.* Bir-seba on the southern frontier of Canaan (see at Gen. xxi. 31). The expression אֲשֶׁר לְיְהוּדָה, “which to Judah,” *i.e.* which belonged to the kingdom of Judah, for Beersheba was really allotted to the tribe of Simeon (Josh. xix. 2), is appended not merely as a geographical indication that Elijah went outside the land, but to show that he meant to leave the kingdom of Israel, the scene of his previous labours, just as Jeremiah in a similar internal conflict gave utterance to the wish that he could leave his people, if he had but a lodging-place in the wilderness (Jer. ix. 2). וַיֵּרָא is not to be altered into וַיִּירָא, *et timuit*, after the LXX. and Vulg., notwithstanding the fact that some Codd. have this reading, which only rests upon an erroneous conjecture. For it is obvious that Elijah did not flee from any fear of the vain threat of Jezebel, from the fact that he did not merely withdraw into the kingdom of Judah, where he would have been safe under Jehoshaphat from all the persecutions of Jezebel, but went to Beersheba, and thence onwards into the desert, there to pour out before the Lord God his weariness of life (ver. 4). וַיִּזְכֹּר אֶל־נַפְשׁוֹ, he went upon his soul, or his life, *i.e.* not to save his life (as I once thought, with many other commentators), for his wish to die (ver. 4) is opposed to this; but to care for his soul in the manner indicated in ver. 4, *i.e.* to commit his soul or his life to the Lord his God in the solitude of the desert, and see what He would determine concerning him.¹—He left his servant in Beersheba, while he himself went a day's journey farther into the desert (Paran), not merely because he was so filled with weariness

¹ G. Menken (*christl. Homil. üb. den Proph. Elias*, p. 231) has given the following admirable explanation of וַיִּזְכֹּר אֶל־נַפְשׁוֹ so far as the sense is concerned: “For conscience sake, from conviction, out of obligation, not from fear. After all his former experience, and from the entire relation in which Elijah stood to God, it was impossible that he should be afraid, and not be firmly convinced that the God who had shut up heaven at his word, who had supplied him with bread and flesh for a whole year in the desert through the medium of ravens, who had supported him miraculously for years in a foreign land through the

ness of life in his dark oppression, that he thought he should have no further need of his servant, and therefore left him behind in Beersheba, but that he might pour out his heart before God alone in the desert and yield himself up to His guidance. For however unquestionably his lamentation in ver. 4, for example, expresses a weariness of life, this merely indicates the feeling which had taken possession of his soul after a day's journey in the barren desert. And even there he lays his wish to die before God in prayer; so that this feeling is merely to be regarded as one result of the spiritual conflict, which his bodily exhaustion had now raised to a height that it cannot have reached when he was in Beersheba. If, therefore, he did not start with the intention of making a pilgrimage to Horeb, he had certainly gone into the desert for the purpose of seeing whether the Lord would manifest His mercy to him, as He had formerly done to His people under Moses, or whether He would withdraw His hand entirely from him. After a day's journey he sat down under a רִמֹם (construed here as a feminine, in ver. 5 as a masculine), a species of broom (*genista Retem* in Forskål), which is the finest and most striking shrub of the Arabian desert, growing constantly in the beds of streams and in the valleys, where places of encampment are frequently selected for the sake of the shelter which they afford by night from the wind and by day from the sun (Rob. *Pal.* i. 299). וַיִּשְׁאַל . . . לָמוּת: and wished that his soul might die (a kind of accusative with infinitive; see Ewald, § 336, b), and said, רַב עָתָה, "Enough now; take, Lord, my soul, for I am not better than my fathers;" i.e. I have worked and endured enough, and deserve no longer life than my fathers. From this it appears that Elijah was already of a great age.—Vers. 5 sqq. In this disturbed state of mind he lay down and slept under a broom-tree. Then the Lord came with His power to the help of the despairing man. "An angel touched him (wakened him out of his sleep), and said to him: Arise, eat." And behold he saw at his head רֶצֶףִים עֲנִיתִי, a bread cake baked over red-hot stones, a savoury article of food which is still a great favourite with the Bedouins (see at Gen. xviii. 6, xix. 3), and a pitcher of water,

medium of a poor widow, who had concealed and rescued him for three years and a half from the search of the king, who had accredited and honoured him in the sight of all the people as His servant, who had given an immediate answer to his prayer for rain, could also defend him in this extremity, and rescue him from this danger, if such should be His will."

and ate and drank, and lay down again.—Ver. 7. But the angel wakened him a second time, and called upon him to eat with these words: “for the way is too far for thee” (רַב מַסָּע הַדֶּרֶךְ, *iter est majus quam pro viribus tuis*—Vat.).—Ver. 8. “Then he arose, ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to the mount of God at Horeb.” As the angel did not tell him whither he was to go, and Elijah wandered to Horeb in consequence of this strengthening, it appears to have been his intention from the very beginning to go into the desert, and see whether the Lord would still further acknowledge him and his work; so that in the support and strength imparted by the angel he saw an indication that he was to follow the footsteps of the divine grace still farther into the desert, and make a pilgrimage to Horeb, with the hope that there perhaps the Lord would reveal to him His counsel concerning the further guidance of the people of His covenant, as He had formerly done to His servant Moses, and give him the necessary instruction for the continuance of his prophetic service. *Horeb* is called the mount of God here, as it was proleptically in Ex. iii. 1, as the place where the Lord confirmed the covenant, already made with the patriarchs, to their descendants, and adopted the tribes of Israel as His people and made them into a kingdom of God. The distance from Beersheba to Horeb is about 200 miles. Consequently Elijah would not have required forty days to travel there, if the intention of God had been nothing more than to cause him to reach the mountain, or “to help him on his way” (Thenius). But in the strength of the food provided by the angel Elijah was not only to perform the journey to Horeb, but to wander in the desert for forty days and forty nights, *i.e.* forty whole days, as Moses had formerly wandered with all Israel for forty years; that he might know that the Lord was still the same God who had nourished and sustained His whole nation in the desert with manna from heaven for forty years. And just as the forty years’ sojourn in the desert had been to Moses a time for the trial of faith and for exercise in humility and meekness (Num. xii. 3), so was the strength of Elijah’s faith to be tried by the forty days’ wandering in the same desert, and to be purified from all carnal zeal for the further fulfilment of His calling, in accordance with the divine will. What follows shows very clearly that this was the object of the divine guidance of Elijah (cf. Hengstenberg, *Diss. on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. 171, 172).

Vers. 9-18. *Appearance of God at Horeb.*—Ver. 9. When Elijah arrived at Horeb, he went into the cave (the definite article in הַמְּעָרָה, with the obvious connection between the appearance of God, which follows here, and that described in Ex. xxxiii. 12 sqq., points back to the cleft in the rock, נִקְרָת הַצֵּדַי) in which Moses had stood while the glory of Jehovah passed by (see at Ex. xxxiii. 22), and there he passed the night. And behold the word of the Lord came to him (in the night): "What doest thou here, Elijah?" This question did not involve a reproof, as though Elijah had nothing to do there, but was simply intended to lead him to give utterance to the thoughts and feelings of his heart.—Ver. 10. Elijah answered: "I have striven zealously for Jehovah the God of hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, destroyed Thine altars, and killed Thy prophets with the sword; and I only am left, and they seek my life." In these words there was not only the greatest despair expressed as to the existing condition of things, but also a carnal zeal which would gladly have called down the immediate vengeance of the Almighty upon all idolaters. The complaint contained, on the one hand, the tacit reproof that God had looked on quietly for so long a time at the conduct of the ungodly, and had suffered things to come to such an extremity, that he, His prophet, was the only one left of all the true worshippers of God, and, on the other hand, the indirect appeal that He would interpose at last with His penal judgments. Because Elijah had not seen the expected salutary fruits of his zeal for the Lord, he thought that all was lost, and in his gloomy state of mind overlooked what he had seen a short time before with his own eyes, that even in the neighbourhood of the king himself there lived a pious and faithful worshipper of Jehovah, viz. Obadiah, who had concealed a hundred prophets from the revenge of Jezebel, and that the whole of the people assembled upon Carmel had given glory to the Lord, and at his command had seized the prophets of Baal and put them to death, and therefore that the true worshippers of the Lord could not all have vanished out of Israel. קָנָא קִנְיָתִי לַיהוָה recalls to mind the zeal of Phinehas (Num. xxv. 11 sqq.), which put an end to the whoredom of the sons of Israel with the daughters of Moab. But whereas Phinehas received the promise of an everlasting priesthood for his zeal, Elijah had seen so little fruit from his zeal against the worshippers of Baal, that they actually sought

the 7000
who had not
known the name
of Baal.

his life. *מזבחות* are altars, which pious Israelites in the kingdom of the ten tribes had built in different places for the worship of Jehovah (see at ch. xviii. 30).—Vers. 11 sqq. The Lord replied to the prophet's complaint first of all by the manifestation of His control of the phenomena of nature (vers. 11-13), and then by a verbal explanation of His design (vers. 15-18).

In this divine revelation men have recognised from the very earliest times a repetition of the appearance of God which was granted to Moses upon Sinai. As God, in token of His grace, granted the prayer of Moses that he might see His glory, after he had striven zealously for the honour of the Lord when the people rebelled by worshipping the golden calf; so did He also display His glory upon Horeb to Elijah as a second Moses for the purpose of strengthening his faith, with this simple difference, that He made all His goodness pass by Moses, and declared His name in the words, "Jehovah, a gracious and merciful God," etc. (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7), whereas He caused Elijah first of all to behold the operation of His grace in certain phenomena of nature, and then afterwards made known to him His will with regard to Israel and to the work of His prophets. This difference in the form of the revelation, while the substance and design were essentially the same, may be explained from the difference not only in the historical circumstances, but also in the state of mind of the two servants to whom He manifested His glory. In the case of Moses it was burning love for the welfare of his people which impelled him to offer the prayer that the Lord would let him see His glory, as a sign that He would not forsake His people; and this prayer was granted him, so far as a man is ever able to see the glory of God, to strengthen him for the further discharge of the duties of his office. Hidden in the cleft of the rock and shielded by the hand of God, he saw the Lord pass by him, and heard Him utter in words His inmost being. Elijah, on the other hand, in his zeal for the honour of God, which was not quite free from human passion, had been led by the want of any visible fruit from his own labour to overlook the work of the Lord in the midst of His people; so that he had fled into the desert and wished to be released from this world by death, and had not been brought out of his despair by the strengthening with meat and drink which he had received from the angel, and which enabled him to travel for forty days to the mount of

God without suffering from want, a fact which was intended to remind him of the ancient God of the fathers, to whose omnipotence and goodness there is no end; so that it was in a most gloomy state of mind that he reached Horeb at last. And now the Lord designed not only to manifest His glory as the love in which grace and righteousness are united, but also to show him that his zeal for the honour of the Lord was not in harmony with the love and grace and long-suffering of God. "The design of the vision was to show to the fiery zeal of the prophet, who wanted to reform everything by means of the tempest, the gentle way which God pursues, and to proclaim the long-suffering and mildness of His nature, as the voice had already done to Moses on that very spot; hence the beautiful change in the divine appearance" (Herder, *Geist der hebr. Poesie*, 1788, ii. p. 52).—Vers. 11, 12. After God had commanded him to come out of the cave and stand upon the mountain (that part of the mountain which was in front of the cave) before Him, "behold Jehovah went by (the participle עָבַר is used to give a more vivid representation of the scene); and a great and strong tempest, rending mountains and breaking rocks in pieces, before Jehovah—it was not in the tempest that Jehovah was; and after the tempest an earthquake—it was not in the earthquake that Jehovah was; and after the earthquake fire—it was not in the fire that Jehovah was; and after the fire a still, gentle rustling." קוֹל רֶמְמָה רָקָה, literally the tone of a gentle blowing. On the change of gender in רֶמְמָה רָקָה, see Ewald, § 174, c.—Tempest, earthquake, and fire, which are even more terrible in the awful solitude of the Horeb mountains than in an inhabited land, are signs of the coming of the Lord to judgment (cf. Ps. xviii. 8 sqq.). It was in the midst of such terrible phenomena that the Lord had once come down upon Sinai, to inspire the people who were assembled at the foot of the mountain with a salutary dread of His terrible majesty, of the fiery zeal of His wrath and love, which consumes whatever opposes it (see at Ex. xix. 16 sqq.). But now the Lord was not in these terrible phenomena; to signify to the prophet that He did not work in His earthly kingdom with the destroying zeal of wrath, or with the pitiless severity of judgment. It was in a soft, gentle rustling that He revealed Himself to him.—Vers. 13, 14. When Elijah heard this, he covered up his face in his cloak (אָדָּרָה; see at 2 Kings i. 8) and went out to the entrance

to the cave. And behold he heard the question a second time, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" and answered with a repetition of his complaint (see vers. 9 and 10).—While the appearance of God, not in the tempest, the earthquake, and the fire, but in a gentle rustling, revealed the Lord to him as a merciful and gracious God, long-suffering, and of great goodness and truth (Ex. xxxiv. 6), the answer to his complaint showed him that He did not leave guilt unpunished (Ex. xxxiv. 7), since the Lord gave him the following command, vers. 15 sqq.: "Go back in thy way to the desert of Damascus, and anoint Hazael king over Aram (see 2 Kings viii. 12, 13), and Jehu the son of Nimshi king over Israel (see 2 Kings ix. 2), and Elisha the son of Shaphat prophet in thy stead" (see ver. 19); and then added this promise, which must have quieted his zeal, that was praiseworthy in the feelings from which it sprang, although it had assumed too passionate a form, and have given him courage to continue his prophetic work: "And it will come to pass, that whoever escapeth the sword of Hazael, him will Jehu slay, and whoever escapeth the sword of Jehu, him will Elisha slay."—Ver. 18. But in order that he might learn, to his shame, that the cause of the Lord in Israel appeared much more desperate to his eye, which was clouded by his own dissatisfaction, than it really was in the eye of the God who knows His own by number and by name, the Lord added: "I have seven thousand left in Israel, all knees that have not bent before Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him." מִדְּבַר יְהוָה into the desert of Damascus (with the *He loc.* with the construct state as in Deut. iv. 41, Josh. xii. 1, etc.; cf. Ewald, § 216, b), *i.e.* the desert lying to the south and east of the city of Damascus, which is situated on the river *Barady*; not *per desertum in Damascus* (Vulg., Luth., etc.); for although Elijah would necessarily pass through the Arabian desert to go from Horeb to Damascus, it was superfluous to tell him that he was to go that way, as there was no other road. The words "return by thy way . . . and anoint Hazael," etc., are not to be understood as signifying that Elijah was to go at once to Damascus and anoint Hazael there, but simply that he was to do this at a time which the Spirit would more precisely indicate. According to what follows, all that Elijah accomplished immediately was to call Elisha to be his successor; whereas the other two commissions were fulfilled by Elisha after Elijah's ascension to heaven

(2 Kings viii. and ix.). The opinion that Elijah also anointed Hazael and Jehu immediately, but that this anointing was kept secret, and was repeated by Elisha when the time for their public appearance arrived, has not only very little probability in itself, but is directly precluded by the account of the anointing of Jehu in 2 Kings ix. The anointing of Hazael and Jehu is mentioned first, because God had chosen these two kings to be the chief instruments of His judgments upon the royal family and people for their idolatry. It was only in the case of Jehu that a real anointing took place (2 Kings ix. 6); Hazael was merely told by Elisha that he would be king (2 Kings viii. 13), and Elisha was simply called by Elijah to the prophetic office by having the cloak of the latter thrown upon him. Moreover, the Messianic passage, Isa. lxi. 1, is the only one in which there is any allusion to the anointing of a prophet. Consequently *משח* must be taken figuratively here, as in Judg. ix. 8, as denoting divine consecration to the regal and prophetic offices. And so, again, the statement that Elisha would slay those who escaped the sword of Jehu is not to be understood literally. Elisha slew by the word of the Lord, which brought judgments upon the ungodly, as we see from 2 Kings ii. 24 (cf. Jer. i. 10, xviii. 7). The "seven thousand," who had not bowed the knee before Baal, are a round number for the *ἐκλογὴ* of the godly, whom the Lord had preserved for Himself in the sinful kingdom, which was really very large in itself, however small it might be in comparison with the whole nation. The number *seven* is the stamp of the works of God, so that seven thousand is the number of the "remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. xi. 5), which had then been preserved by God. *Kissing Baal* was the most usual form in which this idol was worshipped, and consisted not merely in throwing kisses with the hand (cf. Job xxxi. 27, and Plin. *h. n.* 28, 8), but also in kissing the images of Baal, probably on the feet (cf. Cicero in *Verr.* 4, 43).

Vers. 19–21. *Call of Elisha to be a prophet.*—Ver. 19. As he went thence (viz. away from Horeb), Elijah found *Elisha* the son of Shaphat at Abel-Meholah, in the Jordan valley (see at Judg. vii. 22), occupied in ploughing; "twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he himself with the twelfth" (a very wealthy man therefore), and threw his cloak to him as he passed by. The prophet's cloak was a sign of the prophet's vocation, so that throwing it to him was a symbol of the call to the prophetic

office.—Ver. 20. Elisha understanding the sign, left the oxen standing, ran after Elijah, and said to him, “Let me kiss my father and my mother,” *i.e.* take leave of my parents, and then I will follow thee. For the form אֶפְשָׁר see Ewald, § 228, *b*. As he has ploughed his earthly field with his twelve pair of oxen, he was now to plough the spiritual field of the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke ix. 62). Elijah answered, “Go, return, for what have I done to thee?” לְךָ שָׂוִי belong together, as in ver. 15; so that Elijah thereby gave him permission to return to his father and mother. כִּי signifies *for*, not *yet* (Thenius); for there is no antithesis here, according to which כִּי might serve for a more emphatic assurance (Ewald, § 330, *b*). The words “what have I done to thee?” can only mean, I have not wanted to put any constraint upon thee, but leave it to thy free will to decide in favour of the prophetic calling.—Ver. 21. Then Elisha returned, took the pair of oxen with which he had been ploughing, sacrificed, *i.e.* slaughtered them (זָבַח used figuratively), boiled the flesh with the plough, gave a farewell meal to the people (of his place of abode), *i.e.* his friends and acquaintance, and then followed Elijah as his servant, *i.e.* his assistant. The suffix in עֲשָׂוִי refers to הַבָּקָר, and is more precisely defined by the apposition הַבָּשָׂר, “namely, the flesh of the oxen.”

CHAP. XX. AHAB'S DOUBLE VICTORY OVER BENHADAD OF SYRIA.

Even if the impression which the miracle upon Carmel had made upon Ahab, who was weak rather than malevolent, remained without any lasting fruit, the Lord did very quickly manifest His mercy towards him, by sending a prophet with a promise of victory when the Syrians invaded his kingdom, and by giving the Syrians into his power. This victory was a fruit of the seven thousand who had not bent their knee before Baal. Elijah was also to learn from this that the Lord of Sabaoth had not yet departed from the rebellious kingdom.

Vers. 1-22. THE FIRST VICTORY.—Ver. 1. Benhadad, the son of that Benhadad who had conquered several cities of Galilee in the reign of Baasha (ch. xv. 20), came up with a great army—there were thirty-two kings with him, with horses and chariots—and besieged Samaria. The thirty-two kings with him (מֶלֶכִּים) were vassals of Benhadad, rulers of different cities and the terri-

tory belonging to them, just as in Joshua's time almost every city of Canaan had its king; they were therefore bound to follow the army of Benhadad with their troops.—Vers. 2 sqq. During the siege Benhadad sent messengers into the city to Ahab with this demand: "Thy silver and thy gold are mine, and the best of thy wives and thy sons are mine;" and Ahab answered with pusillanimity: "According to thy word, my lord king, I and all that is mine are thine." Benhadad was made still more audacious by this submissiveness, and sent messengers the second time with the following notice (ver. 6): "Yea, if I send my servants to thee to-morrow at this time, and they search thy house and thy servants' houses, all that is the pleasure of thine eyes they will put into their hands and take." $\text{כִּן יִּ$ does not mean "only=certainly" here (Ewald, § 356, *b*), for there is neither a negative clause nor an oath, but כִּן signifies *if* and יִּ introduces the statement, as in ver. 5; so that it is only in the repetition of the יִּ that the emphasis lies, which can be expressed by *yea*. The words of Ahab in ver. 9 show unquestionably that Benhadad demanded more the second time than the first. The words of the first demand, "Thy silver and thy gold," etc., were ambiguous. According to ver. 5, Benhadad meant that Ahab should give him all this; and Ahab had probably understood him as meaning that he was to give him what he required, in order to purchase peace; but Benhadad had, no doubt, from the very first required an unconditional surrender at discretion. He expresses this very clearly in the second demand, since he announces to Ahab the plunder of his palace and also of the palaces of his nobles. $\text{כָּל־מִטְּאֵר עִינֶיךָ}$, all thy costly treasures. It was from this second demand that Ahab first perceived what Benhadad's intention had been; he therefore laid the matter before the elders of the land, i.e. the king's counsellors, ver. 7: "Mark and see that this man seeketh evil," i.e. that he is aiming at our ruin, since he is not contented with the first demand, which I did not refuse him.—Ver. 8. The elders and all the people, i.e. the citizens of Samaria, advised that his demand should not be granted. $\text{אַל־תִּשְׁמַע וְאַל תִּהְיוּ אֲחֵיכֶם}$, "hearken not (to him), and thou wilt not be willing" (אֵל is stronger than אַל ; yet compare Ewald, § 350, *a*); whereupon Ahab sent the messengers away with this answer, that he would submit to the first demand, but that the second he could not grant.—Ver. 10. Benhadad then attempted to overawe the weak-minded Ahab by strong threats, sending fresh messengers to threaten him

with the destruction of the city, and confirming it by a solemn oath: "The gods do so to me—if the dust of Samaria should suffice for the hollow hands of all the people that are in my train." The meaning of this threat was probably that he would reduce the city to ashes, so that scarcely a handful of dust should be left; for his army was so powerful and numerous, that the rubbish of the city would not suffice for every one to fill his hand.—Ver. 11. Ahab answered this loud boasting with the proverb: "Let not him that girdeth himself boast as he that looseneth the girdle," equivalent to the Latin, *ne triumphum canas ante victoriam*.—Ver. 12. After this reply of Ahab, Benhadad gave command to attack the city, while he was drinking with his kings in the booths. **בָּמֹת** are booths made of branches, twigs, and shrubs, such as are still erected in the East for kings and generals in the place of tents (*vid.* Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenl.* iii. pp. 198-9). **שָׁבוּ**: take your places against the city, *sc.* to storm it (for **שָׁבוּ** in the sense of arranging the army for battle, see 1 Sam. xi. 11 and Job i. 17); not *οικοδομήσατε χάρακα* (LXX.), or place the siege train.—Vers. 13, 14. While the Syrians were preparing for the attack, a prophet came to Ahab and told him that Jehovah would deliver this great multitude (of the enemy) into his hand that day, "that thou mayest know that I am Jehovah," and that through the retainers of the governors of the provinces (**שָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת**, who had fled to Samaria), *i.e.* by a small and weak host. In the appearance of the prophet in Samaria mentioned here and in vers. 28 and 35 sqq. there is no such irreconcilable contradiction to ch. xviii. 4, 22, and xix. 10, as Thenius maintains; it simply shows that the persecution of the prophets by Jezebel had somewhat abated, and therefore Elijah's labour had not remained without fruit. **מִי יִפְתָּח הַמִּלְחָמָה**, who shall open the battle? **אָסַר** answers to the German *anfäden* (to string, unite; Eng. *join* battle—Tr.); cf. 2 Chron. xiii. 3.—Vers. 15, 16. Ahab then mustered his fighting men: there were 232 servants of the provincial governors; and the rest of the people, all the children of Israel, *i.e.* the whole of the Israelitish fighting men that were in Samaria (**הָיִל**, ver. 19), amounted to 7000 men. And at noon, when Benhadad and his thirty-two auxiliary kings were intoxicated at a carousal in the booths (**שָׁמָּה שָׂבוּ** as in ch. xvi. 9), he ordered his men to advance, with the servants of the provincial governors taking the lead. The 7000 men are not to be regarded as the 7000 mentioned in ch. xix. 18, who had

not bowed their knee before Baal, as Rashi supposes, although the sameness in the numbers is apparently not accidental; but in both cases the number of the covenant people existing in Israel is indicated, though in ch. xix. 18 the 7000 constitute the *ἐκλογή* of the true Israel, whereas in the verse before us they are merely the fighting men whom the Lord had left to Ahab for the defence of his kingdom.—Vers. 17, 18. When Benhadad was informed of the advance of these fighting men, in his drunken arrogance he ordered them to be taken alive, whether they came with peaceable or hostile intent.—Vers. 19, 20. But they—the servants of the governors at the head, and the rest of the army behind—smote every one his man, so that the Aramæans fled, and Benhadad, pursued by the Israelites, escaped on a horse with some of the cavalry. *וַיִּפָּזְצוּ* is in apposition to *וַיִּהְיֶה*, “he escaped, and horsemen,” *sc.* escaped with him, *i.e.* some of the horsemen of his retinue, whilst the king of Israel, going out of the city, smote horses and chariots of the enemy, who were not prepared for this sally of the besieged, and completely defeated them.—Ver. 22. After this victory the prophet came to Ahab again, warning him to be upon his guard, for at the turn of the year, *i.e.* the next spring (see at 2 Sam. xi. 1), the Syrian king would make war upon him once more.

Vers. 23–34. THE SECOND VICTORY.—Vers. 23, 24. The servants (ministers) of Benhadad persuaded their lord to enter upon a fresh campaign, attributing the defeat they had sustained to two causes, which could be set aside, *viz.* to the supposed nature of the gods of Israel, and to the position occupied by the vassal-kings in the army. The gods of Israel were mountain gods: when fighting with them upon the mountains, the Syrians had had to fight against and succumb to the power of these gods, whereas on the plain they would conquer, because the power of these gods did not reach so far. This notion concerning the God of Israel the Syrians drew, according to their ethnical religious ideas, from the fact that the sacred places of this God—not only the temple at Jerusalem upon Moriah, but also the altars of the high places—were erected upon mountains; since heathenism really had its mountain deities, *i.e.* believed in gods who lived upon mountains and protected and conducted all that took place upon them (cf. Douglai *Analect.* ss. i. 178, 179; Deyling, *Observv.* ss. iii. pp. 97 sqq.; Winer,

ibid. R. W. i. p. 154), and in Syrophœnicia even mountains themselves had divine honours paid to them (*vid.* Movers, *Phœniz.* i. p. 667 sqq.). The servants of Benhadad were at any rate so far right, that they attributed their defeat to the assistance which God had given to His people Israel; and were only wrong in regarding the God of Israel as a local deity, whose power did not extend beyond the mountains. They also advised their lord (ver. 24) to remove the kings in his army from their position, and appoint governors in their stead (מִנְחָם, see ch. x. 15). The vassal-kings had most likely not shown the desired self-sacrifice for the cause of their superior in the war. And, lastly (ver. 25), they advised the king to raise his army to its former strength, and then carry on the war in the plain. "Number thyself an army, like the army which has fallen from thee." מִמֶּנִּי, "from with thee," rendered correctly *de tuis* in the Vulgate, at least so far as the sense is concerned (for the form see Ewald, § 264, b). But these prudently-devised measures were to be of no avail to the Syrians; for they were to learn that the God of Israel was not a limited mountain-god.—Ver. 26. With the new year (see ver. 22) Benhadad advanced to Aphek again to fight against Israel. *Aphek* is neither the city of that name in the tribe of Asher (Josh. xix. 30 and xiii. 4), nor that on the mountains of Judah (Josh. xv. 53), but the city in the plain of Jezreel not far from Endor (1 Sam. xxix. 1 compared with xxviii. 4); since Benhadad had resolved that this time he would fight against Israel in the plain.—Ver. 27. The Israelites, mustered and provided for (מְלֻכָּם: supplied with ammunition and provisions), marched to meet them, and encamped before them "like two little separate flocks of goats" (*i.e.* severed from the great herd of cattle). They had probably encamped upon slopes of the mountains by the plain of Jezreel, where they looked like two miserable flocks of goats in contrast with the Syrians who filled the land.—Ver. 28. Then the man of God (the prophet mentioned in vers. 13 and 22) came again to Ahab with the word of God: "Because the Syrians have said Jehovah is a mountain-God and not a God of the valleys, I will give this great multitude into thy hand, that ye may know that I am Jehovah."—Vers. 29, 30. After seven days the battle was fought. The Israelites smote the Syrians, a hundred thousand men in one day; and when the rest fled to Aphek, into the city, the wall fell upon twenty-seven

thousand men, ἵνα δὲ κακείνοι καὶ οὗτοι μάθωσιν, ὡς θεήλατος ἡ πληγή (Theodoret). The flying Syrians had probably some of them climbed the wall of the city to offer resistance to the Israelites in pursuit, and some of them sought to defend themselves by taking shelter behind it. And during the conflict, through the special interposition of God, the wall fell and buried the Syrians who were there. The cause of the fall is not given. Thenius assumes that it was undermined, in order to remove all idea of any miraculous working of the omnipotence of God. Benhadad himself fled into the city "room to room," i.e. from one room to another (cf. ch. xxii. 25, 2 Chron. xviii. 24).—Vers. 31, 32. In this extremity his servants made the proposal to him, that trusting in the generosity of the kings of Israel, they should go and entreat Ahab to show favour to him. They clothed themselves in mourning apparel, and put ropes on their necks, as a sign of absolute surrender, and went to Ahab, praying for the life of their king. And Ahab felt so flattered by the fact that his powerful opponent was obliged to come and entreat his favour in this humble manner, that he gave him his life, without considering how a similar act on the part of Saul had been blamed by the Lord (1 Sam. xv. 9 sqq.). "Is he still alive? He is my brother!" was his answer to Benhadad's servants.—Ver. 33. And they laid hold of these words of Ahab as a good omen (שִׁינָה), and hastened and bade him explain (i.e. bade him quickly explain); וְשִׁינָה, whether (it had been uttered) from himself, i.e. whether he had said it with all his heart (Maurer), and said, "Benhadad is thy brother." The ἀπ. λεγ. שִׁינָה, related to שִׁינָה, *exuere*, signifies *abstrahere*, *nudare*, then figuratively, *aliquid facere nude*, i.e. *sine prætextu*, or *aliquid nude*, i.e. *sine fuce atque ambagibus testari, confirmare* (cf. Fürst, *Concord.* p. 398); then in the Talmud, to give an explanation (*vid. Ges. thes.* p. 476). This is perfectly applicable here, so that there is no necessity to alter the text, even if we thereby obtained a better meaning than Thenius with his explanation, "they tore it out of him," which he takes to be equivalent to "they laid hold of him by his word" (!). Ahab thereupon ordered Benhadad to come and get up into his chariot.—Ver. 34. Benhadad, in order to keep Ahab in this favourable mood, promised to give him back at once the cities which his father had taken away from Ahab's father, and said, "Thou mayest make thyself roads in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria." There is no account

of any war between Omri and Benhadad I.; it is simply stated in ch. xv. 20 that Benhadad I. had taken away several cities in Galilee from the Israelites during the reign of Baasha. This cannot be the war intended here, however, not indeed because of the expression *וַיִּבְנֶה אֹמְרִי דָרֹם*, since *בָּנָה* might certainly be taken in a broader sense as referring to Baasha as an ancestor of Ahab, but chiefly on account of the statement that Benhadad had made himself roads in Samaria. This points to a war between Omri and Benhadad, after the building of Samaria into the capital of the kingdom, of which no account has been preserved. *וַיִּבְנֶה אֹמְרִי דָרֹם*, "to make himself roads," cannot be understood as referring either to fortifications and military posts, or to roads for cattle and free pasturage in the Syrian kingdom, since Samaria and Damascus were cities; nor can it signify the establishment of custom-houses, but only the clearing of portions of the city for the purpose of trade and free intercourse (Cler., Ges., etc.), or for the establishment of bazaars, which would occupy a whole street (Böttcher, Thenius; see also Movers, *Phönizier*, ii 3, p. 135).—"And I," said Ahab, "will let thee go upon a covenant" (a treaty on oath), and then made a covenant with him, giving him both life and liberty. Before *וַיִּבְנֶה אֹמְרִי דָרֹם* we must supply in thought *וַיִּבְנֶה אֹמְרִי דָרֹם*. This thoroughly impolitic proceeding on the part of Ahab arose not merely from a natural and inconsiderate generosity and credulity of mind (G. L. Bauer, Thenius), but from an unprincipled weakness, vanity, and blindness. To let a cruel and faithless foe go unpunished, was not only the greatest harshness to his own subjects, but open opposition to God, who had announced to him the victory, and delivered the enemy of His people into his hand.¹ Even if Ahab had no express command from God to put Benhadad to death, as Saul had in 1 Sam. xv. 3, it was his duty to punish this bitter foe of Israel with death, if only to secure quiet for his own subjects; as it was certainly to be foreseen that Ben-

¹ Clericus is correct in the explanation which he has given: "Although, therefore, this act of Ahab had all the appearance of clemency, it was not an act of true clemency, which ought not to be shown towards violent aggressors, who if released will do much more injury than before, as Benhadad really did. God had given the victory to Ahab, and delivered the guilty king into his hands, that he might inflict punishment upon him, not that he might treat him kindly. And Ahab, who had allowed so many prophets to be slain by his wife Jezebel, had no great clemency at other times."

hadad would not keep the treaty which had been wrung from him by force, as was indeed very speedily proved (see ch. xxii. 1).

Vers. 35–43. *The verdict of God upon Ahab's conduct towards Benhadad.*—Vers. 35, 36. A disciple of the prophets received instructions from God, to announce to the king that God would punish him for letting Benhadad go, and to do this, as Nathan had formerly done in the case of David (2 Sam. xii. 1 sqq.), by means of a symbolical action, whereby the king was led to pronounce sentence upon himself. The disciple of the prophets said to his companion, “in the word of Jehovah,” *i.e.* by virtue of a revelation from God (see at ch. xiii. 2), “Smite me;” and when the friend refused to smite him, he announced to him that because of this disobedience to the voice of the Lord, after his departure from him a lion would meet him and smite him, *i.e.* would kill him; a threat which was immediately fulfilled. This occurrence shows with how severe a punishment all opposition to the commandments of God to the prophets was followed, as a warning for others; just as in the similar occurrence in ch. xiii. 24.—Ver. 37. The disciple of the prophets then asked another to smite him, and he smote him, “smiting and wounding,” *i.e.* so that he not only smote, but also wounded him (*vul.* Ewald, § 280, *a*). He wished to be smitten and wounded, not to disguise himself, or that he might be able to appeal loudly to the king for help to obtain his rights, as though he had suffered some wrong (Ewald), nor merely to assume the deceptive appearance of a warrior returning from the battle (Thenius), but to show to Ahab symbolically what he had to expect from Benhadad whom he had released (C. a Lap., Calm., etc.).—Ver. 38. With these wounds he placed himself in the king's path, and disguised himself (שִׁחַתָּה as in 1 Sam. xxviii. 8) by a bandage over his eyes. שִׁחַתָּה does not mean ashes (Syr., Vulg., Luth., etc.), but corresponds to the Chaldee שִׁחַתָּה, head-band, *τελαμών* (LXX.).—Vers. 39, 40. When the king passed by, he cried out to him and related the following fictitious tale: He had gone to the war, and a man had come aside to him (וַיָּבֹא as in Ex. iii. 3, Judg. xiv. 8, etc.), and had given a man (a prisoner) into his care with this command, that he was to watch him, and if he should be missing he was to answer for his life with his own life, or to pay a talent of silver (as a punishment). The rest may be easily imagined, namely the request

to be saved from this punishment. Ahab answered (ver. 40), כִּי תִשְׁפֹּט, "thus thy sentence, thou hast decided," i.e. thou hast pronounced thine own sentence, and must endure the punishment stated.—Vers. 41, 42. Then the disciple of the prophets drew the bandage quickly from his eyes, so that the king recognised him as a prophet, and announced to him the word of the Lord: "Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man of my ban (i.e. Benhadad, who has fallen under my ban), thy life shall stand for his life, and thy people for his people," i.e. the destruction to which Benhadad was devoted will fall upon thee and thy people. The expression אִישׁ־חֲרָמִי (man of my ban) showed Ahab clearly enough what ought to have been done with Benhadad. A person on whom the ban was pronounced was to be put to death (Lev. xxvii. 29).—Ver 43. The king therefore went home, and returned sullen (סָר, from סָרַר) and morose to Samaria.

CHAP. XXI. THE MURDER AND ROBBERY OF NABOTH.

After these events Ahab was seized with such a desire for a vineyard which was situated near his palace at Jezreel, that when Naboth, the owner of the vineyard, refused to part with his paternal inheritance, he became thoroughly dejected, until his wife Jezebel paved the way for the forcible seizure of the desired possession by the shameful execution of Naboth (vers. 1-15). But when Ahab was preparing to take possession of the vineyard, Elijah came to meet him with the announcement, that both he and his wife would be visited by the Lord with a bloody death for this murder and robbery, and that his idolatry would be punished with the extermination of all his house (vers. 16-26). Ahab was so affected by this, that he humbled himself before God; whereupon the Lord told Elijah, that the threatened judgment should not burst upon his house till after Ahab's death (vers. 27-29).

Vers. 1-15.—Ahab wanted to obtain possession of the vineyard of Naboth, which was in Jezreel (אֶשְׂרָא refers to עֵשְׂרָא), near the palace of the king, either in exchange for another vineyard or for money, that he might make a vegetable garden of it. From the fact that Ahab is called the king of Samaria we may infer that Jezreel, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. xix. 18), was only a summer residence of the king.—Ver. 3. Naboth refused

to part with the vineyard, because it was the inheritance of his fathers, that is to say, on religious grounds (חֵלֶלָה לִי כִּירוֹתָהּ), because the sale of a paternal inheritance was forbidden in the law (Lev. xxv. 23-28; Num. xxxvi. 7 sqq.). He was therefore not merely at liberty as a personal right to refuse the king's proposal, but bound by the commandment of God.—Ver. 4. Instead of respecting this tender feeling of shrinking from the transgression of the law and desisting from his coveting, Ahab went home, *i.e.* to Samaria (cf. ver. 8), sullen and morose (קָעָה as in ch. xx. 43), lay down upon his bed, turned his face (*viz.* to the wall; cf. 2 Kings xx. 2)—“after the manner of sorrowful persons, who shrink from and refuse all conversation, and even the sight of others” (Seb. Schmidt)—and did not eat. This childish mode of giving expression to his displeasure at Naboth's refusal to comply with his wish, shows very clearly that Ahab was a man sold under sin (ver. 20), who only wanted the requisite energy to display the wickedness of his heart in vigorous action.—Vers. 5-7. When Jezebel learned the cause of Ahab's ill-humour, she said to him, “Thou, dost thou now exercise royal authority over Israel?” אָמָר is placed first for the sake of emphasis, and the sentence is to be taken as an ironical question, as it has been by the LXX. “I (if thou hast not courage enough to act) will procure thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”—Vers. 8, 9. The shameless woman then wrote a letter in the name of Ahab, sealed it below with the royal seal, which probably bore the king's signature and was stamped upon the writing instead of signing the name, as is done at the present day among Arabs, Turks, and Persians (*vid.* Paulsen, *Reg. der Morgenl.* p. 295 sqq.), to give it the character of a royal command (cf. Esther viii. 13, Dan. vi. 17), and sent this letter (the *Chethib* חֶתֶב is correct, and the *Keri* has arisen from a misunderstanding) to the elders and nobles of his town (*i.e.* the members of the magistracy, Deut. xvi. 18), who lived near Naboth, and therefore had an opportunity to watch his mode of life, and appeared to be the most suitable persons to institute the charge that was to be brought against him. The letter ran thus: “Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth at the head of the people, and set two worthless men opposite to him, that they may give evidence against him: Thou hast blasphemed God and king; and lead him out and stone him, that he may die.” Jezebel ordered the fasting for a sign, as though some public

crime or heavy load of guilt rested upon the city, for which it was necessary that it should humble itself before God (1 Sam. vii. 6). The intention was, that at the very outset the appearance of justice should be given to the legal process about to be instituted in the eyes of all the citizens, and the stamp of veracity impressed upon the crime of which Naboth was to be accused. הוֹשִׁיבוּ . . . בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם, "seat him at the head of the people," i.e. bring him to the court of justice as a defendant before all the people. The expression may be explained from the fact, that a sitting of the elders was appointed for judicial business, in which Naboth and the witnesses who were to accuse him of blasphemy took part seated. To preserve the appearance of justice, two witnesses were appointed, according to the law in Deut. xvii. 6, 7, xix. 15, Num. xxxv. 30; but worthless men, as at the trial of Jesus (Matt. xxvi. 60). בִּרְכּוּ אֱלֹהִים, to bless God, i.e. to bid Him farewell, to dismiss Him, as in Job ii. 9, equivalent to blaspheming God. God and king are mentioned together, like God and prince in Ex. xxii. 27, to make it possible to accuse Naboth of transgressing this law, and to put him to death as a blasphemer of God, according to Deut. xiii. 11 and xvii. 5, where the punishment of stoning is awarded to idolatry as a practical denial of God. Blaspheming the king is not to be taken as a second crime to be added to the blasphemy of God; but blaspheming the king, as the visible representative of God, was *eo ipso* also blaspheming God.—Vers. 11-13. The elders of Jezreel executed this command without delay; a striking proof both of deep moral corruption and of slavish fear of the tyranny of the ruthless queen.—Vers. 14, 15. When the report of Naboth's execution was brought to her, she called upon Ahab to take possession of his vineyard (שָׁרַף = שָׂרַף, Deut. ii. 24). As Naboth's sons were put to death at the same time, according to 2 Kings ix. 26, the king was able to confiscate his property; not, indeed, on any rule laid down in the Mosaic law, but according to a principle involved in the very idea of high treason. Since, for example, in the case of blasphemy the property of the criminal was forfeited to the Lord as *cherem* (Deut. xiii. 16), the property of traitors was regarded as forfeited to the king.

Vers. 16-26. But when Ahab went down to Jezreel to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, Elijah came to meet him by the command of God, with the word of the Lord,

"Hast thou murdered and also taken possession?" The question served to sharpen his conscience, since Ahab was obliged to admit the fact. **אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁמְרֹן** means "who lives at Samaria," for when Elijah came to meet him, Ahab was in Jezreel. Elijah then said to him still further: "Thus saith the Lord: In the place where the dogs have licked the blood of Naboth, will they also lick thine, yea, thy blood." **וְנָם אֲחֵהָ** serves as an emphatic repetition of the suffix (cf. Ges. § 121, 3). This threat was only so far fulfilled upon Ahab, from the compassion of God, and in consequence of his humbling himself under the divine judgment (vers. 27–29), that dogs licked his blood at Samaria when the carriage was washed in which he had died (ch. xxii. 38); but it was literally fulfilled in the case of his son Joram, whose corpse was cast into Naboth's piece of ground (2 Kings ix. 25, 26).—Ver. 20. Ahab answered, "Hast thou found me (met with me), O mine enemy?" (not, hast thou ever found me thine enemy?—Vulg., Luth.) i.e. dost thou come to meet me again, mine enemy? He calls Elijah his enemy, to take the sting from the prophet's threat as an utterance caused by personal enmity. But Elijah fearlessly replied, "I have found (thee), because thou sellest thyself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord." He then announced to him, in vers. 21, 22, the extermination of his house, and to Jezebel, as the principal sinner, the most ignominious end (ver. 23). **הִתְמַכֵּר לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרָע**, to sell one's self to do evil, i.e. to give one's self to evil so as to have no will of one's own, to make one's self the slave of evil (cf. ver. 25, 2 Kings xvii. 17). The consequence of this is *πεπρασθαι ὑπὸ τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ* (Rom. vii. 14), sin exercising unlimited power over the man who gives himself up to it as a slave. For vers. 21, 22, see ch. xiv. 10, 11, xv. 29, 30, xvi. 3, 12, 13. The threat concerning Jezebel (ver. 23) was literally fulfilled, according to 2 Kings ix. 30 sqq. **הַל**, written defectively for **הָלַל**, as in 2 Sam. xx. 15, is properly the open space by the town-wall, *pomærium*. Instead of **הַל** we have **בְּהֶלֶק** in the repetition of this threat in 2 Kings ix. 10, 36, 37, and consequently Thenius and others propose to alter the **הַל** here. But there is no necessity for this, as **בְּהֶלֶק**, on the portion, i.e. the town-land, of Jezreel (not, in the field at Jezreel), is only a more general epithet denoting the locality, and **הַל** is proved to be the original word by the LXX.—Vers. 25 and 26 contain a reflection on the part of the historian concerning Ahab's ungodly

conduct, whereby he brought such an ignominious end upon himself and his house. 'רַק לֹא הָיָה וְאֵן, "only there has not been (one) like Ahab," i.e. there was no one else like Ahab, "who sold himself," etc. הִסְתִּירָהּ for הִסְתִּירָהּ, from סָוֵה, to entice, to seduce or lead astray (cf. Ewald, § 114, *a*, and Ges. § 72, Anm. 6). וַיַּחֲבֵד, and he acted abominably. *Amorites*: for Canaanites, as in Gen. xv. 16, etc.

Vers. 27-29. This terrible threat made such an impression upon Ahab, that he felt deep remorse, and for a time at least was sincerely penitent. Rending the clothes, putting on the mourning garment of hair (שֵׁשׁ), and fasting, are frequently mentioned as external signs of humiliation before God or of deep mourning on account of sin. וַיֵּלֶךְ אֵם, he walked about lightly (slowly), like one in deep trouble. This repentance was neither hypocritical, nor purely external; but it was sincere even if it was not lasting and produced no real conversion. For the Lord Himself acknowledged it to be humiliation before Him (ver. 29), and said to Elijah, that because of it He would not bring the threatened calamity upon Ahab's house in his own lifetime, but only in the days of his son. וַאֲבִיָּא for אָבִי, as in ver. 21.

CHAP. XXII. WAR OF AHAB AND JEHOSEPHAT AGAINST THE SYRIANS,
AND DEATH OF AHAB. REIGNS OF JEHOSEPHAT OF JUDAH AND
AHAZIAH OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 1-40. ALLIED CAMPAIGN OF AHAB AND JEHOSEPHAT AGAINST THE SYRIANS AT RAMOTH, AND DEATH OF AHAB (compare 2 Chron. xviii. 2-34).—Ver. 1. "And they rested three years; there was no war between Aram and Israel." וַיֵּשְׁבִי here is to keep quiet, to undertake nothing, as in Judg. v. 17, etc. The subject to וַיֵּשְׁבִי is Aram and Israel mentioned in the second clause. The length of time given here points back to the end of the war described in ch. xx.—Vers. 2-4. In the third year (not necessarily "towards the end of it," as Thenius supposes, for Jehoshaphat's visit preceded the renewal of the war) Jehoshaphat visited the king of Israel, with whom he had already formed a marriage alliance by marrying his son to Ahab's daughter (2 Chron. xviii. 1; 2 Kings viii. 18). Ahab then said to his servants that the king of Syria had kept the city of *Ramoth* in Gilead (probably situated on the site of the present *Szalt*: see at

Deut. iv. 43), which he ought to have given up, according to the conditions of the peace in ch. xx. 34, and asked Jehoshaphat whether he would go with him to the war against Ramoth, which the latter promised to do. "I as thou, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses;" *i.e.* I am at thy service with the whole of my military power. In the place of the last words we have therefore in the Chronicles *וְיָמְךָ בְּמִלְחָמָה*, "I am with thee in the war," *i.e.* I will assist thee in the war.—Vers. 5, 6. But as Jehoshaphat wished also to inquire the word of the Lord concerning the war, Ahab gathered together about 400 prophets, who all predicted as out of one mouth a prosperous result to the campaign. These 400 prophets are neither the 400 prophets of Asherah who had not appeared upon Carmel when Elijah was there (ch. xviii. 19, 20), nor prophets of Baal, as some of the earlier commentators supposed, since Ahab could not inquire of them *אֲתִדְבֵּר יְהוָה*. On the other hand, they were not "true prophets of Jehovah and disciples of the prophets" (Cler., *Then.*), but prophets of the Jehovah worshipped under the image of an ox, who practised prophesying as a trade without any call from God, and even if they were not in the pay of the idolatrous kings of Israel, were at any rate in their service. For Jehoshaphat did not recognise them as genuine prophets of Jehovah, but inquired whether there was not such a prophet still in existence (ver. 7), that they might inquire the will of the Lord of him (*יִחְזֹק*).—Ver. 8. Ahab then named to him one, but one whom he hated, because he never prophesied good concerning him, but only evil,¹ namely, *Micah* the son of Jimlah. Josephus and the Rabbins suppose him to have been the prophet, whose name is not given, who had condemned Ahab in the previous war for setting Benhadad at liberty (ch. xx. 35 sqq.). But there is no foundation for this, and it is mere conjecture. At any rate, Ahab had already come to know Micah as a prophet of evil, and, as is evident from ver. 26, had had him imprisoned on account of an unwelcome prophecy. Ahab's dislike to this prophet had its root in the belief, which was connected with heathen notions of prophecy and conjuring, that the prophets stood in such a relation to the Deity that the latter necessarily fulfilled their will; a belief which had arisen from the fact that the predictions of true prophets always came to pass (see at Num. xxii. 6 and 17).

¹ Just as Agamemnon says to Calchas in *Il.* iv. 106: *μάρτυς κακῶν, οὐ πάντοτε μοι τὸ κρήνην εἶπας*, κ.τ.λ.

—Ver. 9. By Jehoshaphat's desire, Ahab nevertheless sent a chamberlain (סָרִיס; see at 1 Sam. viii. 15 and Gen. xxxvii. 36) to fetch Micah (מִיכָה, bring quickly).—Vers. 10-12. In the meantime the prophets of the calves continued to prophesy success before the two kings, who sat upon thrones "clothed in robes," i.e. in royal attire, upon a floor in front of the gate of Samaria. זֶרֶן, a threshing-floor, i.e. a levelled place in the open air. In order to give greater effect to their announcement, one of them, named *Zedekiyah* the son of Cnaanah, made himself iron horns, probably iron spikes held upon the head (Thenius), and said, "With these wilt thou thrust down Aram even to destruction." This symbolical action was an embodiment of the figure used by Moses in the blessing of Joseph (Deut. xxxiii. 17): "Buffalo horns are his (Joseph's) horns, with them he thrusts down nations" (*vid.* Hengstenberg, *Beitr.* ii. p. 131), and was intended to transfer to Ahab in the case before them that splendid promise which applied to the tribe of Ephraim. But the pseudo-prophet overlooked the fact that the fulfilment of the whole of the blessing of Moses was dependent upon fidelity to the Lord. All the rest of the prophets adopted the same tone, saying, "Go to Ramoth, and prosper," i.e. and thou wilt prosper. (On this use of two imperatives see Ges. § 130, 2).—Vers. 13, 14. The messenger who fetched Micah tried on the way to persuade him to prophesy success to the king as the other prophets had done; but Micah replied with a solemn oath, that he would only speak what Jehovah said to him.

Vers. 15-28. *Micah's prophecy concerning the war, and his testimony against the lying prophets.*—Vers. 15, 16. When Micah had come into the presence of the king, he replied to his question, "Shall we go against Ramoth?" etc., in just the same words as the pseudo-prophets, to show the king how he would speak if he were merely guided by personal considerations, as the others were. From the verbal agreement in his reply, and probably also from the tone in which he spoke, Ahab perceived that his words were ironical, and adjured him to speak only truth in the name of Jehovah. Micah then told him what he had seen in the spirit (ver. 17): "I saw all Israel scatter itself upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd;" and then added the word of the Lord: "These have no master; let them return every one to his house in peace." That is to say, Ahab would fall in the war against Ramoth in Gilead, and his army scatter itself with-

out a leader upon the mountains of Gilead, and then every one would return home, without being pursued and slain by the enemy. Whilst Zedekiyah attempted to give greater emphasis to his prophecy by symbolically transferring to Ahab's enterprise the success predicted by Moses, Micah, on the other hand, showed to the king out of the law what would really take place in the intended war, namely, that very state of things which Moses before his departure sought to avert from Israel, by the prayer that the Lord would set a man over the congregation to lead them out and in, that the congregation might not become as sheep that have no shepherd (Num. xxvii. 16, 17).—Ver. 18. But although Ahab had asked for a true word of the Lord, yet he endeavoured to attribute the unfavourable prophecy to Micah's personal enmity, saying to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell thee that he prophesies nothing good concerning me, but only evil (misfortune)?"—Vers. 19 sqq. Micah was not led astray, however, by this, but disclosed to him by a further revelation the hidden ground of the false prophecy of his 400 prophets. לָכֵן שָׁמַע יְהוָה, "therefore, sc. because thou thinkest so, hear the word of Jehovah: I saw the Lord sit upon His throne, and all the army of heaven stand around Him (עָמְדוּ לְפָנָיו as in Gen. xviii. 8, etc.) on His right hand and on His left. And the Lord said, Who will persuade Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth in Gilead? and one spake so, the other so; and the spirit came forth (from the ranks of the rest), stood before Jehovah, and said, I will persuade him. . . I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And He (Jehovah) said, Persuade, and thou wilt also be able; go forth and do so. And now Jehovah has put a lying spirit into the mouth of all his prophets; but Jehovah (Himself) has spoken evil (through me) concerning thee." The vision described by Micah was not merely a subjective drapery introduced by the prophet, but a simple communication of the real inward vision by which the fact had been revealed to him, that the prophecy of those 400 prophets was inspired by a lying spirit. The spirit (רוּחַ) which inspired these prophets as a lying spirit is neither Satan, nor any evil spirit whatever, but, as the definite article and the whole of the context show, the personified spirit of prophecy, which is only so far a πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον τῆς πλάνης (Zech. xiii. 2; 1 John iv. 6) and under the influence of Satan as it works as רוּחַ שֶׁקֶר in accordance with the will of God. For even the predictions of the false prophets, as we may see from the passage before us,

and also from Zech. xiii. 2 and the scriptural teaching in other passages concerning the spiritual principle of evil, were not mere inventions of human reason and fancy; but the false prophets as well as the true were governed by a supernatural spiritual principle, and, according to divine appointment, were under the influence of the evil spirit in the service of falsehood, just as the true prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit in the service of the Lord. The manner in which the supernatural influence of the lying spirit upon the false prophets is brought out in Micah's vision is, that the spirit of prophecy (רוח הנבואה) offers itself to deceive Ahab as רוח שקר in the false prophets. Jehovah sends this spirit, inasmuch as the deception of Ahab has been inflicted upon him as a judgment of God for his unbelief. But there is no statement here to the effect that this lying spirit proceeded from Satan, because the object of the prophet was simply to bring out the working of God in the deception practised upon Ahab by his prophets.—The words of Jehovah, "Persuade Ahab, thou wilt be able," and "Jehovah has put a lying spirit," etc., are not to be understood as merely expressing the permission of God, as the fathers and the earlier theologians suppose. According to the Scriptures, God does work evil, but without therefore willing it and bringing forth sin. The prophet's view is founded upon this thought: Jehovah has ordained that Ahab, being led astray by a prediction of his prophets inspired by the spirit of lies, shall enter upon the war, that he may find therein the punishment of his ungodliness. As he would not listen to the word of the Lord in the mouth of His true servants, God had given him up (παρέδωκεν, Rom. i. 24, 26, 28) in his unbelief to the working of the spirits of lying. But that this did not destroy the freedom of the human will is evident from the expression הִפְתֵּהוּ, "thou canst persuade him," and still more clearly from גַּם הִכָּל, "thou wilt also be able," since they both presuppose the possibility of resistance to temptation on the part of man.

Zedekiah was so enraged at this unveiling of the spirit of lying by which the pseudo-prophets were impelled, that he smote Micah upon the cheek, and said (ver. 24): "Where did the Spirit of Jehovah depart from me, to speak to thee?" To אֵיפֹה the Chronicles add as an explanation, הֵרִירָה: "by what way had he gone from me?" (cf. 2 Kings iii. 8, and Ewald, § 326, a.) Zedekiah was conscious that he had not invented his prophecy himself, and therefore it was that he rose up with such audacity

against Micah; but he only proved that it was not the Spirit of God which inspired him. If he had been inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, he would not have thought it necessary to try and give effect to his words by rude force, but he would have left the defence of his cause quietly to the Lord, as Micah did, who calmly replied to the zealot thus (ver. 25): "Thou wilt see it (that the Spirit of Jehovah had departed from thee) on the day when thou shalt go from chamber to chamber to hide thyself" (הִתְכַּוֵּה for הִתְכַּוֵּה, see Ges. § 75, Anm. 21). This was probably fulfilled at the close of the war, when Jezebel or the friends of Ahab made the pseudo-prophets suffer for the calamitous result; although there is nothing said about this in our history, which confines itself to the main facts.—Vers. 26, 27. But Ahab had Micah taken back to Amon the commander of the city, and to Joash the king's son, with the command to put him in prison and to feed him with bread and water of affliction, till he came safe back (בְּשָׁלוֹם) from the war. From the expression הִשְׁבִּיחֵהוּ, "lead him back," it evidently follows that Micah had been fetched from the commander of the city, who had no doubt kept him in custody, as the city-prison was probably in his house. The opposite cannot be inferred from the words "put him into the prison;" for this command, when taken in connection with what follows, simply enjoins a more severe imprisonment.—Ver. 28. In his consciousness of the divine truth of his announcement, Micah left the king with these words: "If thou come back safe, Jehovah has not spoken by me. Hear it, all ye nations." עַמִּים does not mean people, for it is only in the antique language of the Pentateuch that the word has this meaning, but nations; and Micah thereby invokes not only the persons present as witnesses of the truth of his words, but the nations generally, Israel and the surrounding nations, who were to discern the truth of his word from the events which would follow (see at Mic. i. 2).

Vers. 29–40. *The issue of the war, and death of Ahab.*—Ver. 29. Ahab, disregarding Micah's prophecy, went on with the expedition, and was even joined by Jehoshaphat, of whom we should have thought that, after what had occurred, he at any rate would have drawn back. He was probably deterred by false shame, however, from retracting the unconditional promise of help which he had given to Ahab, merely in consequence of a prophetic utterance, which Ahab had brought against his

own person from Micah's subjective dislike. But Jehoshaphat narrowly escaped paying the penalty for it with his life (ver. 32), and on his fortunate return to Jerusalem had to listen to a severe reproof from the prophet Jehu in consequence (2 Chron. xix. 2).—Vers. 30, 31. And even Ahab could not throw off a certain fear of the fulfilment of Micah's prophecy. He therefore resolved to go to the battle in disguise, that he might not be recognised by the enemy. **וְהִתְחַשְׁשׁ נָא** ("disguise myself and go into the battle," i.e. I will go into the battle in disguise): an *infin. absol.*,—a broken but strong form of expression, which is frequently used for the imperative, but very rarely for the first person of the voluntative (cf. Ewald, §. 328, c), and which is probably employed here to express the anxiety that impelled Ahab to take so much trouble to ensure his own safety. (Luther has missed the meaning in his version; in the Chronicles, on the contrary, it is correctly given.) **וְאַמְתָּה לְבִשְׁךָ**, "but do thou put on thy clothes." These words are not to be taken as a command, but simply in this sense: "thou mayest (canst) put on thy (royal) dress, since there is no necessity for thee to take any such precautions as I have to take." There is no ground for detecting any cunning, *vafrities*, on the part of Ahab in these words, as some of the older commentators have done, as though he wished thereby to divert the predicted evil from himself to Jehoshaphat. But we may see very clearly that Ahab had good reason to be anxious about his life, from the command of the Syrian king to the captains of his war-chariots (ver. 31) to fight chiefly against the king of Israel. We cannot infer from this, however, that Ahab was aware of the command. The measure adopted by him may be sufficiently accounted for from his fear of the fulfilment of Micah's evil prophecy, to which there may possibly have been added some personal offence that had been given on his part to the Syrian king in connection with the negotiations concerning the surrender of Ramoth, which had no doubt preceded the war. The thirty-two commanders of the war-chariots and cavalry are, no doubt, the commanders who had taken the place of the thirty-two kings (ch. xxi. 24). "Fight not against small and great, but against the king of Israel only," i.e. endeavour above all others to fight against the king of Israel and to slay him.—Vers. 32, 33. And when the leaders of the war-chariots saw Jehoshaphat in the battle in his royal clothes, they took him

for the king of Israel (Ahab), and pressed upon him. Then Jehoshaphat cried out; and from this they perceived that he was not the king of Israel, and turned away from him. וַיִּפְּקֹהוּ אֲחָב וַיִּסְרֻהוּ וַיִּסְרֻהוּ וַיִּסְרֻהוּ, "and they thought, it is only (*i.e.* no other than) the king of Israel." יִסְרוּ עָלָיו, "they bent upon him." Instead of this we have in the Chronicles יִסְבּוּ עָלָיו, "they surrounded him," and Thenius proposes to alter our text to this; but there is no necessity for doing so, as סָבַר also occurs in a similar sense and connection in ch. xx. 39. How far Jehoshaphat was saved by his crying out, is not precisely stated. He probably cried out to his followers to come to his aid, from which the Syrians discovered that he was not the king of Israel, whom they were in search of. The chronicler adds (ch. ii. 18, 31): "and the Lord helped him and turned them off from him;" thus believingly tracing the rescue of the king to its higher causality, though without our having any right to infer from this that Jehoshaphat cried aloud to God for help, which is not implied in the words of the Chronicles.—Ver. 34. But notwithstanding the precaution he had taken, Ahab did not escape the judgment of God. "A man drew his bow in his simplicity" (לְחִמּוֹ as in 2 Sam. xv. 11), *i.e.* without trying to hit any particular man, "and shot the king of Israel between the skirts and the coat of mail." וַיִּכּוּתוּ הָאֲרָמִים are "joints by which the iron thorax was attached to the hanging skirt, which covered the abdomen" (Cler.). The true coat of mail covered only the breast, to somewhere about the last rib; and below this it had an appendage (skirts) consisting of moveable joints. Between this appendage and the true coat of mail there was a groove through which the arrow passed, and, entering the abdomen, inflicted upon the king a mortal wound; so that he said to his charioteer: הֲפֹךְ יָדְךָ, *verte manus tuas*, *i.e.* turn round (cf. 2 Kings ix. 23). The *Chethib* יָדְךָ (plural) is the only correct reading, since the driver held the reins in both his hands. כִּי הִתְחַלֵּיתִי: for I am wounded. —Ver. 35. "And the conflict ascended," *i.e.* became more violent. The use of the verb עָלָה in this sense may be accounted for on the supposition that it is founded upon the figure of a rising stream, which becomes more and more impetuous the higher it rises (*vid.* Isa. viii. 7). "And the king was stationed (*i.e.* remained or kept himself in an upright posture) upon the chariot before the Syrians," that he might not dishearten his soldiers, "and died in the evening, and poured the

blood of the wounds in the middle hollow (פִּי) of the chariot." —Ver. 36. Towards sunset the cry went through the army (הַצְבָּא, the army drawn up in battle array), "Every one into his city and into his land!"—In ver. 37 the historian shows how the word of the Lord was fulfilled in the case of Ahab. "Thus the king died and came to Samaria:" equivalent to, thus the king reached Samaria dead; and he was buried there. —Ver. 38. When they washed the chariot at the pool of Samaria, the dogs licked his blood, while the harlots were bathing (in the pool). וְהַזְנוּתָּ הַזֵּנִי is a circumstantial clause, and זָנַי means to bathe, as in Ex. ii. 5. This explanation, which is sustained by the grammar and is the only tenable one, disposes of the several arbitrary interpretations of these words, together with the emendations of the text of which Thenius is so fond. In this way was the word of the Lord through Elijah (ch. xxi. 19) and the unknown prophet (ch. xx. 42) fulfilled; also the prediction of Micah (ver. 17). Ahab had paid the penalty with his own life for sparing the life of Benhadad (ch. xx. 42), and his blood was licked up by the dogs (ch. xxi. 19). The fact that the dogs licked up the blood and the harlots were bathing in the pool, when the chariot that was stained with the blood of Ahab was being washed, is mentioned as a sign of the ignominious contempt which was heaped upon him at his death. —Vers. 39, 40. Close of Ahab's history. We have no further account of his buildings. "The ivory palace," i.e. the palace inlaid with ivory, he had probably built in his capital Samaria (cf. Amos iii. 15).

Vers. 41-50. REIGN OF JEHOSEPHAT OF JUDAH.—The account of this in the books before us is a very condensed one. Beside the two campaigns in which he joined with Ahab and Joram of Israel against the Syrians and Moabites, and which are described in the history of the kingdom of Israel (ch. xxii. 1-35 and 2 Kings iii.), we have simply a short notice of his attempt to restore the trade with Ophir, and a general statement of the spirit of his reign; whereas we learn from the extract preserved in the Chronicles from the annals of the kings, that he also carried on a victorious war against the Edomites and Ammonites (2 Chron. xx.), and did a great deal to promote the spread of the knowledge of the law among his people, and to carry out the restoration of a better administration of justice, and to

improve the condition of the army (2 Chron. xvii and xix).—Vers. 41–44, which give the age of Jehoshaphat when he ascended the throne, and the duration and character of his reign, are also found with slight deviations in 2 Chron. xx. 31–33, in the closing summary of the history of his reign.—Ver. 43. “He walked entirely in the way of his father Asa and departed not from it, to do what was well-pleasing to the Lord,” whereas Asa’s heart had become more estranged from the Lord in the last years of his reign (see ch. xv. 18 sqq.).—On the worship of the high places (ver. 43), see at ch. xv. 14.—Ver. 44. He maintained peace with the king of Israel, *i.e.* with every one of the Israelitish kings who were contemporaneous with him, *viz.* Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram, whereas hitherto the two kingdoms had assumed an attitude of hostility towards each other. Even if this friendly bearing towards Israel was laudable in itself, Jehoshaphat went beyond the bounds of what was allowable, since he formed a marriage alliance with the house of Ahab, by letting his son Joram marry a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (2 Chron. xviii. 1).—Ver. 45. The brave deeds (הַנְּבוֹנִיּוֹת) which he performed include both his efforts to strengthen his kingdom, partly by raising fortifications and organizing the military force, and partly by instructing the people in the law and improving the administration of justice (2 Chron. xvii. 7–19 and xix. 4–11), and also the wars which he waged, *viz.* the expeditions already mentioned.—For ver. 46 see ch. xv. 12.—Ver. 47. “There was (then) no (real) king in Edom; a vicegerent was king,” *i.e.* governed the country. This remark is introduced here merely on account of what follows, namely, to show how it was that Jehoshaphat was able to attempt to restore the maritime trade with Ophir. If we observe this connection between the verse before us and what follows, we cannot infer from it, as Ewald does (*Gesch.* iii. pp. 464 and 474 sqq.), that the Edomites with Egyptian help had forced from Rehoboam both their liberty and also their right to have a king of their own blood, and had remained in this situation till Jehoshaphat completely subjugated them again. (See the remarks on ch. xi. 21, 22.) All that can be gathered from 2 Chron. xx. is, that the Edomites, in league with the Ammonites and other desert tribes, made an incursion into Judah, and therefore tried to throw off the supremacy of Judah, but did not succeed in their attempt.—Vers. 48, 49. The brief notice concerning Jehoshaphat’s attempt to

build Tarshish ships (for the word, see p. 150) for the voyage to Ophir is expanded in 2 Chron. xx. 36, 37, where we learn that Jehoshaphat had allied himself with Ahaziah of Israel for this purpose, and that the prophet Eliezer predicted the destruction of his ships on account of this alliance. When the ships had been broken in pieces in Eziongeber, no doubt by a storm, Ahaziah made this fresh proposal to him: "Let my people sail with thy people;" but Jehoshaphat would not. Ahaziah evidently wanted to persuade Jehoshaphat to make another attempt, after the destruction of the ships which were first built; but Jehoshaphat did not agree to it any more, because it was impossible for him, after the fulfilment of Eliezer's prediction, to expect a more favourable result. Thus the two accounts can be harmonized in a very simple manner, with the exception of the words "to go to Tarshish," which we find in the Chronicles in the place of "to go to Ophir," the reading in our text, and which sprang from an erroneous interpretation of the expression "ships of Tarshish" (see above, p. 150). The *Chethib* עֶשֶׂר is an error of the pen for עֶשֶׂה (*Keri*); but *לְשֹׁנָה* (*Chethib*) is not to be altered into *לְשֹׁנֵיהֶם*, since the construction of a singular verb with the subject following in the plural is by no means rare (*vid.* Ewald, § 317, a). On Eziongeber and Ophir, see at ch. ix. 26 and 28.

Vers. 51-53. REIGN OF AHAZIAH OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 51. For the *datum* "in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat," see at 2 Kings i. 17.—Vers. 52, 53. Ahaziah walked in the way of his father and his mother, who had introduced the worship of Baal into the kingdom, and in the way of Jeroboam, who had set up the calves (*cf.* ch. xvi. 30-33).—In ver. 53 it is again expressly added, that he adored and worshipped Baal, as in ch. xvi. 31.—With this general description of his character not only is the chapter brought to a close, but the first book of Kings also,—very unsuitably, however, since the further account of Ahaziah's reign and of his death is given in ch. i. of the following book. It would have been incomparably more suitable to commence a fresh chapter with ver. 52, and indeed to commence the second book there also.

SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.

CHAP. I. AHAZIAH'S ILLNESS. HIS DEATH ANNOUNCED BY ELIJAH.



AFTER the Moabites had rebelled against Israel, Ahaziah became sick in consequence of a fall through a grating in his upper room, and sent messengers to Ekron to consult the idol Baalzebub concerning the result of his illness. By the command of God, however, Elijah met the messengers on the road, and told them that the king would die (vers. 1-8). When Ahaziah sent soldiers to fetch Elijah, the messengers were miraculously slain on two successive occasions, and it was only his humiliation before the prophet which saved the third captain and his host from sharing a similar fate; whereupon Elijah went with him to the king, and repeated the threat already announced on account of his idolatry, which was very soon fulfilled (vers. 9-18).

Vers. 1-8. After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel (ver. 1). The Moabites, who had been subjugated by David (2 Sam. viii. 2), had remained tributary to the kingdom of the ten tribes after the division of the kingdom. But when Israel was defeated by the Syrians at Ramoth in the time of Ahab, they took advantage of this defeat and the weakening of the Israelitish power in the country to the east of the Jordan to shake off the yoke of the Israelites, and very soon afterwards attempted an invasion of the kingdom of Judah, in alliance with the Edomites and other tribes of the desert, which terminated, however, in a great defeat, though it contributed to the maintenance of their independence. For further remarks, see at ch. iii. 4 sqq.—Ver. 2. Ahaziah could not do anything to subjugate the Moabites any further, since he was very soon afterwards taken grievously ill. He fell through the grating in his upper room at Samaria. הַסִּבְכָּה, the grating, is either a window

furnished with a shutter of lattice-work, or a door of lattice-work in the upper room of the palace, but hardly a grating in the floor of the *Aliyah* for the purpose of letting light into the lower rooms, as the Rabbins supposed. On account of this misfortune, Ahaziah resorted to the Ekronitish *Baalzebub* to obtain an oracle concerning the result of his illness. בַּעַל־זְבוּב, *i.e.* Fly-Baal, was not merely the "avertter of swarms of insects," like the Ζεὺς ἀπομυῖος, μυῖαγρος of Elis (Ges., Winer, Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 175), since "the Fly-God cannot have received his name as the enemy of flies, like *lucus a non lucendo*," but was Μῦια θεός (LXX, Joseph.), *i.e.* God represented as a fly, as a fly-idol, to which the name *Myiodes*, gnat-like, in Plin. *h. n.* xxix. 6, clearly points, and as a god of the sun and of summer must have stood in a similar relation to the flies to that of the oracle-god Apollo, who both sent diseases and took them away (*vid.* J. G. Müller, Art. *Beelzebub* in Herzog's *Cycl.* i. p. 768, and Stark, *Gaza*, pp. 260, 261). The latter observes that "these (the flies), which are governed in their coming and going by all the conditions of the weather, are apparently endowed with prophetic power themselves." This explains the fact that a special power of prophecy was attributed to this god.¹ Ekron, now Akir, the most northerly of the five Philistian capitals (see at Josh. xiii. 3).—Vers. 3, 4. But the angel of the Lord, the mediator of the revelations made by the invisible God to the covenant nation (see *Comm. on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. pp. 185-191, transl.), had spoken to Elijah to go and meet the king's messengers, who were going to inquire of Baalzebub, and to ask them whether it was from the want of a God in Israel (אֵין סִבְלֵי אֱלֹהִים as in Ex. xiv. 11; see Ewald, § 323, a) that they turned to Baalzebub, and to announce to them the word of Jehovah, that Ahaziah would not rise up from his bed again, but would die. "And Elijah went," *sc.* to carry out the divine commission.—Vers. 5-8. The messengers did not recognise Elijah, but yet they turned back and reported the occurrence to the king, who knew at once, from the description they gave of the

¹ The later Jews altered the name *Beelzebub* into Βεελζεβοὺλ, *i.e.* probably lord of the (heavenly) dwelling, as a name given to the ἀρχὴν τῶν δαιμονίων (Matt. x. 25, etc.); and the later Rabbins finally, by changing בַּעַל־זְבוּב into בַּעַל־זְבוּב, made a fly-god into a dung-god, to express in the most intense form their abomination of idolatry (see Lightfoot, *Horæ hebr. et talm. in Matt.* xii. 24, and my *bibl. Archæol.* i. pp. 440, 441).

habitus of the man in reply to his question, that it was Elijah the *Tishbite*. **מָה הָיָה לְעִלְיָה**: "what was the manner of the man?" **מָה** is used here to denote the peculiarity of a person, that which in a certain sense constitutes the vital law and right of the individual personality; *figura et habitus* (Vulg.). The servants described the prophet according to his outward appearance, which in a man of character is a reflection of his inner man, as **אִישׁ בָּעַל שֵׁעַר**, *vir pilosus, hirsutus*. This does not mean a man with a luxuriant growth of hair, but refers to the hairy dress, i.e. the garment made of sheep-skin or goat-skin or coarse camel-hair, which was wrapped round his body; the **אֲדָרְת** (ch. ii. 8; 1 Kings xix. 13), or **אֲדָרְת שֵׁעַר** (Zech. xiii. 4, cf. Matt. iii. 4, Heb. xi. 37), which was worn by the prophets, not as mere ascetics, but as preachers of repentance, the rough garment denoting the severity of the divine judgments upon the effeminate nation, which revelled in luxuriance and worldly lust. And this was also in keeping with "the leather girdle," **אֲזוּר עוֹר**, *ζώνη δερματίνη* (Matt. iii. 4), whereas the ordinary girdle was of cotton or linen, and often very costly.

Vers. 9-16. After having executed the divine command, Elijah returned to the summit of the mountain, on which he dwelt. Most of the commentators suppose it to have been one of the peaks of Carmel, from ch. ii. 25 and 1 Kings xviii. 42, which is no doubt very probable, though it cannot be raised into certainty. Elijah's place of abode was known to the king; he therefore sent a captain with fifty men to fetch the prophet. To the demand of the captain, "Man of God, the king has said, Come down," Elijah replied, "And if I am a man of God, let fire fall from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty." (The expression **וְאִם**, *and if*, shows that Elijah's words followed immediately upon those of the captain.) This judicial miracle was immediately fulfilled.—Vers. 11, 12. The same fate befell a second captain, whom the king sent after the death of the first. He was more insolent than the first, "both because he was not brought to his senses by hearing of his punishment, and because he increased his impudence by adding *make haste* (**הָרָהֵר**)."—C. a Lap. For **וְיָרֶדְרָר** the LXX. (*Cod. Alex.*) have *καὶ ἀνέβη καὶ ἐλάλησε*, so that they read **וַיַּעַל**. The correctness of this reading, according to which **וַיַּעַל** would be an error of the pen, is favoured not only by **וַיַּעַל** in vers. 9 and 13, but also by **וְיָרֶדְרָר** which follows; for, as a general rule, **וַיַּעַל** would be followed by

τῶν. The repetition of this judicial miracle was meant to show in the most striking manner not only the authority which rightfully belonged to the prophet, but also the help and protection which the Lord gave to His servants. At the same time, the question as to the "morality of the miracle," about which some have had grave doubts, is not set at rest by the remark of Thenius, that "the soldiers who were sent come into consideration here purely as instruments of a will acting in opposition to Jehovah." The third captain also carried out the ungodly command of the king, and he was not slain (vers. 13 sqq.). The first two must therefore have been guilty of some crime, which they and their people had to expiate with their death. This crime did not consist merely in their addressing him as "man of God," for the third addressed Elijah in the same way (ver. 13), but in their saying "Man of God, come down." This summons to the prophet, to allow himself to be led as a prisoner before the king, involved a contempt not only of the prophetic office in the person of Elijah, but also of the Lord, who had accredited him by miracles as His servant. The two captains who were first sent not only did what they were bound to do as servants of the king, but participated in the ungodly disposition of their lord (*συμβαίνοντες τῷ σκοπῷ τοῦ πεπομφότος*—Theodoret); they attacked the Lord with reckless daring in the person of the prophet, and the second captain, with his "Come down quickly," did it even more strongly than the first. This sin was punished, and that not by the prophet, but by the Lord Himself, who fulfilled the word of His servant.¹ What Elijah here did was an act of holy zeal for the honour of the Lord, in the spirit of the old covenant, under which God destroyed the insolent despisers of His name with fire and sword, to manifest the energy of His holy majesty by the side of the dead idols of the heathen. But this act cannot be transferred to the times of the new covenant, as is clearly shown in Luke ix. 54, 55, where Christ does not blame Elijah for what he did, but admonishes His disciples, who overlooked the difference between the economy of the law and that of the gospel, and in their carnal zeal wanted to imitate what Elijah had done in divine zeal for the honour of the Lord, which had been injured in his own person.—Vers. 13, 14. The king, disregarding the

¹ Οἱ τοῦ προφήτου κατηγοροῦντες κατὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ προφήτου κινεῖσι τὰς γλώττας, as Theodoret very aptly observes.

punishing hand of the Lord, which, even if it might possibly have been overlooked in the calamity that befell the captain who was first sent and his company, could not be misunderstood when a similar fate befell the second captain with his fifty men, sent a third company, in his defiant obduracy, to fetch the prophet. (אֶלֶּשׁ after אֶלֶּשׁ is apparently an error of the pen for אֶלֶּשׁ, as the following word אֶלֶּשׁ shows.) But the third captain was better than his king, and wiser than his two predecessors. He obeyed the command of the king so far as to go to the prophet; but instead of haughtily summoning him to follow him, he bent his knee before the man of God, and prayed that his own life and the lives of his soldiers might be spared.—Vers. 15, 16. Then Elijah followed him to the king (אֶלֶּשׁ, before him, i.e. before the king, not before the captain; and אֶלֶּשׁ for אֶלֶּשׁ, see Ewald, § 264, b), having been directed to do so by the angel of the Lord, and repeated to him the word of the Lord, which he had also conveyed to him through his messengers (see vers. 4 and 6).

Vers. 17 and 18. When Ahaziah died, according to the word of the Lord through Elijah, as he had no son, he was followed upon the throne by his brother Joram, "in the second year of Joram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah." This statement is at variance both with that in ch. iii. 1, to the effect that Joram began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, and with that in 1 Kings xxii. 52, viz. that Ahaziah ascended the throne in the seventeenth year of the reign of Jehoshaphat, which lasted twenty-five years, and also with the statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram of Judah became king over Judah in the fifth year of Joram of Israel. If, for example, Ahaziah of Israel died after a reign of not quite two years, at the most a year and a half, in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat; as Jehoshaphat himself reigned twenty-five years, he cannot have died till the seventh year of Joram of Israel, and his son Joram followed him upon the throne. The last of these discrepancies may be solved very simply, from the fact that, according to ch. viii. 16, Jehoshaphat was still king when his son Joram began to reign, so that Jehoshaphat abdicated in favour of his son about two years before his death. And the first discrepancy (that between ch. i. 17 and ch. iii. 1) is removed by Usher (*Annales M. ad a.m.* 3106 and 3112), Lightfoot, and others, after the example of the *Seder Olam*, by the assumption of a co-regency. According to this, when Jehoshaphat went with Ahab to Ramoth in Gilead to war against the Syrians, in

the eighteenth year of his reign, which runs parallel to the twenty-second year of the reign of Ahab, he appointed his son Joram to the co-regency, and transferred to him the administration of the kingdom. It is from this co-regency that the statement in ch. i. 17 is dated, to the effect that Joram of Israel became king in the second year of Joram of Judah. This second year of the co-regency of Joram corresponds to the eighteenth year of the reign of Jehoshaphat (ch. iii. 1). And in the fifth year of his co-regency Jehoshaphat gave up the reins of government entirely to him. It is from this point of time, *i.e.* from the twenty-third year of Jehoshaphat, that we are to reckon the eight years of the reign of Joram (of Judah), so that he only reigned six years more after his father's death.¹ We have no information as to the reason which induced Jehoshaphat to abdicate in favour of his son two years before his death; for there is very little probability in the conjecture of Lightfoot (*Opp.* i. p. 85), that Jehoshaphat did this when he commenced the war with the Moabites in alliance with Joram of Israel, for the simple reason that the Moabites revolted after the death of Ahab, and Joram made preparations for attacking them immediately after their rebellion (ch. iii. 5-7), so that he must have commenced this expedition before the fifth year of his reign.

¹ Wolff indeed boldly declares that "the co-regency of Joram is a pure fiction, and the biblical historians do not furnish the slightest warrant for any such supposition" (see p. 628 of the treatise mentioned at p. 187); but he cannot think of any other way of reconciling the differences than by making several alterations in the text, and inventing a co-regency in the case of the Israelitish king Ahaziah. The synchronism of the reigns of the Israelitish kings necessarily requires the solution adopted in the text. For if Joram of Israel, who began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat and reigned twelve years (ch. iii. 1), was slain at the same time as Ahaziah of Judah (ch. ix. 24-27), and Ahaziah of Judah reigned about one year and his predecessor Joram about eight years, so that the two together certainly reigned fully eight years; Joram of Judah must have ascended the throne four years after Joram of Israel, *i.e.* in the twenty-third year of Jehoshaphat, which runs parallel to the fifth year of Joram of Israel. Consequently the twenty-five years of Jehoshaphat are to be reduced to twenty-three in reckoning the sum-total of the years embraced by the period of the kings. It is true that there is no analogy for this combination of the years of the reigns of two kings, since the other reductions of which different chronologists are fond are perfectly arbitrary, and the case before us stands quite alone; but this exception to the rule is indicated clearly enough in the statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram began to reign while Jehoshaphat was (still) king. When, however, Thénius objects to this mode of reconciling the differences, which even Winer adopts



CHAP. II. ELIJAH'S ASCENSION TO HEAVEN. ELISHA'S FIRST
MIRACLES.

Vers. 1-13. ELIJAH'S ASCENSION TO HEAVEN.—Vers. 1-10. *Journey from Gilgal to the other side of the Jordan.*—Vers. 1, 2. When the time arrived that Jehovah was about to take up His servant Elijah in a tempest to heaven, Elijah went with his attendant Elisha from Gilgal down to Bethel. בִּפְתוֹתַיִם, in the tempest or storm, i.e. in a tempestuous storm, which was frequently the herald of the divine self-revelations in the terrestrial world (*vid.* Job xxxviii. 1, xl 6; Ezek. i. 4; Zech. ix. 14). הַשָּׁמַיִם is the accusative of direction. *Gilgal* and *Bethel* (*Beitin*, see at 1 Kings xii. 29) were seats of schools of the prophets, which Elijah had founded in the kingdom of the ten tribes. It is now generally admitted that *Gilgal*, from which they went down to Bethel, cannot be the place of that name which was situated in the Jordan valley to the east of Jericho, but must be the Gilgal upon the mountains, the elevated *Jilyilia* to the south-west of Silo (Seilun, see at Josh. viii. 35). On the way Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, I pray, for the Lord has sent me to Bethel;" but Elisha declared with a solemn oath that he would not leave him. The Lord had revealed to both that the seal of divine attestation was to be impressed upon the work of Elijah by his being miraculously taken up into heaven, to

in the third edition of his *bibl. Real-Wörterbuch*, i. p. 539, on the ground that the reign of Joram is dated most precisely in 1 Kings xxii. 51 and 2 Chron. xxi. 1, 5, 20, from the death of Jehoshaphat, and that an actual co-regency, viz. that of Jotham, is expressly mentioned in ch. xv. 5, which does not render it at all necessary to carry the years of his reign into those of his father's, this appeal to the case of Jotham cannot prove anything, for the simple reason that the biblical text knows nothing of any co-regency of Jotham and Uzziah, but simply states that when Uzziah was smitten with leprosy, his son Jotham judged the people of the land, but that he did not become king till after his father's death (ch. xv. 5, 7; 2 Chron. xxvi. 21, 23). It is indeed stated in 1 Kings xxii. 51 and 2 Chron. xxvi. 1, 5, 20, that Jehoshaphat died and his son Joram became king, which may be understood as meaning that he did not become king till after the death of Jehoshaphat; but there is no necessity to understand it so, and therefore it can be very easily reconciled with the more precise statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram ascended the throne during the reign of Jehoshaphat, whereas the assertion of Thenius, that the circumstantial clause וַיִּהְיֶה מֶלֶךְ יִזְחָרָה in ch. viii. 16 is a gloss, is not critically established by the absence of these words from the LXX., Syr., and Arabic, and to expunge them from the text is nothing but an act of critical violence.

strengthen the faith not of Elisha only, but also of the disciples of the prophets and of all the godly in Israel; but the revelation had been made to them separately, so that Elijah had no suspicion that Elisha had also been informed as to his being taken away. He wanted, therefore, to get rid of his servant, not "to test his love and attachment" (Vatabl.), but from humility (C. a Lap. and others), because he did not wish to have any one present to witness his glorification without being well assured that it was in accordance with the will of God.—Ver. 3. In Bethel the disciples of the prophets came to meet Elisha, and said to him, "Knowest thou that Jehovah will take thy master from over thy head to-day?" עֲלֵה לְעַלְמָא דְּלַחְיָא expresses in a pictorial manner the taking away of Elijah from his side by raising him to heaven, like *ἐπαίρειν* and *ἀπολαμβάνειν* in Acts i. 9, 10. Elisha replied, "I know it, be silent," because he knew Elijah's feeling. The Lord had therefore revealed to the disciples of the prophets the taking away of Elijah, to strengthen their faith.—Vers. 4-7. In Bethel, and again in Jericho, to which they both proceeded from Bethel, Elijah repeated the appeal to Elisha to stay there, but always in vain. The taking away of Elijah had also been revealed to the disciples of the prophets at Jericho. Thus they both came to the Jordan, whilst fifty disciples of the prophets from Jericho followed them at a distance, to be eye-witnesses of the miraculous translation of their master. The course which Elijah took before his departure from this earth, viz. from Gilgal past Bethel and Jericho, was not merely occasioned by the fact that he was obliged to touch at these places on the way to the Jordan, but had evidently also the same higher purpose, for which his ascension to heaven had been revealed both to Elisha and to the disciples of the prophets at Bethel and Jericho. Elijah himself said that the Lord had sent him to Bethel, to Jericho, to the Jordan (vers. 2, 4, 6). He therefore took this way from an impulse received from the Spirit of God, that he might visit the schools of the prophets, which he had founded, once more before his departure, and strengthen and fortify the disciples of the prophets in the consecration of their lives to the service of the Lord, though without in the least surmising that they had been informed by the Spirit of the Lord of his approaching departure from this life. But as his ascension to heaven took place not so much for his own sake, as because of

those associates in his office who were left behind, God had revealed it to so many, that they might be even more firmly established in their calling by the miraculous glorification of their master than by his words, his teaching, and his admonitions, so that they might carry it on without fear or trembling, even if their great master should no longer stand by their side with the might of his spiritual power to instruct, advise, or defend. But above all, Elisha, whom the Lord had appointed as his successor (1 Kings xix. 16), was to be prepared for carrying on his work by the last journey of his master. He did not leave his side therefore, and resolved, certainly also from an inward impulse of the Spirit of God, to be an eye-witness of his glorification, that he might receive the spiritual inheritance of the first-born from his departing spiritual father.—Ver. 8. When they reached the Jordan, Elijah took his prophet's cloak, rolled it up (עָרָם, *áp. ley. convolvit*), and smote the water with it; whereupon the water divided hither and thither, so that they both passed through on dry ground. The cloak, that outward sign of the prophet's office, became the vehicle of the Spirit's power which works unseen, and with which the prophet was inspired. The miracle itself is analogous to the miraculous dividing of the Red Sea by the stretching out of Moses' rod (Ex. xiv. 16, 21); but at the same time it is very peculiar, and quite in accordance with the prophetic character of Elijah. Moses, the leader of the people, performed his miracles with his shepherd's crook, Elijah the prophet divided the river with his prophet's mantle.—Vers. 9, 10. After crossing the Jordan, Elijah allowed his servant and companion to make one more request before he was taken away, in the full confidence that the Lord would fulfil it in answer to his prayer; and Elisha asked, "Let *פְּנֵי שְׁנֵי רִבְּרֵי*, *διπλαῖ ἐν πνεύματί σου*, i.e. a double portion in (of) thy spirit be granted to me." This request has been misunderstood by many translators, from Ephraem Syrus down to Köster and F. W. Krummacher, who have supposed that Elisha wished to have a double measure of Elijah's spirit ("that thy spirit may be twofold in me;" Luther after the Vulgate, "*ut fiat in me duplex spiritus tuus*"); and some have taken it as referring to the fact that Elisha performed many more miracles and much greater ones than Elijah (Cler., Pfeiffer, *dub. vœx.* p. 442), others to the gift of prophecy and miracles (Köster, *die Proph.* p. 82), whilst others, like Krummacher, have understood by it

that the spirit of Elisha, as an evangelical spirit, was twice as great as the legal spirit of Elijah. But there is no such meaning implied in the words, nor can it be inferred from the answer of Elijah; whilst it is impossible to show that there was any such measure of the Spirit in the life and works of Elisha in comparison with the spirit of Elisha, although his request was fulfilled. The request of Elisha is evidently based upon Deut. xxi. 17, where פִּרְשֵׁי הַבְּכֹרִים denotes the double portion which the first-born received in (of) the father's inheritance, as R. Levi b. Gers., Seb. Münst., Vatabl., Grot., and others have perceived, and as Hengstenberg (*Beitr.* ii. p. 133 f.) in our days has once more proved. Elisha, resting his foot upon this law, requested of Elijah as a first-born son the double portion of his spirit for his inheritance. Elisha looked upon himself as the first-born son of Elijah in relation to the other "sons of the prophets," inasmuch as Elijah by the command of God had called him to be his successor and to carry on his work. The answer of Elijah agrees with this: "Thou hast asked a hard thing," he said, because the granting of this request was not in *his* power, but in the power of God. He therefore made its fulfilment dependent upon a condition, which did not rest with himself, but was under the control of God: "if thou shalt see me taken from thee (וְנִקַּחְתָּ מִי, *partic. Pual* with the *v* dropped, see Ges. § 52, Anm. b; Ewald, § 169, d), let it be so to thee; but if not, it will not be so." From his own personal inclination Elijah did not wish to have Elisha, who was so closely related to him, as an eye-witness of his translation from the earth; but from his persistent refusal to leave him he could already see that he would not be able to send him away. He therefore left the matter to the Lord, and made the guidance of God the sign for Elisha whether the Lord would fulfil his request or not. Moreover, the request itself even on the part of the petitioner presupposes a certain dependence, and for this reason Elisha could not possibly desire that the double measure of Elijah's spirit should be bestowed upon him. A dying man cannot leave to his heir more than he has himself. And, lastly, even the ministry of Elisha, when compared with that of Elijah, has all the appearance of being subordinate to it. He lives and labours merely as the continuer of the work already begun by Elijah, both outwardly in relation to the worshippers of idols, and inwardly in relation to the disciples of the prophets. Elisha performs the anointing of Jehu and Hazael,

with which Elijah was charged, and thereby prepares the way for the realization of that destruction of Ahab's house which Elijah predicted to the king; and he merely receives and fosters those schools of the prophets which Elijah had already founded. And again, it is not Elisha but Elijah who appears as the Coryphæus of prophecy along with Moses, the representative of the law, upon the mount of transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 3).—It is only a thoroughly external mode of observation that can discover in the fact that Elisha performed a greater number of miracles than Elijah, a proof that the spirit of Elijah rested doubly upon him.

Vers. 11–13. *Elijah's ascension*.—Ver. 11. While they were walking on and talking to each other, “behold (there suddenly appeared) a fiery chariot and fiery horses, and separated the two (by driving between them), and Elijah went up in the tempest to heaven.” As God had formerly taken Enoch away, so that he did not taste of death (see at Gen. v. 24), so did He also suddenly take Elijah away from Elisha, and carry him to heaven without dying. It was בַּסְעָרָה, “in the tempest,” that he was taken away. The storm was accompanied by a fiery phenomenon, which appeared to the eyes of Elisha as a chariot of fire with horses of fire, in which Elijah rode to heaven. The tempest was an earthly substratum for the theophany, the fiery chariots and fiery horses the symbolical form in which the translation of his master to heaven presented itself to the eye of Elisha, who was left behind.¹—The ascension of Elijah has been compared to the death of Moses. “As God Himself buried Moses, and his grave has not been found to this day, so did He fetch Elias to heaven in a still more glorious manner in a fiery chariot with fiery horses, so that fifty men, who searched for him, did not find him on the earth” (Ziegler). This parallel has a real foundation in the appearance of Moses and Elijah with Christ on the mountain of transfiguration, only we must not overlook the difference in the departure from this life of these two witnesses of God. For Moses died and was to die in the wilderness because of his sin (Deut. xxxii.

¹ All further questions, e.g. concerning the nature of the fiery chariot, the place to which Elijah was carried, the day of his ascension, which C. a Lap., according to the Romish martyrology, assigns to the 20th of July in the 19th year of Jehoshaphat, and others of the same kind, which have been discussed by the earlier commentators, are to be set down as useless trifles, which go beyond the bounds of our thought and comprehension.

49 sqq.), and was only buried by the hand of the Lord, so that no one has seen his grave, not so much for the purpose of concealing it from men as to withdraw his body from corruption, and preserve and glorify it for the eternal life (see the Comm. on Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6). Elijah did not die, but was received into heaven by being "changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52; 1 Thess. iv. 15 sqq.). This difference is in perfect harmony with the character and position of these two men in the earthly kingdom of God. Moses the lawgiver departed from the earthly life by the way of the law, which worketh death as the wages of sin (Rom. vi. 23, vii. 13); Elijah the prophet, who was appointed to admonish for future times (ὁ καταγραφείς ἐν ἐλεγκμοῖς εἰς καιρούς), to pacify the wrath before the judgment, to turn the heart of the father to the son, and to restore the tribes of Jacob (Ecclus. xlviii. 10), was taken to heaven as the forerunner of Christ (Mal. iii. 23, 24; Matt. xi. 10, 11) without tasting of death, to predict the ascension of our Lord, and to set it forth in Old Testament mode; for as a servant, as the servant of the law, who with his fiery zeal preached both by word and deed the fire of the wrath of divine justice to the rebellious generation of his own time, Elijah was carried by the Lord to heaven in a fiery storm, the symbol of the judicial righteousness of God. "As he was an unparalleled champion for the honour of the Lord, a fiery war-chariot was the symbol of his triumphal procession into heaven" (O. v. Gerlach). But Christ, as the Son, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth, after having taken away from death its sting and from hell its victory, by His resurrection from the grave (1 Cor. xv. 55), returned to the Father in the power of His eternal deity, and ascended to heaven in His glorified body before the eyes of His disciples as the victor over death and hell, until a cloud received Him and concealed His figure from their sight (Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9).¹—Ver. 12. When Elisha saw his

¹ The actual truth of this miraculous departure of the prophet is strongly confirmed by the appearance of Elijah, as recorded in Matt. xvii. 3, 4 and Luke ix. 30, upon which the seal of attestation is impressed by the ascension of our Lord. His ascension was in harmony with the great mission with which he, the mightiest of all the prophets, was entrusted in that development of the divine plan of salvation which continued through the centuries in the interval between Moses and Christ.—Whoever is unable to do justice to the spirit and nature of the divine revelation of mercy, will be unable to comprehend this miracle also. This was the case with Josephus, and even with Ephraem the Syrian father. Josephus, for example (*Ant.* ix. 2, 2), says nothing about the

master carried thus miraculously away, he exclaimed, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and horsemen thereof!" and as he saw him no more, he took hold of his clothes and rent them in two pieces, *i.e.* from the top to the bottom, as a proof of the greatness of his sorrow at his being taken away. He called Elijah אֲבִי, "my father," as his spiritual father, who had begotten him as his son through the word of God: "Chariot (war-chariot) and horsemen of Israel," on which the Israelitish kings based the might and security of their kingdom, are a symbolical representa-

miracle, and simply states that Ἡλίας ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἠφανίσθη καὶ οὐδεὶς ἔγνω μίχρῃς τῆς σήμερον αὐτοῦ τὴν τελευτήν, and adds that it is written of Elijah and Enoch in the sacred books, ὅτι γινόμεσιν ἀφανεῖς. θάνατον δὲ αὐτῶν οὐδεὶς οἶδεν. Ephraem, the Christian father, passes over the last clause of ver. 11, "so Elijah went up in the whirlwind to heaven," in his exposition of our chapter, and paraphrases the rest of the words thus: "There came suddenly from on high a fire-storm, and in the midst of the flame the form of a chariot and of horses, and separated them from one another; one of the two it left on the earth, the other, namely Elijah, it carried up on high (حُكِيَ لَمْوَاةٍ);

but whither the wind (or Spirit? רוּחַ) took him, or in what place it left him, the Scriptures have *not* told us. They say, however, that some years afterwards an alarming letter from him, full of threats, was delivered to king Joram of Judah." Following the lead of such predecessors as these, J. D. Michaelis, who boasts so much of his orthodoxy, informed the "unlearned" (in the *Anmerkungen* to his *Bibel-übersetzung*) that Elijah did not go to heaven, but was simply carried away from Palestine, and lived at least twelve years more, that he might be able to write a letter to king Joram (2 Chron. xxi. 12), for "men do not receive letters from people in heaven." This incident has been frequently adduced since then as a disproof of the ascension of Elijah. But there is not a word in the Chronicles about any letter (ספר, ספרים, or אגרת, which would be the Hebrew for a letter); all that is said is that a *writing* (מכתב) from the prophet Elijah was brought to Joram, in which he was threatened with severe punishments on account of his apostasy. Now such a writing as this might very well have been written by Elijah before his ascension, and handed to Elisha to be sent by him to king Joram at the proper time. Even Bertheau admits that, according to the chronological data of the Old Testament, Elijah might have been still living in the reign of Joram of Judah; and it is *a priori* probable that he both spoke of Joram's sin and threatened him with punishment. It is impossible to fix the year of Elijah's ascension. Neither the fact that it is mentioned after the death of Ahaziah of Israel, which he himself had personally foretold to that ungodly king, nor the circumstance that in the war which Jehoshaphat and Joram of Israel waged with the Moabites the prophet Elisha was consulted (ch. iii.), warrants the conclusion that Elijah was taken from the earth in the interval between these two events. It is very obvious from ch. iii. 11, that the two kings applied to Elisha simply because he was in the neighbourhood, and not because Elijah was no longer alive.

tion of the strong defence which Elijah had been through his ministry to the kingdom of Israel (cf. ch. xiii. 14).—Ver. 13. He then took up Elijah's prophet's mantle, which had fallen from him when he was snatched away, and returned to the Jordan. The prophet's mantle of the master fell to Elisha the disciple, as a pledge to himself that his request was fulfilled, and as a visible sign to others that he was his divinely appointed successor, and that the spirit of Elijah rested upon him (ver. 15).

Vers. 14-25. RETURN OF ELISHA TO JERICHO AND BETHEL, AND HIS FIRST MIRACLES.—Vers. 14, 15. Having returned to the banks of the Jordan, Elisha smote the water with Elijah's mantle, saying, "Where is Jehovah the God of Elijah, yea He?" and the water divided hither and thither, so that he was able to go through. אֵיךְ הָיָה, which the LXX. did not understand, and have simply reproduced in Greek characters, ἀφφώ, is an emphatic apposition, "yea He," such as we find after suffixes, e.g. Prov. xxii. 19; and הָיָה is only a strengthened הָיָה, which is more usual when emphatic prominence is given to the suffix (*vid.* Ges. § 121, 3). The Masoretic accentuation, which separates it from the preceding words, rests upon a false interpretation. There is no need either for the alteration proposed by Ewald, § 362, a, of הָיָה into הָיָה, "he had scarcely smitten the water," especially as not a single analogous example can be adduced of the use of הָיָה followed by a *Vav consec.*; or for the conjecture that the original reading in the text was מֵינָה (Houb., Böttch., Then), "where is now the God of Elijah?" which derives no critical support from the ἀφφώ of the LXX, and is quite at variance with Hebrew usage, since מֵינָה generally stands immediately after הָיָה, when it serves to strengthen the interrogation (*vid.* Judg. ix. 38, Job xvii. 15, Isa. xix. 12, Hos. xiii. 10). This miracle was intended partly to confirm Elisha's conviction that his petition had been fulfilled, and partly to accredit him in the eyes of the disciples of the prophets and the people generally as the divinely appointed successor of Elijah. All the disciples of the prophets from Jericho saw also from this that the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha, and came to meet him to do homage to him as being now their spiritual father and lord.—Vers. 16-18. But the disciples of the prophets at Jericho were so unable to realize the fact of Elijah's translation, although it had been previously revealed to them, that

they begged permission of Elisha to send out fifty brave men to seek for Elijah. **וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁלַח**: whether the Spirit of the Lord has not taken him and cast him upon one of the mountains, or into one of the valleys. **וְהָיָה** with the perfect is used "where there is fear of a fact, which as is conjectured almost with certainty has already happened," like **μὴ** in the sense of "whether not" (*vid.* Ewald, § 337, b). **רוּחַ יְהוָה** is not a wind sent by Jehovah (*Ges.*), but the Spirit of Jehovah, as in 1 Kings xviii. 12. The *Chethib* **רוּחַ יְהוָה** is the regular formation from **רוּחַ** or **רוּחַ** (*Zech.* xiv. 4); the *Keri* with the transposition of **ח** and **ה**, the later form: **רוּחַ יְהוָה**, Ezek. vii. 16, xxxi. 12, etc. The belief expressed by the disciples of the prophets, that Elijah might have been miraculously carried away, was a popular belief, according to 1 Kings xviii. 12, which the disciples of the prophets were probably led to share, more especially in the present case, by the fact that they could not imagine a translation to heaven as a possible thing, and with the indefiniteness of the expression **וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁלַח** could only understand the divine revelation which they had received as referring to removal by death. So that even if Elisha told them how miraculously Elijah had been taken from him, which he no doubt did, they might still believe that by the appearance in the storm the Lord had taken away His servant from this life, that is to say, had received his soul into heaven, and had left his earthly tabernacle somewhere on the earth, for which they would like to go in search, that they might pay the last honours to their departed master. Elisha yielded to their continued urgency and granted their request; whereupon fifty men sought for three days for Elijah's body, and after three days' vain search returned to Jericho. **וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁלַח**, to being ashamed, i.e. till he was ashamed to refuse their request any longer (see at Judg. iii. 25).

The two following miracles of Elisha (vers. 19–25) were also intended to accredit him in the eyes of the people as a man endowed with the Spirit and power of God, as Elijah had been. Vers. 19–22. *Elisha makes the water at Jericho wholesome*.—During his stay at Jericho (ver. 18) the people of the city complained, that whilst the situation of the place was good in other respects, the water was bad and the land produced miscarriages. **וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁלַח**, the land, i.e. the soil, on account of the badness of the water; not "the inhabitants, both man and beast" (*Thenius*). Elisha then told them to bring a new dish with

salt, and poured the salt into the spring with these words: "Thus saith the Lord, I have made this water sound; there will no more be death and miscarriage thence" (מִשְׁכָּחָה מָשַׁחָה). מִשְׁכָּחָה is a substantive here (*vid.* Ewald, 160, e). מִזְרַח הַיָּם is no doubt the present spring *Ain es Sultán*, the only spring near to Jericho, the waters of which spread over the plain of Jericho, thirty-five minutes' distance from the present village and castle, taking its rise in a group of elevations not far from the foot of the mount *Quarantana* (Kuruntul); a large and beautiful spring, the water of which is neither cold nor warm, and has an agreeable and sweet (according to Steph. Schultz, "somewhat salt") taste. It was formerly enclosed by a kind of reservoir or semicircular wall of hewn stones, from which the water was conducted in different directions to the plain (*vid.* Rob. Pal. ii. p. 283 sq.). With regard to the miracle, a spring which supplied the whole of the city and district with water could not be so greatly improved by pouring in a dish of salt, that the water lost its injurious qualities for ever, even if salt does possess the power of depriving bad water of its unpleasant taste and injurious effects. The use of these natural means does not remove the miracle. Salt, according to its power of preserving from corruption and decomposition, is a symbol of incorruptibility and of the power of life which destroys death (see Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 325, 326). As such it formed the earthly substratum for the spiritual power of the divine word, through which the spring was made for ever sound. A new dish was taken for the purpose, not *ob munditiem* (Seb. Schm.), but as a symbol of the renewing power of the word of God.—But if this miracle was adapted to show to the people the beneficent character of the prophet's ministry, the following occurrence was intended to prove to the despisers of God that the Lord does not allow His servants to be ridiculed with impunity.—Vers. 23-25. *The judgment of God upon the loose fellows at Bethel.* Elisha proceeded from Jericho to Bethel, the chief seat of the idolatrous calf-worship, where there was also a school of the prophets (ver. 3). On the way thither there came small boys out of the city to meet him, who ridiculed him by calling out, "Come up, bald-head, come," etc. קַרְחָה, bald-head (with a bald place at the back of the head), was used as a term of scorn (cf. Isa. iii. 17, 24); but hardly from a suspicion of leprosy (Winer, Thenius). It was rather as a natural defect, for Elisha, who

lived for fifty years after this (ch. xiii. 14), could not have been bald from age at that time.—Ver. 24. The prophet then turned round and cursed the scoffers in the name of the Lord, and there came two bears out of the wood, and tore forty-two boys of them in pieces. The supposed “immorality of cursing,” which Thenius still adduces as a disproof of the historical truth of this miracle, even if it were established, would not affect Elisha only, but would fall back upon the Lord God, who executed the curse of His servant in such a manner upon these worthless boys. And there is no need, in order to justify the judicial miracle, to assume that there was a preconcerted plan which had been devised by the chief rulers of the city out of enmity to the prophet of the Lord, so that the children had merely been put forward (O. v. Gerlach). All that is necessary is to admit that the worthless spirit which prevailed in Bethel was openly manifested in the ridicule of the children, and that these boys knew Elisha, and in his person insulted the prophet of the Lord. If this was the case, then Elisha cursed the boys for the purpose of avenging the honour of the Lord, which had been injured in his person; and the Lord caused this curse to be fulfilled, to punish in the children the sins of the parents, and to inspire the whole city with a salutary dread of His holy majesty.¹—Ver. 25. Elisha went from Bethel to Carmel (see at 1 Kings xviii. 19), probably to strengthen himself in solitude for the continuation of his master’s work. He returned thence to Samaria, where, according to ch. vi. 32, he possessed a house.

CHAP. III. JORAM OF ISRAEL, AND THE EXPEDITION AGAINST MOAB
WHICH HE UNDERTOOK IN COMPANY WITH JEHOSEPHAT.

Vers. 1–3. REIGN OF JORAM OF ISRAEL.—For the chronological statement in ver. 1, see at ch. i. 17. *Joram* or *Jehoram* was

¹ Augustine, or the author of the *Sermo* 204 *de Tempore* (or *Sermo* 41 *de Eliseo* in t. v. of the *Opp. Aug.*, ed. J. P. Migne, p. 1826), which is attributed to him, gives a similar explanation. “The insolent boys,” he says, “are to be supposed to have done this at the instigation of their parents; for they would not have called out if it had displeased their parents.” And with regard to the object of the judicial punishment, he says it was inflicted “that the elders might receive a lesson through the smiting of the little ones, and the death of the sons might be a lesson to the parents; and that they might learn to fear the prophet, whom they would not love, notwithstanding the wonders which he performed.”

not so ungodly as his father Ahab and his mother Jezebel. He had the statue or pillar of Baal, which his father had erected in Samaria, removed; and it was only to the sin of Jeroboam, *i.e.* the calf-worship, that he adhered. Joram therefore wished to abolish the worship of Baal and elevate the worship of Jehovah, under the image of the calf (ox), into the religion of his kingdom once more. For the singular suffix *לְמֶלֶךְ* see Ewald, § 317, *a*. He did not succeed, however, in exterminating the worship of Baal. It not only continued in Samaria, but appears to have been carried on again in the most shameless manner (*cf.* ch. x. 18 sqq.); at which we cannot be surprised, since his mother Jezebel, that fanatical worshipper of Baal, was living throughout the whole of his reign (ch. ix. 30).

Vers. 4-27. WAR OF JORAM, IN ALLIANCE WITH JEHOSEPHAT, AGAINST THE MOABITES.—Vers. 4, 5. The occasion of this war was the rebellion of the Moabites, *i.e.* the refusal to pay tribute to Israel since the death of Ahab. Mesha the (vassal-) king of Moab was a possessor of flocks, and paid to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams; not merely at the commencement of each new reign (*Cler.*), but as a yearly tribute (*לְשָׁנָה*, to bring again = to bring repeatedly, as in Num. xviii. 9, etc.). This yearly tribute could not be exorbitant for the land of the Moabites, which abounded in good pasture, and was specially adapted for the rearing of flocks. The payment of tribute in natural objects and in the produce of the land was very customary in ancient times, and is still usual among the tribes of Asia.¹ *לְשָׁנָה* signifies both a shepherd (Amos i. 1) and also a possessor of flocks. In Arabic it is properly the possessor of a superior kind of sheep and goats (*vid.* Boch. *Hieroz.* i. p. 483 sq. ed. Ros.). *צֶמֶר* may either be taken as a second object to *לְשָׁנָה*, or be connected with *אֵילִים* as an accusative of looser government (Ewald, § 287, *h*). In the first case the tribute would consist of the wool (the fleeces) of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams; in the second, of 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. In support of the latter we may quote Isa. xvi. 1, where lambs are mentioned as tribute.—Vers. 5 sqq. The statement

¹ *Pecunia ipsa a pecore appellabatur. Etiam nunc in tabulis Censoriis pascua dicuntur omnia, ex quibus populus reditus habet, quia diu hoc solum vectigal fuit. Multatio quoque non nisi ovium boumque impendio dicebatur.*—PLINII *h. nat.* xviii. 3.

concerning the rebellion of the Moabites, which has already been mentioned in ch. i. 1, is repeated here, because it furnished the occasion for the expedition about to be described. Ahaziah had been unable to do anything during his short reign to renew the subjugation of Moab; Joram was therefore anxious to overtake what had been neglected immediately after his ascent of the throne. He went to Samaria בְּיָמֵי הָרָמָה, at that time, namely, when he renewed his demand for the tribute and it was refused (Thenius), and mustered all Israel, i.e. raised an army out of the whole kingdom, and asked Jehoshaphat to join in the war, which he willingly promised to do (as in 1 Kings xxii. 4), notwithstanding the fact that he had been blamed by prophets for his alliance with Ahab and Ahaziah (2 Chron. xix. 2 and xx. 37). He probably wished to chastise the Moabites still further on this occasion for their invasion of Judah (2 Chron. xx.), and to do his part by bringing them once more under the yoke of Israel, to put it out of their power to make fresh incursions into Judah.—Ver. 8. In reply to Joram's question, "By which way shall we advance (against Moab)?" Jehoshaphat decided in favour of "the way through the desert of Edom." There were two ways by which it was possible to enter the land of the Moabites; namely, either by going above the Dead Sea, and crossing the Jordan and the boundary river Arnon, and so entering it from the north, or by going round the southern point of the Dead Sea, and advancing through the northern portion of the mountains of Edom, and thus entering it from the south. The latter way was the longer of the two, and the one attended with the greatest difficulties and dangers, because the army would have to cross mountains which were very difficult to ascend. Nevertheless Jehoshaphat decided in its favour, partly because, if they took the northern route, they would have the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead to fear, partly also because the Moabites, from their very confidence in the inaccessibility of their southern boundary, would hardly expect any attack from that side, and might therefore, if assailed at that point, be taken off their guard and easily defeated, and probably also from a regard to the king of Edom, whom they could induce to join them with his troops if they took that route, not so much perhaps for the purpose of strengthening their own army as to make sure of his forces, namely, that he would not make a fresh attempt at rebellion by a second invasion of the kingdom of Judah while

Jehoshaphat was taking the field against the Moabites.—Ver. 9. But however cleverly this plan may have been contrived, when the united army had been marching round for seven days and was passing through the deep rocky valley of the *Ahsy*,¹ which divided the territories of Edom and Moab, it was in the greatest danger of perishing from want of water for men and cattle, as the river which flows through this valley, and in which they probably hoped to find a sufficient supply of water, since according to Robinson (*Pal.* ii. pp. 476 and 488) it is a stream which never fails, was at that time perfectly dry.

In this distress the hearts of the two kings were manifested.—Vers. 10-12. Joram cried out in his despair: "Woe, that Jehovah has called these three kings, to give them into the hand of Moab!" (c), *that*, serves to give emphasis to the assurance; see Ewald, § 330, b.) Jehoshaphat, on the other hand, had confidence in the Lord, and inquired whether there was no prophet there, through whom they could seek counsel of the Lord (as in 1 Kings xxii. 7); whereupon one of the servants of the Israelitish king answered that Elisha was there, who had poured water upon the hands of Elijah, i.e. had been with him daily as his servant, and therefore could probably obtain and give a revelation from God. Elisha may perhaps have come to the neighbourhood of the army at the instigation of the Spirit of God, because the distress of the kings was to be one means in the hand of the Lord, not only of dis-

¹ The usual route from southern Judæa to the land of the Moabites, which even the Crusaders and more recent travellers took, runs round the Dead Sea up to the mouth of the Wady *ed Deraah* or *Kerak*, and then up this wady to Kerak (*vid.* Roh. ii. p. 231). The allied kings did not take this route however, but went through the Wady *el Kurahy* or *es-Safieh*, which opens into the southern end of the Dead Sea, and which is called the Wady *el Ahsy* farther up in the mountains, by Seetzen (*R.* ii. pp. 355, 356) erroneously the Wady *el Hössa* (Roh. ii. p. 488), a ravine through which Burckhardt passed with the greatest difficulty (*Syrien*, ii. p. 673). That they advanced by this route is a necessary inference from the fact, that when they first suffered from want of water they were on the border of the Moabitish territory, of which this very wady forms the boundary (ver. 21; see Burckh. p. 674, and Roh. *Pal.* ii. p. 555), and the water came flowing from Edom (ver. 20). Neither of these circumstances is applicable to the Wady *el Kerak*.—Still less can we assume, with O. v. Gerlach, that they chose the route through the Arahah that they might approach Moab from the south, as the Israelites under Moses had done. For it would have been impossible for them to reach the border of Moab by this circuitous route. And why should they go so far round, with the way through Edom open to them?

tinguishing the prophet in the eyes of Joram, but also of pointing Joram to the Lord as the only true God. The three kings, humbled by the calamity, went in person to Elisha, instead of sending for him.—Vers. 13, 14. In order still further to humble the king of Israel, who was already bowed down by the trouble, and to produce some salutary fruit of repentance in his heart, Elisha addressed him in these words: "What have I to do with thee? Go to the (Baal-) prophets of thy father and thy mother! Let them help thee." When Joram replied to this in a supplicatory tone: לֹא, no, pray (as in Ruth i. 13), *i.e.* speak not in this refusing way, for the Lord has brought these three kings—not me alone, but Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom also—into this trouble; Elisha said to him with a solemn oath (cf. 1 Kings xvii. 1): "If I did not regard Jehoshaphat, I should not look at thee and have respect to thee," *i.e.* I should not deign to look at thee, much less to help thee.—Vers. 15–17. He then sent for a minstrel, to collect his mind from the impressions of the outer world by the soft tones of the instrument, and by subduing the self-life and life in the external world to become absorbed in the intuition of divine things. On this influence of music upon the state of the mind, see the remark on 1 Sam. xvi. 16, and Passavant's *Untersuchungen über den Lebens-magnetismus*, p. 207 (ed. 2).—As the minstrel was playing, the hand of the Lord came upon him (יְהוָה according to the later usage for יְהוָה, as in 1 Sam. xvii. 48, etc.; compare Ewald, § 345, *b*, and יְהוָה יְהוָה as in 1 Kings xviii. 46), so that he said in the name of the Lord: "Make this valley full of trenches (עֲשֵׂה, *inf. abs.* for the imperative; for נָבִים נָבִים see Ges. § 108, 4); for thus saith the Lord, ye will see neither wind nor rain, and this valley will be filled with water, that ye may be able to drink, and your flocks and your cattle." נָבִים are trenches for collecting water (*vid.* Jer. xiv. 3), which would suddenly flow down through the brook-valley. This large quantity of water came on the (following) morning "by the way of Edom" (ver. 20), a heavy fall of rain or violent storm having taken place, as is evident from the context, in the eastern mountains of Edom, at a great distance from the Israelitish camp, the water of which filled the brook-valley, *i.e.* the Wady *el Kurahy* and *el Ahsy* (see at ver. 9) at once, without the Israelites observing anything either of the wind, which always precedes rain in the East (Harmar, *Beobb.* i. pp. 51, 52), or of the rain itself. מִיְמֵיכֶם

are the flocks intended for slaughtering, **בְּהֵמָתָם** the beasts of burden.—Vers. 18, 19. Elisha continued: “and this is too little for Jehovah (the comparative force of **נָסָל** is implied in the context, especially in the alternating combination of the two clauses, which is indicated by **! . . . !**, see Ewald, § 360, c): He will also give Moab into your hand, and ye will smite all the fortified and choice cities, fell all the good trees (fruit-trees), stop up all the springs of water, and spoil all the good fields with stones.” **מִבְּצָרֵי** and **מִכְּבוֹדֵי** are intended to produce a play upon words, through the resemblance in their sound and meaning (Ewald, § 160, c). In the announcement of the devastation of the land there is an allusion to Deut. xx. 19, 20, according to which the Israelites were ordered to spare the fruit-trees when Canaan was taken. These instructions were not to apply to Moab, because the Moabites themselves as the arch-foes of Israel would not act in any other way with the land of Israel if they should gain the victory. **הִכָּאֵב**, to add pain, is a poetical expression for spoiling a field or rendering it infertile through the heaping up of stones.—Ver. 20. The water came in the morning at the time of the morning sacrifice (see 1 Kings xviii. 36), to indicate that the Lord was once more restoring His favour to the people on account of the sacrifice presented to Him in His temple.

The help of God, which preserved the Israelitish army from destruction, also prepared destruction for the Moabites. Vers. 21-23. On hearing the report of the march of the allied kings, Moab had raised all the men that were capable of bearing arms, and stationed them on the frontier. In the morning, when the sun had risen above the water, the Moabites saw the water opposite to them like blood, and said: “That is blood: the (allied) kings have destroyed themselves and smitten one another; and now to the spoil, Moab!” Coming with this expectation to the Israelitish camp, they were received by the allies, who were ready for battle, and put to flight. The divine help consisted, therefore, not in a miracle which surpassed the laws of nature, but simply in the fact that the Lord God, as He had predicted through His prophet, caused the forces of nature ordained by Him to work in the predetermined manner. As the sudden supply of an abundance of water was caused in a natural way by a heavy fall of rain, so the illusion, which was so fatal to the Moabites, is also to be explained in the natural manner indicated in the text. From the reddish earth of the freshly dug trenches the

water collected in them had acquired a reddish colour, which was considerably intensified by the rays of the rising sun, so that when seen from a distance it resembled blood. The Moabites, however, were the less likely to entertain the thought of an optical delusion, from the fact that with their accurate acquaintance with the country they knew very well that there was no water in the wady at that time, and they had neither seen nor heard anything of the rain which had fallen at a great distance off in the Edomitish mountains. The thought was therefore a natural one, that the water was blood, and that the cause of the blood could only have been that their enemies had massacred one another, more especially as the jealousy between Israel and Judah was not unknown to them, and they could have no doubt that Edom had only come with them as a forced ally after the unsuccessful attempt at rebellion which it had made a short time before; and, lastly, they cannot quite have forgotten their own last expedition against Judah in alliance with the Edomites and Ammonites, which had completely failed, because the men composing their own army had destroyed one another. But if they came into collision with the allied army of the Israelites under such a delusion as this, the battle could only end in defeat and in a general flight so far as they were concerned.—Vers. 24, 25. The Israelites followed the fugitives into their own land and laid it waste, as Elisha had prophesied (ver. 25 compared with ver. 19). The *Chelhib* יִבְרָה is to be read בָּה (for יִבְרָה, as in 1 Kings xii. 12): and (Israel) came into the land and smote Moab. The *Keri* יִבְרָה is a bad emendation. יִבְרָה is either the infinitive construct used instead of the infin. absolute (Ewald, § 351, c), or an unusual form of the inf. absol. (Ewald, § 240, b). עֲרֵה־הָאֵשׁ, till one (= so that one only) left its stones in *Kir-charesheth*. On the infinitive form עֲרֵה־הָאֵשׁ see at Josh. viii. 22. The suffix in אֲנִיָּה probably points forward to the following noun (Ewald, § 309, c). The city called חֶרֶשֶׁת here and Isa. xvi. 7, and חֶרֶשׁ in Isa. xvi. 11 and Jer. xlviii. 31, 36, i.e. probably city of potsherds, is called elsewhere קִר, the citadel of Moab (Isa. xv. 1), as the principal fortress of the land (in the Chaldee Vers. קִרְכָּא מוֹאָב), and still exists under the name of *Kerak*, with a strong castle built by the Crusaders, upon a lofty and steep chalk rock, surrounded by a deep and narrow valley, which runs westward under the name of Wady Kerak and falls into the Dead Sea (*vid.* Burckhardt, *Syr.* pp. 643

sqq., C. v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 271, 272). This fortress the allied kings besieged. "The slingers surrounded and smote it," i.e. bombarded it.—Ver. 26. When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too strong for him, he attempted to fight a way through the besiegers with 700 men with drawn swords (לְהִבָּקֵץ, lit. to split them) to the king of Edom, i.e. on the side which was held by this king, from whom he probably hoped that he should meet with the weakest resistance.—Ver. 27. But when this attempt failed, in his desperation he took his first-born son, who was to succeed him as king, and offered him as a sacrifice upon the wall, i.e. in the sight of the besiegers, not to the God of Israel (Joseph., Ephr. Syr., etc.), but to his own god Camos (see at 1 Kings xi. 7), to procure help from him by appeasing his wrath; just as the heathen constantly sought to appease the wrath of their gods by human sacrifices on the occasion of great calamities (*vid.* Euseb. *præpar. ev.* iv. 16, and E. v. Lasaulx, *die Sühnopfer der Griechen und Römer*, pp. 8 sqq.).—"And there was (came) great wrath upon Israel, and they departed from him (the king of Moab) and returned into their land." As הָיָה קֶצֶף עָלָיו is used of the divine wrath or judgment, which a man brings upon himself by sinning, in every other case in which the phrase occurs, we cannot understand it here as signifying the "human indignation," or ill-will, which broke out among the besieged (Budd., Schulz, and others). The meaning is: this act of abomination, to which the king of the Moabites had been impelled by the extremity of his distress, brought a severe judgment from God upon Israel. The besiegers, that is to say, felt the wrath of God, which they had brought upon themselves by occasioning human sacrifice, which is strictly forbidden in the law (Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 3), either inwardly in their conscience or in some outwardly visible signs, so that they gave up the further prosecution of the siege and the conquest of the city, without having attained the object of the expedition, namely, to renew the subjugation of Moab under the power of Israel.

CHAP. IV. ELISHA WORKS SEVERAL MIRACLES.

From ch. iv.—ch. viii. 6 there follows a series of miracles on the part of Elisha, which both proved this prophet to be the continuer of the work which Elijah had begun, of converting Israel from the service of Baal to the service of the living God, and also

manifested the beneficent fruits of the zeal of Elijah for the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth in the midst of the idolatrous generation of his time, partly in the view which we obtain from several of these accounts of the continuance and prosperity of the schools of the prophets, and partly in the attitude of Elisha towards the godly in the land as well as towards Joram the king, the son of the idolatrous Ahab, and in the extension of his fame beyond the limits of Israel. (See the remarks on the labours of both prophets at pp. 229 sqq, and those on the schools of the prophets at 1 Sam. xix. 24.)—All the miracles described in this section belong to the reign of Joram king of Israel. They are not all related, however, in chronological order, but the chronology is frequently disregarded for the purpose of grouping together events which are homogeneous in their nature. This is evident, not only from the fact that (*a*) several of these accounts are attached quite loosely to one another without any particle to indicate sequence (*vid.* ch. iv. 1, 38, 42, v. 1, vi. 8, and viii. 1), and (*b*) we have first of all those miracles which were performed for the good of the scholars of the prophets and of particular private persons (ch. iv.–vi. 7), and then such works of the prophet as bore more upon the political circumstances of the nation, and of the king as the leader of the nation (ch. vi. 8–vii. 20), but also from the circumstance that in the case of some of these facts you cannot fail to perceive that their position is regulated by their substantial relation to what precedes or what follows, without any regard to the time at which they occurred. Thus, for example, the occurrence described in ch. viii. 1–6, which should undoubtedly stand before ch. v. so far as the chronology is concerned, is placed at the end of the miracles which Elisha wrought for king Joram, simply because it exhibits in the clearest manner the salutary fruit of what he had done. And so, again, the account of Naaman the leper is placed in ch. v., although its proper position would be after ch. vi. 7, because it closes the series of miracles performed for and upon private persons, and the miracle was wrought upon a foreigner, so that the fame of the prophet had already penetrated into a foreign country; whereas in order of time it should either stand between vers. 23 and 24 of the sixth chapter (because the incursions of the flying parties of Syrians, to which ch. vi. 8–23 refers, had already taken place), or not till after the close of ch. vii. On the other hand, the partial separation of the miracles performed for the schools of

the prophets (ch. iv. 1-7, 38-41, 42-44, and ch. vi. 1-7) can only be explained on chronological grounds; and this is favoured by the circumstance that the events inserted between are attached by a *Vav consec.*, which does indicate the order of sequence (ch. v. 8 sqq. and vi. 1 sqq.). Regarded as a whole, however, the section ch. iv. 1-viii. 6, which was no doubt taken from a prophetical monograph and inserted into the annals of the kings, is in its true chronological place, since the account in ch. iii. belongs to the earlier period of the history, and the events narrated from ch. viii. 7 onwards to the later period.

Vers. 1-7. THE WIDOW'S CRUSE OF OIL.—A poor widow of the scholars of the prophets complained to Elisha of her distress, namely, that a creditor was about to take her two sons as servants (slaves). The Mosaic law gave a creditor the right to claim the person and children of a debtor who was unable to pay, and they were obliged to serve him as slaves till the year of jubilee, when they were once more set free (Lev. xxv. 39, 40). When the prophet learned, on inquiry, that she had nothing in her house but a small flask of oil (אֵסֶף, from אָסַף, means an anointing flask, a small vessel for the oil necessary for anointing the body), he told her to beg of all her neighbours empty vessels, not a few (אֶל־תִּקְעִי, make not few, *sc.* to beg), and then to shut herself in with her sons, and to pour from her flask of oil into all these vessels till they were full, and then to sell this oil and pay her debt with the money, and use the rest for the maintenance of herself and her children. She was to close the house-door, that she might not be disturbed in her occupation by other people, and also generally to avoid all needless observation while the miracle was being performed. הַפֶּלֶא תִסָּעֵי, let that which is filled be put on one side, namely by the sons, who handed her the vessels, according to vers. 5 and 6, so that she was able to pour without intermission. The form מִצֶּקֶת is a participle *Piel*, and is quite appropriate as an emphatic form; the *Keri* מִצֶּקֶת (*Hiphil*) is an unnecessary alteration, especially as the *Hiphil* of צָק is הִצִּיק. וַיַּעֲמֵד הַשֶּׁמֶן, then the oil stood, *i.e.* it ceased to flow. The *asyndeton* וַאֲחֵי בְנֵיהִי is very harsh, and the *Vav copul.* has probably dropped out. With the alteration proposed by L. de Dieu, viz. of וַאֲחֵי into וַאֲחֵי, "live with thy sons," the verb תִּחַי would necessarily stand first (Thenius).

Vers. 8-37. THE SHUNAMMITE AND HER SON.—Ver. 8. When Elisha was going one day (lit. *the day*, i.e. at that time, then) to *Shunem* (*Solam*, at the south-western foot of the Lesser Hermon; see at 1 Kings i. 3), a wealthy woman (נְהִיָּה as in 1 Sam. xxv. 2, etc.) constrained him to eat at her house; whereupon, as often as he passed by that place in his subsequent journeys from Carmel to Jezreel and back, he was accustomed to call upon her (וַיִּקְרָא as in Gen. xix. 2).—Vers. 9, 10. The woman then asked her husband to build a small upper chamber for this holy man of God, and to furnish it with the necessary articles of furniture (viz. bed, table, seat, and lamp), that he might always turn in at their house. חֶמְדָּה is either a walled upper chamber, i.e. one built with brick and not with wooden walls (Cler., Then.), or an upper chamber built upon the wall of the house (Ges.).—Vers. 11-13. After some time, when Elisha had spent the night in the chamber provided for him, he wanted to make some acknowledgment to his hostess for the love which she had shown him, and told his servant Gehazi to call her, and say to her: "Thou hast taken all this care for us, what shall I do to thee? Hast thou (anything) to say to the king or the chief captain?" i.e. hast thou any wish that I could convey to them, and intercede for thee? There is something striking here in the fact that Elisha did not address the woman himself, as she was standing before him, but told his servant to announce to her his willingness to make some return for what she had done. This was, probably, simply from a regard to the great awe which she had of the "holy man of God" (ver. 9), and to inspire her with courage to give expression to the wishes of her heart.¹ She answered: "I dwell among my people," i.e. not, I merely belong to the people (Thenius), but, I live quietly and peaceably among my countrymen, so that I have no need for any intercession with the king and great men of the kingdom. Ἀπραγμοσύνη χαίρω, καὶ εἰρηνικῶς διῶγω καὶ πρὸς τινα ἀμφισβήτησιν οὐκ ἀνέχομαι (Theodoret).—Vers. 14-16. When Elisha conversed with Gehazi still further on the matter, the latter said: "But she has no son, and her husband is old." Elisha

¹ The conjecture that Elisha would not speak to her directly for the sake of maintaining his dignity, or that the historian looked upon such conversation with women as unbecoming in a teacher of the law (Thenius), is already proved to be untenable by vers. 15, 16, where Elisha does speak to her directly.

then had her called again, and told her when she had entered the door: "At this time a year hence (קָצַת תִּיהֶה, lit. at the time when it revives again; see at Gen. xviii. 10) thou wilt embrace a son." The same favour was to be granted to the Shunammite as that which Sarah had received in her old age, that she might learn that the God of Abraham still ruled in and for Israel. She replied: "No, my lord, thou man of God," אֵלֹהִים, i.e. do not excite in thy servant any deceptive hopes.—Ver. 17. But however incredible this promise might appear to her, as it had formerly done to Sarah (Gen. xviii. 12, 13), it was fulfilled at the appointed time (cf. Gen. xxi. 2).—Vers. 18-20. But even the faith of the pious woman was soon to be put to the test, and to be confirmed by a still more glorious revelation of the omnipotence of the Lord, who works through the medium of His prophets. When the child presented to her by God had grown up into a lad, he complained one day to the reapers in the field of a violent headache, saying to his father, "My head, my head!" He was then taken home to his mother, and died at noon upon her knees, no doubt from inflammation of the brain produced by a sunstroke.—Vers. 21-23. The mother took the dead child at once up to the chamber built for Elisha, laid it upon the bed of the man of God, and shut the door behind her; she then asked her husband, without telling him of the death of the boy, to send a young man with a she-ass, that she might ride as quickly as possible to the man of God; and when her husband asked her, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day, since it is neither new moon nor Sabbath?"¹ she replied, *shalom*; i.e. either "it is all well," or "never mind." For this word, which is used in reply to a question after one's health (see ver. 26), is apparently also used, as Clericus has correctly observed, when the object is to avoid giving a definite answer to any one, and yet at the same time to satisfy him.—Vers. 24, 25. She then rode without stopping, upon the animal

¹ From these words, Theod., Kimchi, C. a Lap., Vatabl., and others have drawn the correct conclusion, that the pious in Israel were accustomed to meet together at the prophets' houses for worship and edification, on those days which were appointed in the law (Lev. xxiii. 3; Num. xxviii. 11 sqq.) for the worship of God; and from this Hertz and Hengstenberg have still further inferred, that in the kingdom of the ten tribes not only were the Sabbath and new moons kept, as is evident from Amos viii. 5 also, but the prophets supplied the pious in that kingdom with a substitute for the missing Levitical priesthood.

driven by the young man, to Elisha at mount Carmel. אֶלְעִזָּרִי לֹא יִמְנָעוּ מִי, literally, do not hinder me from riding.—Vers. 25–27. When the prophet saw her מֵרָחוֹק (from the opposite), that is to say, saw her coming in the distance, and recognised her as the Shunammite, he sent Gehazi to meet her, to ask her about her own health and that of her husband and child. She answered, *shalom*, i.e. well, that she might not be detained by any further discussion, and came to the prophet and embraced his feet, to pray for the help of the “holy man of God.” Gehazi wanted to thrust her away, “because it seemed to him an immodest importunity to wish to urge the prophet in such a way as this, and as it were to compel him” (Seb. Schm.); but the prophet said, “Let her alone, for her soul is troubled, and Jehovah has hidden it from me and has not told me.”¹—Ver. 28. The pious woman then uttered this complaint to the prophet: “Did I ask a son of the Lord? Did I not say, Do not deceive me?” What had happened to her she did not say,—a fact which may easily be explained on psychological grounds from her deep sorrow,—but Elisha could not fail to discover it from what she said.—Ver. 29. He therefore directed his servant Gehazi: “Gird thy loins and take thy staff in thy hand and go: if thou meet any one, thou wilt not salute him; and if any one salute thee, thou wilt not answer him; and lay my staff upon the face of the boy.” The object of this command neither to salute nor to return salutations by the way, was not merely to ensure the greatest haste (Thenius and many others), inasmuch as the people of the East lose a great deal of time in prolonged salutations (Niebuhr, *Beschr. v. Arab.* p. 48),² but the prophet wished thereby to preclude at the very outset the possibility of attributing the failure of Gehazi’s attempt to awaken the child to any external or accidental circumstance of this kind. For since it is inconceivable that the prophet should have adopted a wrong method, that is to say, should have sent Gehazi with the hope

¹ All that we can infer from these last words with regard to the nature of prophecy, is that the *donum propheticum* did not involve a supernatural revelation of every event.

² Or, as C. a Lap. supposes: “that Gehazi might avoid all distraction of either eyes or ears, and prepare himself entirely by prayers for the accomplishment of so great a miracle.” Theodoret explains it in a similar manner: “He knew that he was vainglorious and fond of praise, and that he would be sure to tell the reason of his journey to those who should meet him by the way. And vainglory is a hindrance to thaumaturgy.”

that he would restore the dead boy to life, his only intention in sending the servant must have been to give to the Shunammite and her family, and possibly also to Gehazi himself, a practical proof that the power to work miracles was not connected in any magical way with his person or his staff, but that miracles as works of divine omnipotence could only be wrought through faith and prayer; not indeed with the secondary intention of showing that he alone could work miracles, and so of increasing his own importance (Köster), but to purify the faith of the godly from erroneous ideas, and elevate them from superstitious reliance upon his own human person to true reliance upon the Lord God.—Ver. 30. The mother of the boy does not appear, indeed, to have anticipated any result from the measures adopted by Elisha; for she swears most solemnly that she will not leave him. But the question arises, whether this urging of the prophet to come himself and help arose from doubt as to the result of Gehazi's mission, or whether it was not rather an involuntary utterance of her excessive grief, and of the warmest wish of her maternal heart to see her beloved child recalled to life. We may probably infer the latter from the fulfilment of her request by Elisha.—Ver. 31. Gehazi did as he was commanded, but the dead child did not come to life again; the prophet's staff worked no miracle. "There was no sound and no attention," i.e. the dead one gave no sign of life. This is the meaning of אין קול אין תשובה both here and 1 Kings xviii. 29, where it is used of dead idols. The attempt of Gehazi to awaken the child was unsuccessful, not *propter fidem ipsi a muliere non adhibitam* (Seb. Schm.), nor because of the vainglory of Gehazi himself, but simply to promote in the godly of Israel true faith in the Lord.—Vers. 32-35. Elisha then entered the house, where the boy was lying dead upon his bed, and shut the door behind them both (i.e. himself and the dead child), and prayed to the Lord. He then lay down upon the boy, so that his mouth, his eyes, and his hands lay upon the mouth, eyes, and hands of the child, bowing down over him (יָגִיר; see at 1 Kings xviii. 42); and the flesh (the body) of the child became warm. He then turned round, i.e. turned away from the boy, went once up and down in the room, and bowed himself over him again; whereupon the boy sneezed seven times, and then opened his eyes. This raising of the dead boy to life does indeed resemble the raising of the dead by Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 20 sqq.); but it

differs so obviously in the manner in which it was effected, that we may see at once from this that Elisha did not possess the double measure of the spirit of Elijah. It is true that Elijah stretched himself three times upon the dead child, but at his prayer the dead returned immediately to life, whereas in the case of Elisha the restoration to life was a gradual thing.¹ And they both differ essentially from the raising of the dead by Christ, who recalled the dead to life by one word of His omnipotence (Mark v. 39-42; Luke vii 13-15; John xi. 43, 44), a sign that He was the only-begotten Son of God, to whom the Father gave to have life in Himself, even as the Father has life in Himself (John v. 25 sqq.), in whose name the Apostle Peter also was able through prayer to recall the dead Tabitha to life, whereas Elisha and Elijah had only to prophesy by word and deed of the future revelation of the glory of God.—Vers. 36, 37. After the restoration of the boy to life, Elisha had his mother called and gave her back her son, for which she fell at his feet with thanksgiving.

Vers. 38-41. ELISHA MAKES UNEATABLE FOOD WHOLESOME.—Ver. 38. When Elisha had returned to Gilgal, the seat of a school of the prophets (see at ch. ii. 1), *i.e.* had come thither once more on his yearly circuit, during the famine which prevailed in the land (see at ch. viii. 1), and the prophets' scholars sat before him (the teacher and master), he directed his servant (*i.e.* probably not Gehazi, but the pupil who waited upon him) to put the large pot to the fire and boil a dish for the pupils of the prophets. שָׂפָת answers to the German *beisetzen*, which is used for placing a vessel *upon* the fire (cf. Ezek. xxiv. 3).—Ver. 39. One (of these pupils) then went to the field to gather vegetables (אֵרֶב, *olera*: for the different explanations of this word see Celsii *Hierobot.* i. 459 sqq., and Ges. *Thes.* p. 56), and found אֵרֶב, *i.e.* not wild vines, but wild creepers (Luther), field-creepers

¹ The raising of the dead by Elijah and Elisha, especially by the latter, has been explained by many persons as being merely a revivification by magnetic manipulations or by the force of animal magnetism (even Passavant and Ennemoser adopt this view). But no dead person was ever raised to life by animal magnetism; and the assumption that the two boys were only apparently dead is at variance with the distinct words of the text, in addition to which, both Elisha and Elijah accomplished the miracle through their prayer, as is stated as clearly as possible both here (ver. 33) and also at 1 Kings xvii. 21, 22.

resembling vines; and having gathered his lap full of wild cucumbers, took them home and cut them into the vegetable pot, because they did not know them. חַבְבִּים is rendered in the ancient versions *colocynths* (LXX. *πολυτή ἀγρία*, i.e., according to Suid., *colocynthis*), whereas Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 1122), Winer, and others, following Celsius (*l.c.* i. 393 sqq.), have decided in favour of wild cucumbers, a fruit resembling an acorn, or, according to Oken, a green fleshy fruit of almost a finger's length and an inch thick, which crack with a loud noise, when quite ripe, on very gentle pressure, spiring out both juice and seeds, and have a very bitter taste. The reason for this decision is, that the peculiarity mentioned answers to the etymon חַבְבִּים, to split, in Syr. and Chald. to crack. Nevertheless the rendering given by the old translators is apparently the more correct of the two; for the colocynths also belong to the genus of the cucumbers, creep upon the ground, and are a round yellow fruit of the size of a large orange, and moreover are extremely bitter, producing colic, and affecting the nerves. The form of this fruit is far more suitable for oval architectural ornaments (חַבְבִּים, 1 Kings vi. 18, vii. 24) than that of the wild cucumber.—Ver. 40. The extremely bitter flavour of the fruit so alarmed the pupils of the prophets when they began to eat of the dish, that they cried out, "Death in the pot," and therefore thought the fruit was poison. If eaten in any large quantity, colocynths might really produce death: *vid.* Dioscorid. iv. 175 (178).—Ver. 41. Elisha then had some meal brought and poured it into the pot, after which the people were able to eat of the dish, and there was no longer anything injurious in the pot. וְעַתָּה, then take, וְעַתָּה denoting sequence in thought (*vid.* Ewald, § 348, a). The meal might somewhat modify the bitterness and injurious qualities of the vegetable, but could not take them entirely away; the author of the *Exegetical Handbook* therefore endeavours to get rid of the miracle, by observing that Elisha may have added something else. The meal, the most wholesome food of man, was only the earthly substratum for the working of the Spirit, which proceeded from Elisha, and made the noxious food perfectly wholesome.

Vers. 42-44. FEEDING OF A HUNDRED PUPILS OF THE PROPHETS WITH TWENTY BARLEY LOAVES.—A man of *Baal-Shalisha* (a place in the land of *Shalisha*, the country to the west of Gilgal, Jiljilia; see at 1 Sam. ix. 4) brought the prophet as first-

fruits twenty barley loaves and $\text{נֶרְסֵל} = \text{נֶרְסֵל}$, i.e. roasted ears of corn (see the Comm. on Lev. ii. 14), in his sack (אֶקֶלֶה , ἀγ. λει. , sack or pocket). Elisha ordered this present to be given to the people, i.e. to the pupils of the prophets who dwelt in one common home, for them to eat; and when his servant made this objection: "How shall I set this (this little) before a hundred men?" he repeated his command, "Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus hath the Lord spoken: They will eat and leave" ($\text{אָכְלוּ וְהוּזְרוּ}$, *infin. absol.*; see Ewald, § 328, α); which actually was the case. That twenty barley loaves and a portion of roasted grains of corn were not a sufficient quantity to satisfy a hundred men, is evident from the fact that one man was able to carry the whole of this gift in a sack, and still more so from the remark of the servant, which shows that there was no proportion between the whole of this quantity and the food required by a hundred persons. In this respect the food, which was so blessed by the word of the Lord that a hundred men were satisfied by so small a quantity and left some over, forms a type of the miraculous feeding of the people by Christ (Matt. xiv. 16 sqq., xv. 36, 37; John vi. 11, 12); though there was this distinction between them, that the prophet Elisha did not produce the miraculous increase of the food, but merely predicted it. The object, therefore, in communicating this account is not to relate another miracle of Elisha, but to show how the Lord cared for His servants, and assigned to them that which had been appropriated in the law to the Levitical priests, who were to receive, according to Deut. xviii. 4, 5, and Num. xviii. 13, the first-fruits of corn, new wine, and oil. This account therefore furnishes fresh evidence that the godly men in Israel did not regard the worship introduced by Jeroboam (his state-church) as legitimate worship, but sought and found in the schools of the prophets a substitute for the lawful worship of God (*vid.* Hengstenberg, *Beitr.* ii. S. 136 f.).

CHAP. V. CURING OF THE LEPROSY OF NAAMAN THE SYRIAN, AND
PUNISHMENT OF GEHAZI.

Vers. 1-19. CURING OF NAAMAN FROM LEPROSY.—Ver. 1. *Naaman*, the commander-in-chief of the Syrian king, who was a very great man before his lord, i.e. who held a high place in the service of his king and was greatly distinguished (נִשְׂאָ פָּנִים , cf. Isa. iii. 3, ix. 14), because God had given the Syrians salvation (*vic-*

tory) through him, was as a warrior afflicted with leprosy. The has not dropped out before מִצֶּרֶת, nor has the copula been omitted for the purpose of sharpening the antithesis (Thenius), for the appeal to Ewald, § 354, *a*, proves nothing, since the passages quoted there are of a totally different kind; but גִּבּוֹר הָיָל is a second predicate: the man was as a brave warrior leprosy. There is an allusion here to the difference between the Syrians and the Israelites in their views of leprosy. Whereas in Israel lepers were excluded from human society (see at Lev. xiii. and xiv.), in Syria a man afflicted with leprosy could hold a very high state-office in the closest association with the king.—Vers. 2, 3. And in Naaman's house before his wife, *i.e.* in her service, there was an Israelitish maiden, whom the Syrians had carried off in a marauding expedition (יָצְאוּ נִדְחִים: they had gone out in (as) marauding bands). She said to her mistress: "O that my lord were before the prophet at Samaria! (where Elisha had a house, ch. vi. 32,) he would free him from his leprosy." אָסַף מִצֶּרֶת, to receive (again) from leprosy, in the sense of "to heal," may be explained from Num. xii. 14, 15, where אָסַף is applied to the reception of Miriam into the camp again, from which she had been excluded on account of her leprosy.—Vers. 4, 5. When Naaman related this to his lord (the king), he told him to go to Samaria furnished with a letter to the king of Israel; and he took with him rich presents as compensation for the cure he was to receive, *viz.* ten talents of silver, about 25,000 thalers (£3750—Tr.); 6000 shekels (= two talents) of gold, about 50,000 thalers (£7500); and ten changes of clothes, a present still highly valued in the East (see the Comm. on Gen. xlv. 22). This very large present was quite in keeping with Naaman's position, and was not too great for the object in view, namely, his deliverance from a malady which would be certainly, even if slowly, fatal.—Vers. 6, 7. When the king of Israel (Joram) received the letter of the Syrian king on Naaman's arrival, and read therein that he was to cure Naaman of his leprosy (יִצְחָה), and now,—showing in the letter the transition to the main point, which is the only thing communicated here; cf. Ewald, § 353, *b*), he rent his clothes in alarm, and exclaimed, "Am I God, to be able to kill and make alive?" *i.e.* am I omnipotent like God? (cf. Deut. xxxii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 6;) "for he sends to me to cure a man of his leprosy." The words of the letter הִנֵּנִי מְרַפֵּא, "so cure him," were certainly not so insolent in their meaning as Joram supposed,

but simply meant : have him cured, as thou hast a wonder-working prophet ; the Syrian king imagining, according to his heathen notions of priests and *goëtes*, that Joram could do what he liked with his prophets and their miraculous powers. There was no ground, therefore, for the suspicion which Joram expressed : “ for only observe and see, that he seeks occasion against me.” הִנָּחֵם, to seek occasion, *sc.* for a quarrel (cf. Judg. xiv. 4).—Ver. 8. When Elisha heard of this, he reproved the king for his unbelieving alarm, and told him to send the man to him, “ that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel.”—Vers. 9, 10. When Naaman stopped with his horses and chariot before the house of Elisha, the prophet sent a messenger out to him to say, “ Go and wash thyself seven times in the Jordan, and thy flesh will return to thee, *i.e.* become sound, and thou wilt be clean.” שָׁב, return, inasmuch as the flesh had been changed through the leprosy into festering matter and putrefaction. The reason why Elisha did not go out to Naaman himself, is not to be sought for in the legal prohibition of intercourse with lepers, as Ephraem Syrus and many others suppose, nor in his fear of the leper, as Thenius thinks, nor even in the wish to magnify the miracle in the eyes of Naaman, as C. a Lapide imagines, but simply in Naaman’s state of mind. This is evident from his exclamation concerning the way in which he was treated. Enraged at his treatment, he said to his servant (vers. 11, 12) : “ I thought, he will come out to me and stand and call upon the name of Jehovah his God, and go with his hand over the place (*i.e.* move his hand to and fro over the diseased places), and take away the leprosy.” הַפִּצְיֹרֶת, the leprosy = the disease of leprosy, the scabs and ulcers of leprosy. “ Are not *Abana* and *Pharpar*, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel ? (for the combination of בָּרִי with נְהִירֹת, see Ewald, § 174, *f.*) Should I not bathe in them, and become clean ? ” With these words he turned back, going away in a rage. Naaman had been greatly strengthened in the pride, which is innate in every natural man, by the exalted position which he held in the state, and in which every one bowed before him, and served him in the most reverential manner, with the exception of his lord the king ; and he was therefore to receive a salutary lesson of humiliation, and at the same time was also to learn that he owed his cure not to any magic touch from the prophet, but solely to the power of God working through him.—Of the two rivers of Damascus, *Abana*

or *Amana* (the reading of the *Keri* with the interchange of the labials א and נ, see Song of Sol. iv. 8) is no doubt the present *Barada* or *Barady* (بردى, i.e. the cold river), the *Chrysorrhoas* (Strabo, xvi. p. 755; Plin. *h. n.* 18 or 16), which rises in the table-land to the south of Zebedany, and flows through this city itself, and then dividing into two arms, enters two small lakes about $4\frac{3}{4}$ hours to the east of the city. The *Pharpar* is probably the only other independent river of any importance in the district of Damascus, namely, the *Avaj*, which arises from the union of several brooks around *Sa'sa'*, and flows through the plain to the south of Damascus into the lake Heijāny (see Rob. *Bibl. Researches*, p. 444). The water of the Barada is beautiful, clear and transparent (Rob.), whereas the water of the Jordan is turbid, "of a clayey colour" (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 256); and therefore Naaman might very naturally think that his own native rivers were better than the Jordan.—Ver. 13. His servants then addressed him in a friendly manner, and said, "My father, if the prophet had said to thee a great thing (i.e. a thing difficult to carry out), shouldst thou not have done it? how much more then, since he has said to thee, Wash, and thou wilt be clean?" אָבִי, my father, is a confidential expression arising from childlike piety, as in ch. vi. 21 and 1 Sam. xxiv. 12; and the etymological jugglery which traces אָבִי from אָבִי = אָבִי = אָבִי (Ewald, *Gr.* § 358, Anm.), or from אָבִי (Thenius), is quite superfluous (see Delitzsch on *Job*, vol. ii. p. 265, transl.).—וְיִכְרֹם . . . וְיִכְרֹם is a conditional clause without אָבִי (see Ewald, § 357, b), and the object is placed first for the sake of emphasis (according to Ewald, § 309, a). אָבִי, how much more (see Ewald, § 354, c), sc. shouldst thou do what is required, since he has ordered thee so small and easy a thing.—Ver. 14. Naaman then went down (from Samaria to the Jordan) and dipped in Jordan seven times, and his flesh became sound (שָׁלֵם, as in ver. 10) like the flesh of a little boy. Seven times, to show that the healing was a work of God, for seven is the stamp of the works of God.—Vers. 15, 16. After the cure had been effected, he returned with all his train to the man of God with this acknowledgment: "Behold, I have found that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel," and with the request that he would accept a blessing (a present, נְדָבָה, as in Gen. xxxiii. 11, 1 Sam. xxv. 27, etc.) from him; which the prophet, however, stedfastly refused, notwithstanding

all his urging, that he might avoid all appearance of selfishness, by which the false prophets were actuated.—Vers. 17, 18. Then Naaman said: וְאִם, “and not” = and if not, καὶ εἰ μὴ (LXX.; not “and O,” according to Ewald, § 358, *b*, Anm.), “let there be given to thy servant (=to me) two mules’ burden of earth (on the construction see Ewald, § 287, *h*), for thy servant will no more make (offer) burnt-offerings and slain-offerings to any other gods than Jehovah. May Jehovah forgive thy servant in this thing, when my lord (the king of Syria) goeth into the house of Rimmon, to fall down (worship) there, and he supports himself upon my hand, that I fall down (with him) in the house of Rimmon; if I (thus) fall down in the house of Rimmon, may,” etc. It is very evident from Naaman’s explanation, “for thy servant,” etc., that he wanted to take a load of earth with him out of the land of Israel, that he might be able to offer sacrifice upon it to the God of Israel, because he was still a slave to the polytheistic superstition, that no god could be worshipped in a proper and acceptable manner except in his own land, or upon an altar built of the earth of his own land. And because Naaman’s knowledge of God was still adulterated with superstition, he was not yet prepared to make an unreserved confession before men of his faith in Jehovah as the only true God, but hoped that Jehovah would forgive him if he still continued to join outwardly in the worship of idols, so far as his official duty required. *Rimmon* (i.e. the pomegranate) is here, and probably also in the local name *Hadad-rimmon* (Zech. xii. 11), the name of the supreme deity of the Damascene Syrians, and probably only a contracted form of *Hadad-rimmon*, since *Hadad* was the supreme deity or sun-god of the Syrians (see at 2 Sam. viii. 3), signifying the sun-god with the modification expressed by *Rimmon*, which has been differently interpreted according to the supposed derivation of the word. Some derive the name from רִמְם = רִים, as the supreme god of heaven, like the Ἑλίου of *Sanchun.* (Cler., Seld., *Ges. thes.* p. 1292); others from רִמָּה, a pomegranate, as a personification of the power of generation, as *numen naturæ omnia fecundantis*, since the pomegranate with its abundance of seeds is used in the symbolism of both Oriental and Greek mythology along with the Phallus as a symbol of the generative power (vid. Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 122, 123), and is also found upon Assyrian monuments (vid. Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, p. 343); others again, with less probability, from רִמָּה, *jaculari*,

as the sun-god who vivifies and fertilizes the earth with his rays, like the *ἐκηβόλος Ἀπόλλων*; and others from $\text{ܡܪܝ} = \text{ܡܪ}$, *compruit*, as the dying winter sun (according to Movers and Hitzig; see Leyrer in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*).—The words “and he supports himself upon my hand” are not to be understood literally, but are a general expression denoting the service which Naaman had to render as the aide-de-camp to his king (cf. ch. vii. 2, 17). For the Chaldaic form ܡܪܝܢܝܢܝܢ , see Ewald, § 156, *a*.—In the repetition of the words “if I fall down in the temple of Rimmon,” etc., he expresses the urgency of his wish.—Ver. 19. Elisha answered, “Go in peace,” wishing the departing Syrian the peace of God upon the road, without thereby either approving or disapproving the religious conviction which he had expressed. For as Naaman had not asked permission to go with his king into the temple of Rimmon, but had simply said, might Jehovah forgive him or be indulgent with him in this matter, Elisha could do nothing more, without a special command from God, than commend the heathen, who had been brought to belief in the God of Israel as the true God by the miraculous cure of his leprosy, to the further guidance of the Lord and of His grace.¹

Vers. 20-27. PUNISHMENT OF GEHAZI.—Vers. 20-22. When Naaman had gone a stretch of the way (בְּכַרְתָּ אֶרֶץ , ver 19; see at Gen. xxxv. 16), there arose in Gehazi, the servant of Elisha,

¹ Most of the earlier theologians found in Elisha's words a direct approval of the religious conviction expressed by Naaman and his attitude towards idolatry; and since they could not admit that a prophet would have permitted a heathen alone to participate in idolatrous ceremonies, endeavoured to get rid of the consequence resulting from it, viz. *licitam ergo esse Christianis συμφώνησιν πιστοῦ μετὰ ἀπιστοῦ*, seu *symbolizationem et communicationem cum ceremonia idololatrica*, either by appealing to the use of $\text{וְהַשְׁתַּחֲוִי$ and to the distinction between *incurratio regis voluntaria et religiosa* (real worship) and *incurratio servilis et coacta Naemani, quæ erat politica et civilis* (mere prostration from civil connivance), or by the ungrammatical explanation that Naaman merely spoke of what he had already done, not of what he would do in future (*vid.* Pfeiffer, *Dub. vex.* p. 445 sqq., and J. Meyer, *ad Seder Olam*, p. 904 sqq., Budd., and others).—Both are unsatisfactory. The dreaded consequence falls of itself if we only distinguish between the times of the old covenant and those of the new. Under the old covenant the time had not yet come in which the heathen, who came to the knowledge of the true deity of the God of Israel, could be required to break off from all their heathen ways, unless they would formally enter into fellowship with the covenant nation.

the desire for a portion of the presents of the Syrian which his master had refused (אֲנִי לֹא אֶרְדָּה, as truly as Jehovah liveth, assuredly I run after him; אֲנִי כִּי as in 1 Sam. xxv. 34). He therefore hastened after him; and as Naaman no sooner saw Gehazi running after him than he sprang quickly down from his chariot in reverential gratitude to the prophet (אֵלִישָׁה as in Gen. xxiv. 64), he asked in the name of Elisha for a talent of silver and two changes of raiment, professedly for two poor pupils of the prophets, who had come to the prophet from Mount Ephraim.—Ver. 23. But Naaman forced him to accept two talents (הֶאֱחָזֵק, be pleased to take; and קִבְּרִים, with the dual ending, *ne percat indicium numeri*—Winer) in two purses, and two changes of raiment, and out of politeness had these presents carried by two of his servants before Gehazi.—Ver. 24. When Gehazi came to the hill (הַתְּלָח, the well-known hill before the city) he took the presents from the bearers, and dismissing the men, laid them up in the house. אָבֵק, to bring into safe custody.—Vers. 25, 26. But when he entered his master's presence again, he asked him, "Whence (comest thou), Gehazi?" and on his returning the lying answer that he had not been anywhere, charged him with all that he had done. לֹא לִבִּי הָלַךְ, "had not my heart gone, when the man turned from his chariot to meet thee?" This is the simplest and the only correct interpretation of these difficult words, which have been explained in very different ways. Theodoret (οὐχὶ ἢ καρδία μου ἦν μετὰ σοῦ) and the Vulgate (*nonne cor meum in presenti erat, quando, etc.*) have already given the same explanation, and so far as the sense is concerned it agrees with that adopted by Thenius: was I not (in spirit) away (from here) and present (there)? הָלַךְ stands in a distinct relation to the הָלַךְ of Gehazi.—הֲנֵת זֶה: "is it time to take silver, and clothes, and olive-trees, and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and servants and maidens?" i.e. is this the time, when so many hypocrites pretend to be prophets from selfishness and avarice, and bring the prophetic office into contempt with unbelievers, for a servant of the true God to take money and goods from a non-Israelite for that which God has done through him, that he may acquire property and luxury for himself?—Ver. 27. "And let the leprosy of Naaman cleave to thee and to thy seed for ever." This punishment took effect immediately. Gehazi went out from Elisha covered with leprosy as if with snow (cf. Ex. iv. 6, Num. xii. 10). It was not too harsh a punishment that the

leprosy taken from Naaman on account of his faith in the living God, should pass to Gehazi on account of his departure from the true God. For it was not his avarice only that was to be punished, but the abuse of the prophet's name for the purpose of carrying out his selfish purpose, and his misrepresentation of the prophet¹

CHAP. VI. 1-23. THE FLOATING IRON. THE SYRIANS SMITTEN
WITH BLINDNESS.

Vers. 1-7. **ELISHA CAUSES AN IRON AXE TO FLOAT.**—The following account gives us an insight into the straitened life of the pupils of the prophets. Vers. 1-4. As the common dwelling-place had become too small for them, they resolved, with Elisha's consent, to build a new house, and went, accompanied by the prophet, to the woody bank of the Jordan to fell the wood that was required for the building. The place where the common abode had become too small is not given, but most of the commentators suppose it to have been Gilgal, chiefly from the erroneous assumption that the Gilgal mentioned in ch. ii. 1 was in the Jordan valley to the east of Jericho. Thenius only cites in support of this the reference in יֹשְׁבֵימָה לְפָנָיו (dwell with thee) to ch. iv. 38; but this decides nothing, as the pupils of the prophets sat before Elisha, or gathered together around their master in a common home, not merely in Gilgal, but also in Bethel and Jericho. We might rather think of Jericho, since Bethel and Gilgal (Jiljilia) were so far distant from the Jordan, that there is very little probability that a removal of the meeting-place to the Jordan, such as is indicated by נִשְׁחָלְנוּ שָׁם מִקוֹמָם, would ever have been thought of from either of these localities. —Ver. 5. In the felling of the beams, the iron, i.e. the axe, of one of the pupils of the prophets fell into the water, at which he exclaimed with lamentation: "Alas, my lord (i.e. Elisha), and it was begged!" The sorrowful exclamation implied a petition for help. וְיֵאָמֵר לַיהוָה: "and as for the iron, it fell into the water;" so that even here אֵל does not stand before the nominative, but

¹ "This was not the punishment of his immoderate *δυσποδονία* (receiving of gifts) merely, but most of all of his lying. For he who seeks to deceive the prophet in relation to the things which belong to his office, is said to lie to the Holy Ghost, whose instruments the prophets are" (vid. Acts v. 3).—**GEOTIUS.**

serves to place the noun in subjection to the clause (cf. Ewald, § 277, a). **לִשְׁכֹּחַ** does not mean borrowed, but begged. The meaning to borrow is attributed to **לִשְׁכֹּחַ** from a misinterpretation of particular passages (see the Comm. on Ex. iii. 22). The prophets' pupil had begged the axe, because from his poverty he was unable to buy one, and hence the loss was so painful to him.—Vers. 6, 7. When he showed Elisha, in answer to his inquiry, the place where it had fallen, the latter cut off a stick and threw it thither (into the water) and made the iron flow, i.e. float (**רָצַף**, from **רָצַח**, to flow, as in Deut. xi. 4); whereupon the prophets' pupil picked the axe out of the water with his hand. The object of the miracle was similar to that of the stater in the fish's mouth (Matt. xvii. 27), or of the miraculous feeding, namely, to show how the Lord could relieve earthly want through the medium of His prophet. The natural interpretation of the miracle, which is repeated by Thenius, namely, that "Elisha struck the eye of the axe with the long stick which he thrust into the river, so that the iron was lifted by the wood," needs no refutation, since the raising of an iron axe by a long stick, so as to make it float in the water, is impossible according to the laws of gravitation.

Vers. 8–23. ELISHA'S ACTION IN THE WAR WITH THE SYRIANS.—Vers. 8–10. In a war which the Syrians carried on against the Israelitish king Joram (not Jehoahaz, as Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 557, erroneously supposes), by sending flying parties into the land of Israel (cf. ver. 23), Elisha repeatedly informed king Joram of the place where the Syrians had determined to encamp, and thereby frustrated the plans of the enemy. **אֶל־מָקוֹם . . . תִּהְיוּנָה**: "at the place of so and so shall my camp be." **כִּי־אֶל־כֵּן** as in 1 Sam. xxi. 3 (see at Ruth iv. 1). **תִּהְיוּנָה**, the encamping or the place of encampment (cf. Ewald, § 161, a), is quite appropriate, so that there is no need either for the alteration into **תִּתְבַּחֲוּ**, "ye shall hide yourselves" (Then.), or into **תִּתְבַּחֲוּ**, with the meaning which is arbitrarily postulated, "ye shall place an ambush" (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 558), or for the much simpler alteration into **לִי**, **תִּתְבַּחֲוּ**, "pitch the camp for me" (Böttcher). The singular suffix in **תִּתְבַּחֲוּ** refers to the king as leader of the war: "my camp" = the camp of my army. "Beware of passing over (**עָבַר**) this place," i.e. of leaving it unoccupied, "for there have the Syrians determined to make their invasion." **נִתְּחָם**, from **נָחַח**, going down,

with *dagesh euphon.*, whereas Ewald (§ 187, *b*) is of opinion that *נִחַם*, instead of being an intrans. part. *Kal*, might rather be a part. *Niph.* of *נָחַם*, which would not yield, however, any suitable meaning. Thenius renders *נִעְבֵּר*, "to pass by this place," which would be grammatically admissible, but is connected with his conjecture concerning *נִחַם*, and irreconcilable with ver. 10. When the king of Israel, according to ver. 10, sent to the place indicated on account of Elisha's information, he can only have sent troops to occupy it; so that when the Syrians arrived they found Israelitish troops there, and were unable to attack the place. There is nothing in the text about the Syrians bursting forth from their ambush. *נִחַם* means to enlighten, instruct, but not to warn. *נִשְׁמַרְשָׁם*, "he took care there," i.e. he occupied the place with troops, to defend it against the Syrians, so that they were unable to do anything, "not once and not twice," i.e. several times.—Ver. 11. The king of the Syrians was enraged at this, and said to his servants, "Do ye not show me who of our men (leans) to the king of Israel?" i.e. takes his part. *מִי־לֵאשֶׁר לֵט = מִי־לֵט*, probably according to an Aramæan dialect: see Ewald, 181, *b*, though he pronounces the reading incorrect, and would read *מִי־לֵט*, but without any ground and quite unsuitably, as the king would thereby reckon himself among the traitors.—Vers. 12 sqq. Then one of the servants answered, "No, my lord king," i.e. it is not we who disclose thy plans to the king of Israel, "but Elisha the prophet tells him what thou sayest in thy bed-chamber;" whereupon the king of Syria inquired where the prophet lived, and sent a powerful army to Dothan, with horses and chariots, to take him prisoner there. *Dothan* (see Gen. xxxvii. 17), which according to the *Onom.* was twelve Roman miles to the north of Samaria, has been preserved under its old name in a *Tell* covered with ruins to the south-west of Jenin, on the caravan-road from Gilead to Egypt (see Rob. *Bibl. Res.* p. 158, and V. de Velde, *Journey*, i. pp. 273, 274).—Vers. 15-17. When Elisha's servant went out the next morning and saw the army, which had surrounded the town in the night, he said to the prophet, "Alas, my lord, how shall we do?" But Elisha quieted him, saying, "Fear not, for those with us are more than those with them." He then prayed that the Lord might open his servant's eyes, whereupon he saw the mountain upon which Dothan stood full of fiery horses and chariots round about Elisha. Opening

the eyes was translation into the ecstatic state of clairvoyance, in which an insight into the invisible spirit-world was granted him. The fiery horses and chariots were symbols of the protecting powers of Heaven, which surrounded the prophet. The fiery form indicated the super-terrestrial origin of this host. Fire, as the most ethereal of all earthly elements, was the most appropriate substratum for making the spirit-world visible. The sight was based upon Jacob's vision (Gen. xxxii. 2), in which he saw a double army of angels encamped around him, at the time when he was threatened with danger from Esau.—Vers. 18–20. When the enemy came down to Elisha, he prayed to the Lord that He would smite them with blindness; and when this took place according to his word, he said to them, This is not the way and this is not the city; follow me, and I will lead you to the man whom ye are seeking; and led them to Samaria, which was about four hours' distance from Dothan, where their eyes were opened at Elisha's prayer, so that they saw where they had been led. וַיֵּדְוּ אֵלָיו cannot be understood as referring to Elisha and his servant, who went down to the Syrian army, as J. H. Mich., Budd., F. v. Meyer, and Thenius, who wants to alter אֵלָיו into אֵלֵיהֶם, suppose, but must refer to the Syrians, who went down to the prophet, as is evident from what follows. For the assumption that the Syrians had stationed themselves below and round the mountain on which Dothan stood, and therefore would have had to come up to Elisha, need not occasion an unnatural interpretation of the words. It is true that Dothan stands upon an isolated hill in the midst of the plain; but on the eastern side it is enclosed by a range of hills, which project into the plain (see V. de Velde, *R.* i. p. 273). The Syrians who had been sent against Elisha had posted themselves on this range of hills, and thence they came down towards the town of Dothan, which stood on the hill, whilst Elisha went out of the town to meet them. It is true that Elisha's going out is not expressly mentioned, but in ver. 19 it is clearly presupposed. כְּטִירִים is mental blindness here, as in the similar case mentioned in Gen. xix. 11, that is to say, a state of blindness in which, though a man has eyes that can see, he does not see correctly. Elisha's untruthful statement, "this is not the way," etc., is to be judged in the same manner as every other *ruse de guerre*, by which the enemy is deceived.—Vers. 21–23. Elisha forbade king Joram to slay

the enemy that he had brought to him, because he had not taken them prisoners in war, and recommended him to treat them hospitably and then let them return to their lord. The object of the miracle would have been frustrated if the Syrians had been slain. For the intention was to show the Syrians that they had to do with a prophet of the true God, against whom no human power could be of any avail, that they might learn to fear the almighty God. Even when regarded from a political point of view, the prophet's advice was more likely to ensure peace than the king's proposal, as the result in ver. 23 clearly shows. The Syrians did not venture any more to invade the land of Israel with flying parties, from fear of the obvious protection of Israel by its God; though this did not preclude a regular war, like that related in the following account. For **וְהָאִשָּׁר שָׁבִיתָ וְנָו'** see the Comm. on ch. v. 13. "art thou accustomed to slay that which thou hast taken captive with sword and bow?" i.e. since thou dost not even slay those whom thou hast made prisoners in open battle, how wouldst thou venture to put these to death? **וְכָרָה לָהֶם כֶּרֶה**, he prepared them a meal. **כֶּרֶה** is a *denom.* from **כָּרָה**, a meal, so called from the union of several persons, like *cæna* from *κοινῆ* (*vid.* Dietr. on Ges. *Lex.* s. v. **כָּרָה**).

CHAP. VI. 24-VII. 20. ELISHA'S ACTION DURING A FAMINE IN SAMARIA.

Vers. 24-33. After this there arose so fearful a famine in Samaria on the occasion of a siege by Benhadad, that one mother complained to the king of another, because she would not keep her agreement to give up her son to be eaten, as she herself had already done.—Ver. 25. The famine became great—till an ass's head was worth eighty shekels of silver, and a quarter of a cab of dove's dung was worth five shekels. **וְהָיָה כִּי**, to become for = to be worth. The ass was an unclean animal, so that it was not lawful to eat its flesh. Moreover the head of an ass is the most inedible part of the animal. Eighty shekels were about seventy thalers (£10, 10s.—Tr.), or if the Mosaic bekas were called shekels in ordinary life, thirty-five thalers (£5, 5s.; see Bertheau, *Zur Gesch. der Isr.* p. 49). According to Thénius, a quarter of a cab is a sixth of a small Dresden measure (*Mässchen*), not quite ten Parisian cubic inches. Five

shekels: more than four thalers (twelve shillings), or more than two thalers (six shillings). The *Chethib* חֲרִיבִים is to be read חֲרִי יִבִּים, *excrementa columbarum*, for which the *Keri* substitutes the euphemistic חֲרִיב יִבִּים, *fluxus, profluvium columbarum*. The expression may be taken literally, since dung has been known to be collected for eating in times of terrible famine (*vid.* Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* v. 13, 7); but it may also be figuratively employed to signify a very miserable kind of food, as the Arabs call the

herba Alkali اشنان, *i.e.* sparrow's dung, and the Germans call

Asa foetida Teufelsdreck. But there is no ground for thinking of wasted chick-pease, as Bochart (*Hieroz.* ii. p. 582, ed. Ros.) supposes (see, on the other hand, Celsii *Hierobot.* ii. p. 30 sqq.).¹

—Ver. 26. As the king was passing by upon the wall to conduct the defence, a woman cried to him for help; whereupon he replied: "אֵל-יִשְׁרָאֵל, "should Jehovah not help thee, whence shall I help thee? from the threshing-floor or from the wine-press?" It is difficult to explain the אֵל, which Ewald (§ 355, b) supposes to stand for אֵלֶּם. Thenius gives a simpler explanation, namely, that it is a subjective negation and the sentence hypothetical, so that the condition would be only expressed by the close connection of the two clauses (according to Ewald, § 357). "From the threshing-floor or from the wine-press?" *i.e.* I can neither help thee with corn nor with wine, cannot procure thee either food or drink. He then asked her what her trouble was; upon which she related to him the horrible account of the slaying of her own child to appease her hunger, etc.—Ver. 30. The king, shuddering at this horrible account, in which the curses of the law in Lev. xxvi. 29 and Deut. xxviii. 53, 57 had been literally fulfilled, rent his clothes; and the people then saw that he wore upon his body the hairy garment of penitence and mourning, כִּבְיִית, within, *i.e.* beneath the upper garment, as a sign of humiliation before God, though it was indeed more an *opus operatum* than a true bending of the heart before God and His judgment. This is proved by his conduct in ver. 31. When, for example, the complaint of the

¹ Clericus gives as a substantial parallel the following passage from Plutarch (*Artax.* c. 24): "he only killed the beasts of burden, so that the head of an ass was hardly to be bought for sixty drachmæ;" and Grotius quotes the statement in Plin. *h. n.* viii. 57, that when *Casalinum* was besieged by Hannibal a mouse was sold for 200 *denaria*.

woman brought the heart-breaking distress of the city before him, he exclaimed, "God do so to me . . . if the head of Elisha remain upon him to-day." Elisha had probably advised that on no condition should the city be given up, and promised that God would deliver it, if they humbled themselves before Him in sincere humility and prayed for His assistance. The king thought that he had done his part by putting on the hairy garment; and as the anticipated help had nevertheless failed to come, he flew into a rage, for which the prophet was to pay the penalty. It is true that this rage only proceeded from a momentary ebullition of passion, and quickly gave place to a better movement of his conscience. The king hastened after the messenger whom he had sent to behead Elisha, for the purpose of preventing the execution of the murderous command which he had given in the hurry of his boiling wrath (ver. 32); but it proves, nevertheless, that the king was still wanting in that true repentance, which would have sprung from the recognition of the distress as a judgment inflicted by the Lord. The desperate deed, to which his violent wrath had impelled him, would have been accomplished, if the Lord had not protected His prophet and revealed to him the king's design, that he might adopt defensive measures.—Ver. 32. The elders of the city were assembled together in Elisha's house, probably to seek for counsel and consolation; and the king sent a man before him (namely, to behead the prophet); but before the messenger arrived, the prophet told the elders of the king's intention: "See ye that this son of a murderer (Joram, by descent and disposition a genuine son of Ahab, the murderer of Naboth and the prophets) is sending to cut off my head?" and commanded them to shut the door against the messenger and to force him back at the door, because he already heard the sound of his master's feet behind him. These measures of Elisha, therefore, were not dictated by any desire to resist the lawful authorities, but were acts of prudence by which he delayed the execution of an unrighteous and murderous command which had been issued in haste, and thereby rendered a service to the king himself.—In ver. 33 we have to supply from the context that the king followed close upon the messenger, who came down to Elisha while he was talking with the elders; and he (the king) would of course be admitted at once. For the subject to וַיֵּלֶךְ is not the messenger, but the king, as is evident from ch. vii. 2

and 17. The king said: "Behold the calamity from the Lord, why shall I wait still further for the Lord?"—the words of a despairing man, in whose soul, however, there was a spark of faith still glimmering. The very utterance of his feelings to the prophet shows that he had still a weak glimmer of hope in the Lord, and wished to be strengthened and sustained by the prophet; and this strengthening he received.

Ch. vii. 1, 2. Elisha announced to him the word of the Lord: "At the (this) time to-morrow a seah of wheaten flour (סֵהָ, see at 1 Kings v. 2) will be worth a shekel, and two seahs of barley a shekel in the gate, i.e. in the market, at Samaria." A seah, or a third of an ephah = a Dresden peck (*Metze*), for a shekel was still a high price; but in comparison with the prices given in ch. vi. 25 as those obtained for the most worthless kinds of food, it was incredibly cheap. The king's aide-de-camp (שִׁלְחֵי: see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8; אֲשֶׁר לְמֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל, an error in writing for אֲשֶׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ נָשָׂא, cf. ver. 17, and for the explanation ch. v. 18) therefore replied with mockery at this prophecy: "Behold (i.e. granted that) the Lord made windows in heaven, will this indeed be?" i.e. such cheapness take place. (For the construction, see Ewald, § 357, b.) The ridicule lay more especially in the "windows in heaven," in which there is an allusion to Gen. vii. 11, sc. to rain down a flood of flour and corn. Elisha answered seriously: "Behold, thou wilt see it with thine eyes, but not eat thereof" (see vers. 17 sqq.). The fulfilment of these words of Elisha was brought about by the event narrated in vers. 3 sqq.—Vers. 3–7. "Four men were before the gate as lepers," or at the gateway, separated from human society, according to the law in Lev. xiii. 46, Num. v. 3, probably in a building erected for the purpose (cf. ch. xv. 5), just as at the present day the lepers at Jerusalem have their huts by the side of the Zion gate (*vid.* Strauss, *Sinai u. Golgatha*, p. 205, and Tobler, *Denksblätter aus Jerus.* p. 411 sqq.). These men being on the point of starvation, resolved to invade the camp of the Syrians, and carried out this resolution בַּעֲרֵב, in the evening twilight, not the morning twilight (Seb. Schm., Cler., etc.), on account of ver. 12, where the king is said to have received the news of the flight of the Syrians during the night. Coming to "the end of the Syrian camp," i.e. to the outskirts of it on the city side, they found no one there. For (vers. 6, 7) "the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots and horses,

a noise of a great army," so that, believing the king of Israel to have hired the kings of the Hittites and Egyptians to fall upon them, they fled from the camp in the twilight בְּלַיְלָה, with regard to their life, i.e. to save their life only, leaving behind them their tents, horses, and asses, and the camp as it was.—The miracle, by which God delivered Samaria from the famine or from surrendering to the foe, consisted in an oral delusion, namely, in the fact that the besiegers thought they heard the march of hostile armies from the north and south, and were seized with such panic terror that they fled in the greatest haste, leaving behind them their baggage, and their beasts of draught and burden. It is impossible to decide whether the noise which they heard had any objective reality, say a miraculous buzzing in the air, or whether it was merely a deception of the senses produced in their ears by God; and this is a matter of no importance, since in either case it was produced miraculously by God. The kings of the Hittites are kings of northern Canaan, upon Lebanon and towards Phœnicia; מְלָכֵי חִתִּים in the broader sense for Canaanites, as in 1 Kings x. 29. The plural, "kings of the Egyptians," is probably only occasioned by the parallel expression "kings of the Hittites," and is not to be pressed.—Vers. 8-11. When these lepers (*these*, pointing back to vers. 3 sqq.) came into the camp which the Syrians had left, they first of all satisfied their own hunger with the provisions which they found in the tents, and then took different valuables and concealed them. But their consciences were soon aroused, so that they said: We are not doing right; this day is a day of joyful tidings: if we are silent and wait till the morning light, guilt will overtake us; "for it is the duty of citizens to make known things relating to public safety" (Grotius). They then resolved to announce the joyful event in the king's palace, and reported it to the watchman at the city gate. שָׂרֵי הַעִיר stands as a generic term in a collective sense for the persons who watched at the gate; hence the following plural לָהֶם, and in ver. 11 וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ. "And the gate-keepers cried out (what they had heard) and reported it in the king's palace."—Vers. 12 sqq. The king imagined that the unexpected departure of the Syrians was only a *ruse*, namely, that they had left the camp and hidden themselves in the field, to entice the besieged out of the fortress, and then fall upon them and press into the city. בְּהִשָּׁרָה according to later usage for בְּשָׂרָה (*vid.* Ewald, § 244, a). In order to

make sure of the correctness or incorrectness of this conjecture, one of the king's servants (counsellors) gave this advice: "Let them take (the *Vav* before וְהָיָה as in ch. iv. 41) five of the horses left in the city, that we may send and see how the matter stands." The words, "Behold they (the five horses) are as the whole multitude of Israel that are left in it (the city); behold they are as the whole multitude of Israel that are gone," have this meaning: The five horsemen (for horses stand for horsemen, as it is self-evident that it was men on horseback and not the horses themselves that were to be sent out as spies) can but share the fate of the rest of the people of Samaria, whether they return unhurt to meet death by starvation with the people that still remain, or fall into the hands of the enemy and are put to death, in which case they will only suffer the lot of those who have already perished. *Five* horses is an approximative small number, and is therefore not at variance with the following statement, that two pair of horses were sent out with chariots and men. The *Chethib* חֲמִשָּׁה is not to be altered, since there are other instances in which the first noun is written with the article, though in the construct state (*vid.* Ewald, § 290, e); and the *Keri* is only conformed to the following חֲמִשָּׁה.—Vers. 14b and 15. They then sent out two chariots with horses, who pursued the flying enemy to the Jordan, and found the whole of the road full of traces of the hurried flight, consisting of clothes and vessels that had been thrown away. The *Chethib* חֲמִשָּׁה is the only correct reading, since it is only in the *Niphal* that חָמַשׁ has the meaning to fly in great haste (*cf.* 1 Sam. xxiii. 26, Ps. xlviii. 6, civ. 7).—Vers. 16, 17. When the returning messengers reported this, the people went out and plundered the camp of the Syrians, and this was followed by the consequent cheapness of provisions predicted by Elisha. As the people streamed out, the unbelieving aide-de-camp, whom the king had ordered to take the oversight at the gate (וְהָיָה, to deliver the oversight) for the purpose of preserving order in the crowding of the starving multitude, was trodden down by the people, so that he died, whereby this prediction of Elisha was fulfilled. The exact fulfilment of this prediction appeared so memorable to the historian, that he repeats this prophecy in vers. 18–20 along with the event which occasioned it, and refers again to its fulfilment.

CHAP. VIII. ELISHA HELPS THE SHUNAMMITE TO HER PROPERTY THROUGH THE HONOUR IN WHICH HE WAS HELD ; AND PRE-DICTS TO HAZAEL HIS POSSESSION OF THE THRONE. REIGNS OF JORAM AND AHAZIAH, KINGS OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1-6. ELISHA'S INFLUENCE HELPS THE SHUNAMMITE TO THE POSSESSION OF HER HOUSE AND FIELD.—Vers. 1 and 2. By the advice of Elisha, the woman whose son the prophet had restored to life (ch. iv. 33) had gone with her family into the land of the Philistines during a seven years' famine, and had remained there seven years. The two verses are rendered by most commentators in the pluperfect, and that with perfect correctness, for they are circumstantial clauses, and עָשָׂה is merely a continuation of עָשָׂה, the two together preparing the way for, and introducing the following event. The object is not to relate a prophecy of Elisha of the seven years' famine, but what afterwards occurred, namely, how king Joram was induced by the account of Elisha's miraculous works to have the property of the Shunammite restored to her upon her application. The seven years' famine occurred in the middle of Joram's reign, and the event related here took place before the curing of Naaman the Syrian (ch. v.), as is evident from the fact that Gehazi talked with the king (ver. 4), and therefore had not yet been punished with leprosy. But it cannot have originally stood between ch. iv. 37 and iv. 38, as Thenius supposes, because the incidents related in ch. iv. 38-44 belong to the time of this famine (cf. ch. iv. 38), and therefore precede the occurrence mentioned here. By the words, "the Lord called the famine, and it came seven years" (*sc.* lasting that time), the famine is described as a divine judgment for the idolatry of the nation.—Ver. 3. When the woman returned to her home at the end of the seven years, she went to the king to cry, *i.e.* to invoke his help, with regard to her house and her field, of which, as is evident from the context, another had taken possession during her absence.—Ver. 4. And just at that time the king was asking Gehazi to relate to him the great things that Elisha had done ; and among these he was giving an account of the restoration of the Shunammite's son to life.—Vers. 5, 6. While he was relating this, the woman herself came in to invoke the help of the king to recover her property, and was pointed out

to the king by Gehazi as the very woman of whom he was speaking, which caused the king to be so interested in her favour, that after hearing her complaint he sent a chamberlain with her (*saris* as in 1 Kings xxii. 9), with instructions to procure for her not only the whole of her property, but the produce of the land during her absence.—For עֲרִיבָה without *mappiq*, see Ewald, § 247, *d*.

VERS. 7-15. ELISHA PREDICTS TO HAZAEL AT DAMASCUS THE POSSESSION OF THE THRONE.—Vers. 7 sqq. Elisha then came to Damascus at the instigation of the Spirit of God, to carry out the commission which Elijah had received at Horeb with regard to Hazael (1 Kings xix. 15). Benhadad king of Syria was sick at that time, and when Elisha's arrival was announced to him, sent Hazael with a considerable present to the man of God, to inquire of Jehovah through him concerning his illness. The form of the name הַזְּאֵל (here and ver. 15) is etymologically correct; but afterwards it is always written without ה. 'וְכָל־טוֹב דַּמְשָׁק' ("and that all kinds of good of Damascus") follows with a more precise description of the *minchah*—"a burden of forty camels." The present consisted of produce or wares of the rich commercial city of Damascus, and was no doubt very considerable; at the same time, it was not so large that forty camels were required to carry it. The affair must be judged according to the Oriental custom, of making a grand display with the sending of presents, and employing as many men or beasts of burden as possible to carry them, every one carrying only a single article (cf. Harmer, *Beobb.* ii. p. 29, iii. p. 43, and Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenl.* iii. p. 17).—Ver. 10. According to the *Chethib* לֹא תֵּיָה, Elisha's answer was, "Thou wilt not live, and (for) Jehovah has shown me that he will die;" according to the *Keri* לֹא תֵּיָה, "tell him: Thou wilt live, but Jehovah," etc. Most of the commentators follow the ancient versions, and the Masoretes, who reckon our לֹא among the fifteen passages of the O. T. in which it stands for the pronoun אֲנִי (*vid.* Hilleri *Arcan. Keri*, p. 62 seq.), and some of the codices, and decide in favour of the *Keri*. (1) because the conjecture that אֲנִי was altered into לֹא in order that Elisha might not be made to utter an untruth, is a very natural one; and (2) on account of the extreme rarity with which a negative stands before the inf. abs. with the finite verb following. But there is not much force in either argument.

The rarity of the position of אֵל before the inf. abs. followed by a finite verb, in connection with the omission of the pronoun אֵל after אֵלֶיךָ, might be the very reason why אֵל was taken as a pronoun; and the confirmation of this opinion might be found in the fact that Hazael brought back this answer to the king: "Thou wilt live" (ver. 14). The reading in the text אֵל (*non*) is favoured by the circumstance that it is the more difficult of the two, partly because of the unusual position of the negative, and partly because of the contradiction to ver. 14. But the אֵל is found in the same position in other passages (Gen. iii. 4, Ps. xlix. 8, and Amos ix. 8), where the emphasis lies upon the negation; and the contradiction to ver. 14 may be explained very simply, from the fact that Hazael did not tell his king the truth, because he wanted to put him to death and usurp the throne. We therefore prefer the reading in the text, since it is not in harmony with the character of the prophets to utter an untruth; and the explanation, "thou wilt not die of thine illness, but come to a violent death," puts into the words a meaning which they do not possess. For even if Benhadad did not die of his illness, he did not recover from it.—Ver. 11. Elisha then fixed Hazael for a long time with his eye, and wept. וַיַּעֲמֵד עָיָו, literally, he made his face stand fast, and directed it (upon Hazael) to shaming. עָרֵבֵשׁ as in Judg. iii. 25; not in a shameless manner (Thenius), but till Hazael was embarrassed by it.—Ver. 12. When Hazael asked him the cause of his weeping, Elisha replied: "I know the evil which thou wilt do to the sons of Israel: their fortresses wilt thou set on fire (שָׂרַפְתָּ בָּאֵשׁ, see at Judg. i. 8), their youths wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children to pieces, and cut asunder their women with child" (נִפְּצָה, split, cut open the womb). This cruel conduct towards Israel which is here predicted of Hazael, was only a special elaboration of the brief statement made by the Lord to Elijah concerning Hazael (1 Kings xix. 17). The fulfilment of this prediction is indicated generally in ch. x. 32, 33, and xiii. 3 sqq.; and we may infer with certainty from Hos. x. 14 and xiv. 1, that Hazael really practised the cruelties mentioned.—Vers. 13 sqq. But when Hazael replied in feigned humility, What is thy servant, the dog (i.e. so base a fellow: for דָּלֵק see at 1 Sam. xxiv. 15), that he should do such great things? Elisha said to him, "Jehovah has shown thee to me as king over Aram;" whereupon Hazael returned to his lord, brought him the

pretended answer of Elisha that he would live (recover), and the next day suffocated him with a cloth dipped in water. מִכְבֵּר, from כָּבַר, to plait or twist, literally, anything twisted; not, however, a net for gnats or flies (Joseph., J. D. Mich., etc.), but a twisted thick cloth, which when dipped in water became so thick, that when it was spread over the face of the sick man it was sufficient to suffocate him.

Vers. 16-24. REIGN OF JORAM OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxi. 2-20).—Joram became king in the fifth year of Joram of Israel, while Jehoshaphat his father was (still) king, the latter handing over the government to him two years before his death (see at ch. i. 17), and reigned eight years, namely, two years to the death of Jehoshaphat and six years afterwards.¹ The *Chethib* שְׁשָׁנָה שָׁנָה is not to be altered, since the rule that the numbers two to ten take the noun in the plural is not without exception (cf. Ewald, § 287, 2).—Vers. 18, 19. Joram had married a daughter of Ahab, namely Athaliah (ver. 26), and walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, transplanting the worship of Baal into his kingdom. Immediately after the death of Jehoshaphat he murdered his brothers, apparently with no other object than to obtain possession of the treasures which his father had left them (2 Chron. xxi. 2-4). This wickedness of Joram would have been followed by the destruction of Judah, had not the Lord preserved a shoot to the royal house for David's sake. For לָחֵת לוֹ בֵּיר see 1 Kings xi. 36. The following word לְבָנָי serves as an explanation of לוֹ בֵּיר, "a light with regard to his sons," i.e. by the fact that he kept sons (descendants) upon the throne.—Vers. 20-22. Nevertheless the divine chastisement was not omitted. The ungodliness of Joram was punished partly by the revolt of the Edomites and of the city of Libnah from his rule, and partly by a horrible sickness of which he died (2 Chron. xxi. 12-15). Edom, which had hitherto had only a

¹ The words מִלְּךָ יְהוֹשָׁפָט מִלְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל have been improperly omitted by the Arabic and Syriac, and by Luther, Dathe, and De Wette from their translations; whilst Schulz, Maurer, Thenius, and others pronounce it a gloss. The genuineness of the words is attested by the LXX. (the Edit. Complut. being alone in omitting them) and by the Chaldee: and the rejection of them is just as arbitrary as the interpolation of בָּתָּר, which is proposed by Kimchi and Ewald ("when Jehoshaphat was dead"). Compare J. Meyer, *annotatt. ad Seder Olam*, p. 916 sq.

vicegerent with the title of king (see ch. iii. 9 and 1 Kings xxii. 48), threw off the authority of Judah, and appointed its own king, under whom it acquired independence, as the attempt of Joram to bring it back again under his control completely failed. The account of this attempt in ver. 21 and 2 Chron. xxi. 9 is very obscure. "Joram went over to *Zair*, and all his chariots of war with him; and it came to pass that he rose up by night and smote the Edomites round about, and indeed the captains of the war-chariots, and the people fled (*i.e.* the Judæan men of war, not the Edomites) to their tents." It is evident from this, that Joram had advanced to Zair in Idumæa; but there he appears to have been surrounded and shut in, so that in the night he fought his way through, and had reason to be glad that he had escaped utter destruction, since his army fled to their homes. *זַאִיר* is an unknown place in Idumæa, which Movers, Hitzig, and Ewald take to be Zoar, but without considering that Zoar was in the land of Moab, not in Edom. The Chronicles have instead *עִם שָׂרָיו*, "with his captains," from a mere conjecture; whilst Thenius regards *לַעִירָה* as altered by mistake from *לְעִירָה* ("to Seir"), which is very improbable in the case of so well-known a name as *שֵׁעִיר*. *שֵׁעִיר* is a later mode of writing for *הַפִּסְיָב*, probably occasioned by the frequently occurring word *פִּסְיָב*. "To this day," *i.e.* to the time when the original sources of our books were composed. For the Edomites were subjugated again by Amaziah and Uzziah (ch. xiv. 7 and 22), though under Ahaz they made incursions into Judah again (2 Chron. xxviii. 17).—At that time *Libnah* also revolted. This was a royal city of the early Canaanites, and at a later period it was still a considerable fortress (ch. xix. 8). It is probably to be sought for in the ruins of *Arak el Menshiyeh*, two hours to the west of *Beit-Jibrin* (see the Comm. on Josh. x. 29). This city probably revolted from Judah on the occurrence of an invasion of the land by the Philistines, when the sons of Joram were carried off, with the exception of the youngest, Jehoahaz (Ahaziah: 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17).—Vers. 23, 24. According to 2 Chron. xxi. 18 sqq., Joram died of a terrible disease, in which his bowels fell out, and was buried in the city of David, though not in the family sepulchre of the kings.¹

¹ "The building of Carthage, Dido, her husband Sichæus, her brother Pygmalion king of Tyre (*scelere ante alios immanior omnes*), all coincide with the reign of Joram. This synchronism of the history of Tyre is not without

Vers. 25-29. REIGN OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxii. 1-6).—Ahaziah, the youngest son of Joram, ascended the throne in the twenty-second year of his age. The statement in 2 Chron. xxii. 2, that he was forty-two years old when he became king, rests upon a copyist's error, namely, a confusion of α twenty with β forty. Now, since his father became king at the age of thirty-two, and reigned eight years, Ahaziah must have been born in the nineteenth year of his age. Consequently it may appear strange that Ahaziah had brothers still older than himself (2 Chron. xxi. 17); but as early marriages are common in the East, and the royal princes had generally concubines along with their wife of the first rank, as is expressly stated of Joram in 2 Chron. xxi. 17, he might have had some sons in his nineteenth year. His mother was called Athaliah, and was a daughter of the idolatrous Jezebel. In ver. 26 and 2 Chron. xxii. 2 she is called the daughter, *i.e.* grand-daughter, of Omri; for, according to ver. 18, she was a daughter of Ahab. Omri, the grand-father, is mentioned in ver. 26 as the founder of the dynasty which brought so much trouble upon Israel and Judah through its idolatry.—Ver. 27. Ahaziah, like his father, reigned in the spirit of Ahab, because he allowed his mother to act as his adviser (2 Chron. xxii. 3, 4).—Vers. 28, 29. Ahaziah went with Joram of Israel, his mother's brother, to the war with the Syrians at Ramoth. The contest for this city, which had already cost Ahab his life (1 Kings xxii.), was to furnish the occasion, according to the overruling providence of God, for the extermination of the whole of Omri's family. Being wounded in the battle with the Syrians, Joram king of Israel returned to Jezreel to be healed of his wounds. His nephew Ahaziah visited him there, and there he met with his death at the same time as Joram at the hands of Jehu, who had conspired against Joram (see ch. ix. 14 sqq. and 2 Chron. xxii. 7-9). Whether the war with Hazael at Ramoth was for the recapture of this city, which had been taken by the Syrians, or simply for holding it against the Syrians, it is impossible to determine. All

significance here. The Tyrian, Israelitish, and Judæan histories are closely connected at this time. Jezebel, a Tyrian princess, was Ahab's wife, and again her daughter Athaliah was the wife of Joram, and after his death the murderer of the heirs of the kingdom, and sole occupant of the throne. Tyre, through these marriages, introduced its own spirit and great calamity into both the Israelitish kingdoms."—J. D. MICHAELIS on ver. 24.

that we can gather from ch. ix. 14 is, that at that time Ramoth was in the possession of the Israelites, whether it had come into their possession again after the disgraceful rout of the Syrians before Samaria (ch. vii.), or whether, perhaps, it was not recovered till this war. For אַרְסִים without the article see Ewald, § 277, c.—Ver. 29. בְּרָמָה = בְּרָמָה, ver. 28; see at 1 Kings xxii. 4.

CHAP. IX. JEHU ANOINTED KING. HIS CONSPIRACY AGAINST JORAM.
JORAM, AHAZIAH, AND JEZEBEL SLAIN.

Vers. 1-10. ANOINTING OF JEHU BY COMMAND OF ELISHA.—While the Israelitish army was at Ramoth, Elisha executed the last of the commissions which Elijah had received at Horeb (1 Kings xix. 16), by sending a pupil of the prophets into the camp to anoint *Jehu* the commander-in-chief of the army as king, and to announce to him, in the name of Jehovah, that he would be king over Israel; and to charge him to exterminate the house of Ahab.—Vers. 1-3 contain the instructions which Elisha gave to the pupil of the prophets. אֵלֶּיךָ אֵלֶּיךָ as in 1 Sam. x. 1. רְאֵה שָׁם יְהוּ, look round there for Jehu. הִקְלִיפוּ וְרִי, let him (bid him) rise up from the midst of his brethren, i.e. of his comrades in arms. חָרִי בְּחֶרֶר: the true meaning is, “into the innermost chamber” (see at 1 Kings xx. 30). Ver. 3 contains only the leading points of the commission to Jehu, the full particulars are communicated in the account of the fulfilment in vers. 6 sqq. “And flee, and thou shalt not wait.” Elisha gave him this command, not to protect him from danger on the part of the secret adherents of Ahab (Theodoret, Cler.), but to prevent all further discussions, or “that he might not mix himself up with other affairs” (Seb. Schmidt).—Ver. 4. “And the young man, the servant of the prophet, went.” The second יָעַר has the article in the construct state, contrary to the rule (*vid.* Ges. § 110, 2, b).—Vers. 5 sqq. After the communication of the fact that he had a word to Jehu, the latter rose up and went with him into the house, i.e. into the interior of the house, in the court of which the captains were sitting together. There the pupil of the prophets poured oil upon Jehu’s head, and announced to him that Jehovah had anointed him king for Israel, and that he was to smite, i.e. exterminate, the house of Ahab, to avenge upon it the blood of the prophets (*vid.* 1 Kings xviii. 4, xix. 10).—Vers. 8-10 are simply a repetition of the

threat in 1 Kings xxi. 21-23. For וְהָיָה, see at 1 Kings xxi. 23.

Vers. 11-15. JEHU'S CONSPIRACY AGAINST JORAM. — Ver. 11. When Jehu came out again to his comrades in arms, after the departure of the pupil of the prophets, they inquired וַיִּשְׁאַל, i.e. "is it all well? why did this madman come to thee?" not because they were afraid that he might have done him some injury (Ewald), or that he might have brought some evil tidings (Thenius), but simply because they conjectured that he had brought some important news. They called the prophet וַיִּשְׁאַל, a madman, in derision, with reference to the ecstatic utterances of the prophets when in a state of holy inspiration. Jehu answered evasively, "Ye know the man and his muttering," i.e. ye know that he is mad and says nothing rational. וַיִּשְׁאַל includes both meditating and speaking.—Ver. 12. They were not contented with this answer, however, but said וְלָמָּה, i.e. thou dost not speak truth. Jehu thereupon informed them that he had anointed him king over Israel in the name of Jehovah.—Ver. 13. After hearing this, they took quickly every man his garment, laid it under him upon the steps, blew the trumpet, and proclaimed him king. The clothes, which consisted simply of a large piece of cloth for wrapping round the body (see at 1 Kings xi. 29), they spread out in the place of carpets upon the steps, which served as a throne, to do homage to Jehu. For these signs of homage compare Matt. xxi. 7 and Wetstein, *N. Test. ad h. l.* The difficult words וְעַל-נְיָרֵם הַמַּעֲלֹת, as to the meaning of which the early translators have done nothing but guess, can hardly be rendered in any other way than that proposed by Kimchi (*lib. rad.*), *super ipsosmet gradus*, upon the steps themselves = upon the bare steps; נְיָרֵם being taken according to Chaldee usage like the Hebrew עַצֵּם in the sense of *substantia rei*, whereas the rendering given by Lud. de Dieu, after the Arabic جِزْم, *sectio—super aliquem e gradibus*, is without analogy in Hebrew usage (*vid.* L. de Dieu *ad h. l.*, and Ges. *Thes.* p. 303).¹ The meaning is, that without looking for a suitable

¹ The objection raised by Thenius, that it is only in combination with personal pronouns that the Chaldaic נְיָרֵם signifies *self* either in the Chaldee or Samaritan versions, is proved to be unfounded by וְנְיָרֵם in Job i. 3 (Targ.). Still less can the actual circumstances be adduced as an objection, since

place on which to erect a throne, they laid their clothes upon the bare steps, or the staircase of the house in which they were assembled, and set him thereon to proclaim him king.—Vers. 14, 15. Thus Jehu conspired against Joram, who (as is related again in the circumstantial clause which follows from **וְיָזֶם** to **מִלְךְ אֲרָם**; cf. ch. viii. 28, 29) had been keeping guard at Ramoth in Gilead, i.e. had defended this city against the attacks of Hazael, and had returned to Jezreel to be healed of the wounds which he had received; and said, “If it is your wish (**נִשְׁכְּתִם**), let no fugitive go from the city, to announce it in Jezreel (viz. what had taken place, the conspiracy or the proclamation of Jehu as king).” It is evident from this, that the Israelites were in possession of the city of Ramoth, and were defending it against the attacks of the Syrians, so that **שָׁמָּה** in ver. 14 cannot be understood as relating to the siege of Ramoth. The *Chethib* **לְיֵזְרְעֵל** for **לְהֵיזֵר** is not to be altered according to the *Keri*, as there are many examples to be found of syncope in cases of this kind (*vid.* Olshausen, *Lehrb. d. Hebr. Spr.* p. 140).

Vers. 16-29. SLAYING OF THE TWO KINGS, JORAM OF ISRAEL AND AHAZIAH OF JUDAH.—Ver. 16. Jehu drove without delay to Jezreel, where Joram was lying sick, and Ahaziah had come upon a visit to him.—Vers. 17-21. As the horsemen, who were sent to meet him on the announcement of the watchman upon the tower at Jezreel that a troop was approaching, joined the followers of Jehu, and eventually the watchman, looking down from the tower, thought that he could discover the driving of Jehu in the approaching troop, Joram and Ahaziah mounted their chariots to drive and meet him, and came upon him by the portion of ground of Naboth the Jezreelite. The second **שָׁמָּה** in ver. 17 is a rarer form of the absolute state (see Ges. § 80, 2, Anm. 2, and Ewald, § 173, *d*).—**מִדֶּלֶת הַשְּׁלוֹמִים**: “what hast thou to do with peace?” i.e. to trouble thyself about it. **כֹּחַ אֶל-אֲחֵרִי**: “turn behind me,” sc. to follow me. **הַדְּרִיבָנִי כִּמְ**: “the driving is like the driving of Jehu; for he drives like a madman.” **בְּשִׁעָתוֹ**, in *insania*, i.e. in actual fact in *præcipitatione* (Vatabl). “The there is no evidence to support the assertion that there was no staircase in front of the house. The perfectly un-Hebraic conjecture **אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ**, **הַמַּעְלִיָּה**, “as a figure (or representation) of the necessary ascent” (Thenius), has not the smallest support in the Vulgate rendering, *ad similitudinem tribunalis*.

portion of Naboth" is the vineyard of Naboth mentioned in 1 Kings xxi, which formed only one portion of the gardens of the king's palace.—Ver. 22. To Joram's inquiry, "Is it peace, Jehu?" the latter replied, "What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her many witchcrafts continue?" The notion of continuance is implied in עַד (see Ewald, § 217, e); וְנִטְנִים is spiritual whoredom, i.e. idolatry. בְּשִׁפְטִים, *incantationes magicæ*, then witchcrafts generally, which were usually associated with idolatry (cf. Deut. xviii. 10 sq.).—Ver. 23. Joram detecting the conspiracy from this reply, turned round (וַיִּפְּץָּ as in 1 Kings xxii. 34) and fled, calling out to Ahaziah מִרְסָּה, "deceit," i.e. we are deceived, in actual fact betrayed.—Ver. 24. But Jehu seized the bow (וַיִּמְלֵא יָדוֹ בַּקֶּשֶׁת, lit. filled his hand with the bow), and shot Joram "between his arms," i.e. in his back between the shoulders in an oblique direction, so that the arrow came out at his heart, and Joram sank down in his chariot.—Ver. 25. Jehu then commanded his aide-de-camp (שְׁלִיחַ, see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8) Bidkar to cast the slain man into the field of Naboth the Jezreelite, and said, "For remember how we, I and thou, both rode (or drove) behind his father Ahab, and Jehovah pronounced this threat upon him." אֲנִי וְאַתָּה are accusatives, written with a looser connection for אֲנִי וְאַתָּה, as the apposition רִכְבָּיִם shows: literally, think of me and thee, the riders. The olden translators were misled by אֲנִי, and therefore transposed זָכָר into the first person, and Thenius naturally follows them. רִכְבָּיִם זָכָרִים, riding in pairs. This is the rendering adopted by most of the commentators, although it might be taken, as it is by Kimchi and Bochart, as signifying the two persons who are carried in the same chariot. כֶּבֶד, a burden, then a prophetic utterance of a threatening nature (see the Comm. on Nah. i. 1). For the connection of the clauses 'וַיִּדְבֹּק וְנָא, see Ewald, § 338, a. In ver. 26 Jehu quotes the word of God concerning Ahab in 1 Kings xxi. 19 so far as the substance is concerned, to show that he is merely the agent employed in executing it. "Truly (אִמֶּנֶה, a particle used in an oath) the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons have I seen yesterday, saith the Lord, and upon this field will I requite him." The slaying of the sons of Naboth is not expressly mentioned in 1 Kings xxi. 13, "because it was so usual a thing, that the historian might leave it out as a matter of course" (J. D. Mich., Ewald). It necessarily followed, however, from the fact that Naboth's field was confiscated (see

at 1 Kings xxi. 14).—Vers. 27, 28. When Ahaziah saw this, he fled by the way to the garden-house, but was smitten, i.e. mortally wounded, by Jehu at the height of Gur near Jibleam, so that as he was flying still farther to Megiddo he died, and was carried as a corpse by his servants to Jerusalem, and buried there. After וַיִּכּוּהוּ, “and him also, smite him,” we must supply וַיִּכּוּהוּ, “and they smote him,” which has probably only dropped out through a copyist’s error. The way by which Ahaziah fled, and the place where he was mortally wounded, cannot be exactly determined, as the situation of the localities named has not yet been ascertained. The “garden-house” (בֵּית הַגֶּן) cannot have formed a portion of the royal gardens, but must have stood at some distance from the city of Jezreel, as Ahaziah went away by the road thither, and was not wounded till he reached the height of Gur near Jibleam. מַעְלֵה גֹר, the ascent or eminence of Gur, is defined by Jibleam. Now, as Ahaziah fled from Jezreel to Megiddo past Jibleam, Thenius thinks that Jibleam must have been situated between Jezreel and Megiddo. But between Jezreel and Megiddo there is only the plain of Jezreel or Esdrelom, in which we cannot suppose that there was any such eminence as that of Gur. Moreover Jibleam or Bileam (1 Chron. vi. 55, see at Josh. xvii. 11) was probably to the south of Jenin, where the old name בֵּלְעָם has been preserved in the well

of بلعم, Belameh, near Beled Sheik Manssûr, which is half an hour’s journey off. And it is quite possible to bring this situation of Jibleam into harmony with the account before us. For instance, it is *a priori* probable that Ahaziah would take the road to Samaria when he fled from Jezreel, not only because his father’s brothers were there (ch. x. 13), but also because it was the most direct road to Jerusalem; and he might easily be pursued by Jehu and his company to the height of Gur near Jibleam before they overtook him, since the distance from Jezreel (Zerin) to Jenin is only two hours and a half (Rob. Pal. iii. p. 828), and the height of Gur might very well be an eminence which he would pass on the road to Jibleam. But the wounded king may afterwards have altered the direction of his flight for the purpose of escaping to Megiddo, probably because he thought that he should be in greater safety there than he would be in Samaria.¹

¹ In 2 Chron. xxii. 8, 9, the account of the slaying of Ahaziah and his brethren (ch. x. 12 sqq.) is condensed into one brief statement, and then

—In ver. 29 we are told once more in which year of Joram's reign Ahaziah became king. The discrepancy between "the *eleventh* year" here and "the *twelfth* year" in ch. viii. 25 may be most simply explained, on the supposition that there was a difference in the way of reckoning the commencement of the years of Joram's reign.

Vers. 30–37. DEATH OF JEZEBEL.—Ver. 30. When Jehu came to Jezreel and Jezebel heard of it, "she put her eyes into lead polish (*i.e.* painted them with it), and beautified her head and placed herself at the window." קֶהֱלִי is a very favourite eye-paint with Oriental women even to the present day. It is prepared from antimony ore (كحل, *Cohol* or *Stibium*

of the Arabs), which when pounded yields a black powder with a metallic brilliancy, which was laid upon the eyebrows and eyelashes either in a dry state as a black powder, or moistened generally with oil and made into an ointment, which is applied with a fine smooth eye-pencil of the thickness of an ordinary goose-quill, made either of wood, metal, or ivory. The way to use it was to hold the central portion of the pencil horizontally between the eyelids, and then draw it out between them, twisting it round all the while, so that the edges of the eyelids were blackened all round; and the object was to heighten the splendour of the dark southern eye, and give it, so to speak, a more deeply glowing fire, and to impart a youthful appearance to the whole of the eyelashes even in extreme old age. Rosellini found jars with eye-paint of this kind in the early Egyptian graves (*vid. Hille, über den Gebrauch u. die*

afterwards it is stated with regard to Ahaziah, that "Jehu sought him, and they seized him when he was hiding in Samaria, and brought him to Jehu and slew him," from which it appears that Ahaziah escaped to Samaria. From the brevity of these accounts it is impossible to reconcile the discrepancy with perfect certainty. On the one hand, our account, which is only limited to the main fact, does not preclude the possibility that Ahaziah really escaped to Samaria, and was there overtaken by Jehu's followers, and then brought back to Jehu, and wounded upon the height of Gur near Jibleam, whence he fled to Megiddo, where he breathed out his life. On the other hand, in the perfectly summary account in the Chronicles, מִתְחַבֵּא בְשֶׁמֶרֶן may be understood as referring to the attempt to escape to Samaria and hide himself there, and may be reconciled with the assumption that he was seized upon the way to Samaria, and when overtaken by Jehu was mortally wounded.

Zusammensetzung der oriental. Augenschminke: Deutsch. morg. Zisch. v. p. 236 sqq.).—Jezebel did this that she might present an imposing appearance to Jehu and die as a queen; not to allure him by her charms (Ewald, after Ephr. Syr.). For (ver. 31) when Jehu entered the palace gate, she cried out to him, "Is it peace, thou Zimri, murderer of his lord?" She addressed Jehu as Zimri the murderer of the king, to point to the fate which Jehu would bring upon himself by the murder of the king, as Zimri had already done (*vid.* 1 Kings xvi. 10-18).—Vers. 32, 33. But Jehu did not deign to answer the worthless woman; he simply looked up to the window and inquired: "Who is (holds) with me? who?" Then two, three chamberlains looked out (of the side windows), and by Jehu's command threw the proud queen out of the window, so that some of her blood spirted upon the wall and the horses (of Jehu), and Jehu trampled her down, driving over her with his horses and chariot.—Ver. 34. Jehu thereupon entered the palace, ate and drank, and then said to his men: "Look for this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." הָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת, the woman smitten by the curse of God.—Vers. 35, 36. But when they went to bury her, they found nothing but her skull, the two feet, and the two hollow hands. The rest had been eaten by the dogs and dragged away. When this was reported to Jehu, he said: "This is the word of the Lord, which He spake by His servant Elijah," etc. (1 Kings xxi. 23), *i.e.* this has been done in fulfilment of the word of the Lord. Ver. 37 is also to be regarded as a continuation of the prophecy of Elijah quoted by Jehu (and not as a closing remark of the historian, as Luther supposes), although what Jehu says here does not occur verbatim in 1 Kings xxi. 23, but Jehu has simply expanded rather freely the meaning of that prophecy. הָיִיתָ (*Chethib*) is the older form of the 3d pers. fem. *Kal*, which is only retained here and there (*vid.* Ewald, § 194, a). וְאִשָּׁר is a conjunction (see Ewald, § 337, a): "that men may not be able to say, This is Jezebel," *i.e.* that they may no more be able to recognise Jezebel.

CHAP. X. 1-27. EXTERMINATION OF THE OTHER SONS OF AHAB, OF THE BRETHREN OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH, AND OF THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

VERS. 1-11. EXTERMINATION OF THE SEVENTY SONS OF AHAB IN SAMARIA.—

Vers. 1-3. As Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria (בָּנִים in the wider sense, viz. sons, including grandsons [see at ver. 13], as is evident from the fact that אֲבִימֹן, foster-fathers, are mentioned, whereas Ahab had been dead fourteen years, and therefore his youngest sons could not have had foster-fathers any longer), Jehu sent a letter to the elders of the city and to the foster-fathers of the princes, to the effect that they were to place one of the sons of their lord upon the throne. There is something very strange in the words אֶל-שָׂרֵי יִזְרְעֵאל הַזְּקֵנִים, "to the princes of Jezreel, the old men," partly on account of the name *Jezreel*, and partly on account of the combination of הַזְּקֵנִים with שָׂרֵי. If we compare ver. 5, it is evident that הַזְּקֵנִים cannot be the adjective to שָׂרֵי, but denotes the elders of the city, so that the preposition אֶל has dropped out before הַזְּקֵנִים. שָׂרֵי יִזְרְעֵאל, the princes or principal men of Jezreel, might certainly be the chief court-officials of the royal house of Ahab, since Ahab frequently resided in Jezreel. But against this supposition there is not only the circumstance that we cannot discover any reason why the court-officials living in *Samaria* should be called princes of Jezreel, but also ver. 5, where, instead of the princes of Jezreel, the governor of the city and the governor of the castle are mentioned. Consequently there is an error of the text in יִזְרְעֵאל, which ought to read הָעִיר, though it is older than the ancient versions, since the Chaldee has the reading יִזְרְעֵאל, and no doubt the Alexandrian translator read the same, as the Septuagint has sometimes τῆς πόλεως, like the Vulgate, and sometimes *Samapelas*, both unquestionably from mere conjecture. The "princes of the city" are, according to ver 5, the prefect of the palace and the captain of the city; the זְקֵנִים, "elders," the magistrates of Samaria; and אֲבִימֹן, the foster-fathers and tutors appointed by Ahab for his sons and grandsons. אֲבִימֹן is governed freely by הַזְּקֵנִים. In ver. 2 the words from וְאִתְּכֶם to הַנִּשְׁשָׁן form an explanatory circumstantial clause: "since the sons of your lord are with you, and with you the war-chariots and horses, and a fortified city and arms," i.e. since you have everything in your hands,—the royal

princes and also the power to make one of them king. It is perfectly evident from the words, "the sons of your lord," i.e. of king Joram, that the seventy sons of Ahab included grandsons also. This challenge of Jehu was only a *ruse*, by which he hoped to discover the feelings of the leading men of the capital of the kingdom, because he could not venture, without being well assured of them, to proceed to Samaria to exterminate the remaining members of the royal family of Ahab who were living there. לַעֲרֹכָהּ, to fight concerning, i.e. for a person, as in Judg. ix. 17.—Vers. 4, 5. This *ruse* had the desired result. The recipients of the letter were in great fear, and said, Two kings could not stand before him, how shall we? and sent messengers to announce their submission, and to say that they were willing to carry out his commands, and had no desire to appoint a king.—Vers. 6, 7. Jehu then wrote them a second letter, to say that if they would hearken to his voice, they were to send to him on the morrow at this time, to Jezreel, the heads of the sons of their lord; which they willingly did, slaying the seventy men, and sending him their heads in baskets. רָאשֵׁי בְנֵי אֲדָם, "the heads of the men of the sons of your lord," i.e. of the male descendants of Ahab, in which רָאשֵׁי may be explained from the fact that בְּנֵי-אֲדָם has the meaning "royal princes" (see the similar case in Judg. xix. 22). In order to bring out still more clearly the magnitude of Jehu's demand, the number of the victims required is repeated in the circumstantial clause, "and there were seventy men of the king's sons with (אִתָּם) the great men of the city, who had brought them up."—Vers. 8, 9. When the heads were brought, Jehu had them piled up in two heaps before the city-gate, and spoke the next morning to the assembled people in front of them: "Ye are righteous. Behold I have conspired against my lord, and have slain him, but who has slain all these?" Jehu did not tell the people that the king's sons had been slain by his command, but spake as if this had been done without his interfering by a higher decree, that he might thereby justify his conspiracy in the eyes of the people, and make them believe what he says still further in ver. 10: "See then that of the word of the Lord nothing falls to the ground (i.e. remains unfulfilled) which Jehovah has spoken concerning the house of Ahab; and Jehovah has done what He spake through His servant Elijah."—Ver. 11. The effect of these words was, that the people looked quietly

on when he proceeded to slay all the rest of the house of Ahab, *i.e.* all the more distant relatives in Jezreel, and "all his great men," *i.e.* the superior officers of the fallen dynasty, and "all his acquaintances," *i.e.* friends and adherents, and "all his priests," probably court priests, such as the heathen kings had; not secular counsellors or nearest servants (Thenius), a meaning which כְּהֹנִיִּים never has, not even in 2 Sam. viii. 18 and 1 Kings iv. 5.

Vers. 12-17. EXTERMINATION OF THE BROTHERS OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH AND OF THE OTHER MEMBERS OF AHAB'S DYNASTY.—Vers. 12 sqq. Jehu then set out to Samaria; and on the way, at the binding-house of the shepherds, he met with the brethren of Ahaziah, who were about to visit their royal relations, and when he learned who they were, had them all seized, viz. forty-two men, and put to death at the cistern of the binding-house. וַיָּבֹא וַיִּלְכֶּה, "he came and went," appears pleonastic; the words are not to be transposed, however, as Böttcher and Thenius propose after the Syriac, but וַיִּלְכֶּה is added, because Jehu did not go at once to Samaria, but did what follows on the way. By transposing the words, the slaying of the relations of Ahaziah would be transferred to Samaria, in contradiction to vers. 15 sqq.—The words from וַיְהִי מִן הַיּוֹם onwards, and from וַיִּהְיֶה to כָּל־יְהוּדָה יִרְדָּה, are two circumstantial clauses, in which the subject וַיְהִי is added in the second clause for the sake of greater clearness: "when he was at the binding-house of the shepherds on the road, and Jehu (there) met with the brethren of Ahaziah, he said" בֵּית-עֶקֶר הָרִעִים (*Baithakáθ*, LXX.) is explained by Rashi, after the Chaldee בֵּית כְּנִישַׁת רִעִיָא, as signifying *locus conventus pastorum*, the meeting-place of the shepherds; and Gesenius adopts the same view. But the rest of the earlier translators for the most part adopt the rendering, *locus ligationis pastorum*, from עֶקֶר, to bind, and think of a house *ubi pastores ligabant oves quando eas tondebant*. In any case it was a house, or perhaps more correctly a place, where the shepherds were in the habit of meeting, and that on the road from Jezreel to Samaria; according to Eusebius in the *Onom.* s.v. *Baithakáθ*, a place fifteen Roman miles from *Legio* (*Lejun*, *Megiddo*), in the great plain of Jezreel: a statement which may be correct with the exception of the small number of miles, but which does not apply to the present village of *Beit Kad* to the east of Jenin (Rob. *Pal.* iii. p. 157), with which, according

to Thenius, it exactly coincides. אֲחִיזַחְיָהּ, for which we have אֲחִיזַחְיָהּ בְּנֵי אֲחִיזַחְיָהּ, Ahaziah's brothers' sons, in 2 Chron. xxii. 8, were not the actual brothers of Ahaziah, since they had been carried off by the Arabians and put to death before he ascended the throne (2 Chron. xxi. 17), but partly step-brothers, i.e. sons of Joram by his concubines, and partly Ahaziah's nephews and cousins. לְשָׁלוֹם, *ad salutandum*, i.e. to inquire how they were, or to visit the sons of the king (Joram) and of the queen-mother, i.e. Jezebel, therefore Joram's brothers. In ver. 1 they are both included among the "sons" of Ahab.—Vers. 15 sqq. As Jehu proceeded on his way, he met with *Jehonadab* the son of Rechab, and having saluted him, inquired, "Is thy heart true as my heart towards thy heart?" and on his replying כִּי, "it is (honourable or true)," he bade him come up into the chariot, saying וְיָדְךָ, "if it is (so), give me thy hand;" whereupon he said still further, "Come with me and see my zeal for Jehovah," and then drove with him to Samaria, and there exterminated all that remained of Ahab's family. *Jehonadab* the son of *Rechab* was the tribe-father of the Rechabites (Jer. xxxv. 6). The rule which the latter laid down for his sons and descendants for all time, was to lead a simple nomad life, namely, to dwell in tents, follow no agricultural pursuits, and abstain from wine; which rule they observed so sacredly, that the prophet Jeremiah held them up as models before his own contemporaries, who broke the law of God in the most shameless manner, and was able to announce to the Rechabites that they would be exempted from the Chaldean judgment for their faithful observance of their father's precept (Jer. xxxv.). *Rechab*, from whom the descendants of Jehonadab derived their tribe-name, was the son of Hammath, and belonged to the tribe of the Kenites (1 Chron. ii. 55), to which Hobab the father-in-law of Moses also belonged (Num. x. 29); so that the Rechabites were probably descendants of Hobab, since the Kenites the sons of Hobab had gone with the Israelites from the Arabian desert to Canaan, and had there carried on their nomad life (Jndg. i. 16, iv. 11; 1 Sam. xv. 6; see Witsii *Miscell.* ss. ii. p. 223 sqq.). This Jehonadab was therefore a man distinguished for the strictness of his life, and Jehu appears to have received him in this friendly manner on account of the great distinction in which he was held, not only in his own tribe, but also in Israel generally, that he might exalt himself in the eyes of the people through his

friendship.¹—In **הָיָה אִתְּךָ לְבָבְךָ**, “is with regard to thy heart honourable or upright?” **אִתְּ** is used to subordinate the noun to the clause, in the sense of *quoad* (see Ewald, § 277, a). **כָּל־הַנִּשְׁאָרִים לְאֶהָאָב**, “all that remained to Ahab,” i.e. all the remaining members of Ahab’s house.

Vers. 18–27. EXTERMINATION OF THE PROPHETS AND PRIESTS OF BAAL AND OF THE BAAL-WORSHIP.—Vers. 18 sqq. Under the pretence of wishing to serve Baal even more than Ahab had done, Jehu appointed a great sacrificial festival for this idol, and had all the worshippers of Baal throughout all the land summoned to attend it; he then placed eighty of his guards around the temple of Baal in which they were assembled, and after the sacrifice was offered, had the priests and worshippers of Baal cut down by them with the sword. Objectively considered, the slaying of the worshippers of Baal was in accordance with the law, and, according to the theocratical principle, was perfectly right; but the subjective motives which impelled Jehu, apart from the artifice, were thoroughly selfish, as Seb. Schmidt has correctly observed. For since the priests and prophets of Baal throughout the Israelitish kingdom were bound up with the dynasty of Ahab, with all their interests and with their whole existence, they might be very dangerous to Jehu, if on any political grounds he should happen not to promote their objects, whereas by their extermination he might hope to draw to his side the whole of the very numerous supporters of the Jehovah-worship, which had formerly been legally established in Israel, and thereby establish his throne more firmly. The very fact that Jehu allowed the calf-worship to continue, is a proof that he simply used religion as the means of securing his own ends (ver. 29). **קִדְּשׁוּ עֲצֵרָה** (ver. 20), “sanctify a festal assembly,” i.e. proclaim in the land a festal assembly for Baal (compare Isa. i. 13; and for **עֲצֵרָה** = **עֲצֵרָה**, see at Lev. xxiii. 36). **וַיִּקְרְאוּ**, and they proclaimed, sc. the festal meeting.—Ver. 21. The temple of Baal was filled **לְמַלֵּא**,

¹ According to C. a Lapide, Jehu took him up into his chariot “that he might establish his authority with the Samaritans, and secure a name for integrity by having Jehonadab as his ally, a man whom all held to be both an upright and holy man, that in this way he might the more easily carry out the slaughter of the Baalites, which he was planning, without any one daring to resist him.”

"from one edge (end) to the other." פֶּה in this sense is not to be derived from פֶּתַח, a corner (Cler., Ges.), but signifies mouth, or the upper rim of a vessel. *Metaphora sumta a vasibus humore aliquo plenis*: Vatabl.—Ver. 22. אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַפֶּתַח is the keeper of the wardrobe (Arab. *præfectus vestium*), for the אֲפ. לֵי. פֶּתַח signifies *vestiarium* (Ges. *Thes.* p. 764). The reference is not to the wardrobe of the king's palace, out of which Jehu had every one who took part in the feast supplied with a festal dress or new caftan (Deres., Then., etc.), but the wardrobe of the temple of Baal, since the priests of Baal had their own sacred dresses like the priests of almost all religions (as Silius has expressly shown in his *Ital.* iii. 24-27, of the priests of the Gadetan Hercules). These dresses were only worn at the time of worship, and were kept in a wardrobe in the temple.—Vers. 23, 24. Jehu then came with Jehonadab to the temple, and commanded the worshippers of Baal to be carefully examined, that there might not be one of the worshippers of Jehovah with (among) them. When the priests of Baal were preparing to offer sacrifice, Jehu had eighty men of his guards stationed before the temple, and laid this injunction upon them: "Whoever lets one of the men escape whom I bring into your hands (we must read יָמָּוֹת instead of יָמָּוֹת), his life shall answer for his (the escaped man's) life. נַפְשׁוֹ תָּתֵּן נַפְשׁוֹ, as in 1 Kings xx. 39.—Ver. 25. בְּבֹלְתוֹ: when he (the sacrificing priest, not Jehu) had finished the burnt-offering (the singular suffix י may also be taken as indefinite, when one had finished, *vid.* Ewald, § 294, *δ*), Jehu commanded the runners and aides-de-camp: Come and smite them (the worshippers of Baal), without one coming out (escaping); whereupon they smote them with the edge of the sword, *i.e.* slew them unsparingly. וַיִּשְׁלְכוּ and the runners and aides-de-camp threw (those who had been slain) away, and went into the citadel of the temple of Baal. עִיר בֵּית-הַבַּעַל cannot be the city of the temple of Baal, *i.e.* that part of the city in which the temple of Baal stood, for the runners were already in the court of the temple of Baal; but it is no doubt the temple-citadel, the true temple-house (עִיר from אֵר, *locus circumseptus*)—*templum Baalis magnifice exstructum instar arcis alicujus* (Seb. Schm.).—Ver. 26. They then fetched the columns (מַצֵּבֹת) out of the temple and burned them (the suffix in מַצֵּבֹת refers to the plural מַצֵּבֹת taken as an abstract noun, as in ch. iii. 3; cf. Ewald, § 317, *a*). They then broke

in pieces the **מַצֵּבַת הַבַּעַל**, column of Baal, i.e. the real image of Baal, probably a conical stone dedicated to Baal, whereas the **מַצֵּבֹת**, which were burned, were wooden columns as *πάρεδροι* or *σύμβωμοι* of Baal (see Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 674).—Ver. 27. Lastly, they destroyed the temple itself and made it **לְמִתְרָאוֹת**, privies, for which the Masoretes have substituted the euphemistic **מִתְרָאוֹת**, sinks, as a mark of the greatest insult, many examples of which are to be met with among Oriental tribes (*vid.* Ezra vi. 11, Dan. ii. 5, and Hævernick *in loc.*).—Thus Jehu exterminated Baal from Israel. This remark in ver. 28 forms the introduction to the history of Jehu's reign, with which the last epoch in the history of the ten tribes begins.

3. FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE REIGNS OF JEHU IN ISRAEL,
AND ATHALIAH IN JUDAH, TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KING-
DOM OF ISRAEL.

CHAP. X. 28–XVII.

In the 161 years which this epoch embraces, from B.C. 883 to 722, the fate of the kingdom of Israel was accomplished. The first hundred years, which comprised the reigns of Jehu and his descendants, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, and Jeroboam II., were the last day of grace for the rebellious ten tribes, at the expiration of which the judgment began to burst upon them. As the anointing of Jehu by Elisha was performed by the command of God, so also was the religious reform, which Jehu vigorously commenced with the extermination of the Baal-worship, a fruit of the labours of the prophets Elijah and Elisha within the sinful kingdom; but this reform stood still half-way, since Jehu merely restored the idolatrous Jehovah-worship introduced by Jeroboam, and neither he himself nor his successors desisted from that sin. In order, therefore, if possible, to complete the work begun by His prophets of converting Israel to its God, the Lord now began to visit the rebellious tribes with severe chastisements, giving them up into the power of the Syrians, who under Hazael not only conquered the whole of the land to the east of the Jordan, but almost annihilated the military force of the Israelites (ch. x. 32, 33, xiii. 3, 7). This chastisement did not remain without fruit. Jehoahaz prayed to the Lord, and the Lord had compassion upon the oppressed for the sake of His

covenant with the patriarchs, and sent them deliverers in Joash, who recovered the conquered land from the Syrians after the death of Hazael, and in Jeroboam, who even restored the ancient boundaries of the kingdom (ch. xiii. 4, 5, and 23 sqq., xiv. 25, 26). But with this renewal of external strength, luxuriance and debauchery, partiality in judgment and oppression of the poor began to prevail, as we may see from the prophecies of Hosea and Amos (Amos v. 10 sqq., vi. 1-6; Hos. vi. 7 sqq.); and in addition to the Jehovah-worship, which was performed in an idolatrous manner (Hos. viii. 13, ix. 4, 5), the worship of Baal was carried on most vigorously (Hos. ii. 13, 15, x. 1, 2), so that the people made pilgrimages to Bethel, Gilgal, and even to Beersheba in the south of the kingdom of Judah (Hos. iv. 15; Amos iv. 4, v. 5, viii. 14), and on account of the worship thus zealously performed, relied in carnal security upon the protection of God, and scoffed at the judgments of the Lord which were threatened by the prophets (Amos v. 14, 18). This internal corruption increased with the death of Jeroboam, till all civil order was dissolved. Anarchy, conflicts for the possession of the throne, and repeated regicides, broke up the kingdom and made it ripe for the judgment of destruction, which was gradually accomplished by the Assyrians, whom one party in the reign of Menahem had called to their help, under Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmanasar.—The kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, was purified from the destructive consequences of the alliance with the dynasty of Ahab through the overthrow by the high priest Jehoiada of the godless Athaliah, who had murdered the royal children after the death of Ahaziah and seized upon the government, and, with the renewal of the covenant and the extermination of the worship of Baal under the young king whom Jehoiada had trained, was brought back to the theocratic path; and notwithstanding the fact that in the closing years of Joash and Amaziah idolatry found admission again, was preserved in that path, in which it increased in strength and stability, so that not only were the wounds quickly healed which the war with Israel, occasioned by Amaziah's pride, had inflicted upon it through the conquest and plunder of Jerusalem (ch. xiv. 8 sqq.), but during the sixty-eight years comprised in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, the people rose to a state of great prosperity and wealth through the pursuit of agriculture and trade, and a thoughtful development of the resources of the land, and the

kingdom acquired great external power through the humiliation of the Philistines and the subjugation of the Edomites once more (2 Chron. xxvi.). At the same time, neither of these kings was able entirely to suppress the illegal worship of the high places, although the temple-worship was regularly sustained according to the law; and with the increase of wealth and power, not only did luxuriance and pride set in, but also idolatry and an inclination to heathen ways (Isa. ii. 5-8 and 16 sqq., v. 18 sqq.); so that even in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham Isaiah predicted the day of the Lord's judgment, which was to fall upon everything lofty and proud (Isa. ii.-iv.). This prophecy began to be fulfilled, so far as its first beginnings were concerned, even in the time of Ahaz. Under this weak and idolatrous ruler idolatry gained the upper hand, and the worship of Jehovah was suppressed; and this open apostasy from the Lord was followed by immediate punishment. The allied kings of Israel and Syria forced their way victoriously into Judah, and even stood before the gates of Jerusalem, with the intention of destroying the kingdom of Judah, when Ahaz, despising the help of the Lord, which was offered him by the prophet Isaiah, purchased the assistance of Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria with silver and gold, and was thereby delivered from his foes. But this made him dependent upon the Assyrians, who would have conquered the kingdom of Judah and destroyed it, as they had already destroyed the kingdom of Israel, had not the Lord hearkened to the prayer of the pious king and miraculously routed the powerful army of Sennacherib before the walls of Jerusalem.

CHAP. X. 28-36. REIGN OF JEHU OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 28, 29. Jehu exterminated the worship of Baal from Israel; but the sins of Jeroboam, the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, that is to say, the idolatrous worship of Jehovah, he allowed to remain. "The golden calves, etc.:" this is a supplementary and explanatory apposition to "the sins of Jeroboam." —Vers. 30, 31. Jehu is promised the possession of the throne to the fourth generation of his sons for having exterminated the godless royal house of Ahab (*vid.* ch. xv. 12). The divine sentence, "because thou hast acted well to do right in mine eyes, (because thou) hast done as it was in my heart to the house of Ahab," refers to the deed as such, and not to the subjective

motives by which Jehu had been actuated. For it is obvious that it had not sprung from pure zeal for the honour of the Lord, from the limitation added in ver. 31: "but Jehu did not take heed to walk in the law of Jehovah with all his heart, and did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam."—Vers. 32, 33. Therefore (this link of connection follows from the actual fact, though it is not distinctly mentioned in the text) Hazael had now to inflict chastisement upon faithless Israel. In Jehu's days Jehovah began "to cut off in Israel," *i.e.* to rend away certain portions from the kingdom. "Hazael smote them (the Israelites) on the whole of the border of Israel," *i.e.* of the kingdom, "from Jordan to the sun-rising (*i.e.* on the eastern side of the Jordan), the whole of the land of Gilead (אֶת כְּלֵי-אֲרָץ) is dependent upon יִבְיָהּ, which must be supplied from יִבְיָהּ), namely, the territory of the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Half-Manasseh, from Aroer on the brook Arnon (now *Araayr*, a ruin on the northern border of the Mojab (Arnon) valley; see at Num. xxxii. 34), the southern border of the Israelitish land to the east of the Jordan (Deut. ii. 36, iii. 12), both Gilead and Bashan," the two countries into which Gilead in the broader sense was divided (see at Deut. iii. 8-17).—These conquests took place during the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu, since Hazael began to reign before Jehu, viz. while Joram was king, and had already fought successfully against the Israelites at Ramoth in Joram's reign (ch. viii. 28, 29), but not in the later part of Jehu's reign, as Thenius supposes.—Vers. 34-36. Conclusion of the history of Jehu's reign. The length of his reign is not given till the end in this instance (ver. 36), contrary to the usual custom in our books, because his ascent of the throne is not expressly mentioned in what precedes; but the general character of his reign is given in immediate connection with the account of his anointing and of the extermination of Ahab's dynasty.

CHAP. XI. TYRANNY AND OVERTHROW OF ATHALIAH, AND CORONATION OF JOASH.

Vers. 1-3. THE GOVERNMENT OF ATHALIAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxii. 10-12). After the death of Ahaziah of Judah, his mother Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (see at ch. viii. 18 and 26), seized upon the government, by putting to death all the king's descendants with the exception of Joash, a son of Ahaziah of only a year old, who had been secretly carried off

from the midst of the royal children, who were put to death, by Jehosheba, his father's sister, the wife of the high priest Jehoiada, and was first of all hidden with his nurse in the bed-chamber, and afterwards kept concealed from Athaliah for six years in the high priest's house. The ו before אֶתְּהָה is no doubt original, the subject, Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah, being placed at the head absolutely, and a circumstantial clause introduced with וְאֶתְּהָה: "Athaliah, when she saw that, etc., rose up." בְּלִיְיָוֶה הַמִּמְלָכָה, all the royal seed, i.e. all the sons and relations of Ahaziah, who could put in any claim to succeed to the throne. At the same time there were hardly any other direct descendants of the royal family in existence beside the sons of Ahaziah, since the elder brothers of Ahaziah had been carried away by the Arabs and put to death, and the rest of the closer blood-relations of the male sex had been slain by Jehu (see at ch. x. 13).—*Jehosheba* (יְהוֹשֻׁבָעַת, in the Chronicles יְהוֹשֻׁבָעַת), the wife of the high priest Jehoiada (2 Chron. xxii. 11), was a daughter of king Joram and a sister of Ahaziah, but she was most likely not a daughter of Athaliah, as this worshipper of Baal would hardly have allowed her own daughter to marry the high priest, but had been born to Joram by a wife of the second rank. מְמוֹתָיִם (*Chethib*), generally a substantive, *mortes* (Jer. xvi. 4; Ezek xxviii. 8), here an adjective: slain or set apart for death. The *Keri* מִמְּוֹתָיִם is the participle *Hophal*, as in 2 Chron. xxii. 11. מִמְּוֹתָיִם is to be taken in connection with תִּגְנֹב: she stole him (took him away secretly) from the rest of the king's sons, who were about to be put to death, into the chamber of the beds, i.e. not the children's bed-room, but a room in the palace where the beds (mattresses and counterpanes) were kept, for which in the East there is a special room that is not used as a dwelling-room (see Chardin in Harm. *Beobb.* iii. p. 357). This was the place in which at first it was easiest to conceal the child and its nurse. וַיִּסְתְּרוּ, "they (Jehosheba and the nurse) concealed him," is not to be altered into וַיִּסְתְּרוּהָ after the Chronicles, as Thenius maintains. The masculine is used in the place of the feminine, as is frequently the case. Afterwards he was concealed with her (with Jehosheba) in the house of Jehovah, i.e. in the home of the high-priest in one of the buildings of the court of the temple.

Vers. 4–20. DETHRONEMENT OF ATHALIAH AND CORONATION

OF JOASH (compare the account in 2 Chron. xxiii., which is more elaborate in several points).¹—Ver. 4. In the seventh year of Athaliah's reign, Jehoiada sent for the captains of the king's body-guard to come to him into the temple, and concluded a covenant with them, making them swear and showing them the king's son, namely, to dethrone the tyrant Athaliah and set the king's son upon the throne. שָׂרֵי הַפָּאִיּוֹת, *centuriones*, military commanders of the executioners and runners, i.e. of the royal body-guard. The *Chethib* מִצָּחִית may be explained from the fact that מִצָּחִית is abridged from מִצָּחִיתָה (vid. Ewald, § 267, d). On מִצָּחִיתָה = מִצָּחִיתָה (1 Kings i. 38) see the Comm. on 2 Sam. viii. 18; and on מִצָּחִיתָה as a periphrasis of the genitive, see Ewald, § 292, a. In 2 Chron. xxiii. 1-3 the chronicler not only gives the names of these captains, but relates still more minutely that they went about in the land and summoned the Levites and heads of families in Israel to Jerusalem, probably under the pretext of a festal celebration; whereupon Jehoiada concluded a covenant with the persons assembled, to ensure their assistance in the execution of his plan.—Vers. 5-8. Jehoiada then communicated to those initiated into the plan the necessary instructions for carrying it out, assigning them the places which they were to occupy. "The third part of you that come on the Sabbath (i.e. mount guard) shall keep the guard of the king's house (שְׂמִירָה is a corruption of שְׂמִירָה), and the third part shall be at the gate Sur, and the third part at the gate behind the runners, and (ye) shall keep guard over the house for defence; and the two parts of you, (namely) all who depart on the Sabbath, shall keep the guard of the house of Jehovah for the king; and ye shall surround the king round about, every one with his weapons in his hand; and whoever presses into the ranks shall be slain, and shall be with the king when

¹ In both accounts we have only short extracts preserved from a common and more complete original, the extracts having been made quite independently of one another and upon different plans. Hence the apparent discrepancies, which have arisen partly from the incompleteness of the two abridged accounts, and partly from the different points of view from which the extracts were made, but which contain no irreconcilable contradictions. The assertion of De Wette, which has been repeated by Thenius and Bertheau, that the chronicler distorted the true state of the case to favour the Levites, rests upon a misinterpretation of our account, based upon arbitrary assumptions, as I have already shown in my *apologetischer Versuch über die Chronik* (p. 361 sqq.).

he goes out and in," i.e. in all his steps. The words הַשָּׂמֶרֶת and הַיֹּצֵאת, "those coming and those going out on the Sabbath," denote the divisions of the watch, those who performed duty on the Sabbath and those who were relieved on the Sabbath; not the military guard at the palace however, but the temple-guard, which consisted of Levites. For David had divided the priests and Levites into classes, every one of which had to perform service for a week and was relieved on the Sabbath: compare 1 Chron. xxiii.-xxvi. with Josephus (*Ant.* vii. 14, 7), who expressly says that every one of the twenty-four classes of priests had to attend to the worship of God "for eight days, from Sabbath to Sabbath," also with Luke i. 5. On the other hand, we do not know that there was any similar division and obligation to serve in connection with the royal body-guard or with the army. The current opinion, that by those who come on the Sabbath and those who go out on the Sabbath we are to understand the king's halberdiers or the guard of the palace, is therefore proved to be unfounded and untenable. And if there could be any doubt on the matter, it would be removed by vers. 7 and 10. According to ver. 7, two parts of those who went away (were relieved) on the Sabbath were to undertake the guarding of the house of Jehovah about the king, i.e. to keep guard over that room in the temple where the king then was. Could Jehoiada have used the royal body-guard, that was being relieved from guarding the palace, for such a purpose as this? Who can imagine that this is a credible thing? According to ver. 10, Jehoiada gave to the captains over a hundred the weapons of king David, which were in the house of Jehovah. Did the palace-guard then return without weapons? In 2 Chron. xxiii. 4, "those coming on the Sabbath" are correctly described as the priests and Levites coming on the Sabbath, i.e. the priests and Levites who entered upon their week's duty at the temple on the Sabbath. According to this explanation of the words, which is the only one that can be grammatically sustained, the facts were as follows: "When Jehoiada had initiated the captains of the royal halberdiers, and with their help the heads of families of the people generally, into his plan of raising the youthful Joash to the throne and dethroning Athaliah, he determined to carry out the affair chiefly with the help of the priests and Levites who entered upon their duty in the temple on the Sabbath, and

of those who left or were relieved at the same time, and entrusted the command over these men to the captains of the royal halberdiers, that they might occupy the approaches to the temple with the priests and Levites under their command, so as to prevent the approach of any military from the king's palace and protect the youthful king. These captains had come to the temple without weapons, to avoid attracting attention. Jehoiada therefore gave them the weapons of king David that were kept in the temple.

With regard to the distribution of the different posts, the fact that two-thirds are spoken of first of all in vers. 5, 6, and then two parts in ver. 7, occasions no difficulty. For the two-thirds mentioned in vers. 5, 6 were those who came on the Sabbath, whereas the "two divisions" (שְׁנֵי הַיָּדוֹת) referred to in ver. 7 were all who went away on the Sabbath. Consequently the priests and Levites, who came on the Sabbath and entered upon the week's service, were divided into three sections; and those who should have been relieved, but were detained, into two. Probably the number of those who came this time to perform service at the temple was much larger than usual, as the priests were initiated into Jehoiada's secret; so that it was possible to make three divisions of those who arrived, whereas those who were about to depart could only be formed into two. The three divisions of those who were entering upon duty are also distinctly mentioned in the Chronicles; whereas, instead of the two divisions of those who were relieved, "all the people" are spoken of. The description of the different posts which were assigned to these several companies causes some difficulty. In general, so much is clearly indicated in vers. 7 and 8, that the two divisions of those who were relieved on the Sabbath were to keep guard over the young king in the house of Jehovah, and therefore to remain in the inner spaces of the temple-court for his protection; whereas the three divisions of those who were entering upon duty were charged with the occupation of the external approaches to the temple. One-third was to "keep watch over the king's house," i.e. to observe whatever had to be observed in relation to the king's palace; not to occupy the king's palace, or to keep guard in the citadel at the palace gate (Thenius), but to keep watch towards the royal palace, i.e. to post themselves so that no one could force a way into the temple, with which the indefinite בְּיַד הַמֶּלֶךְ in the

Chronicles harmonizes, if we only translate it "against (at) the king's house." The idea that the palace was guarded is precluded not only by ver. 13, according to which Athaliah came out of the palace to the people to the house of Jehovah, which she would not have been able to do if the palace had been guarded, but also by the circumstance that, according to ver. 19, the chief men were in the temple with the whole of the (assembled) people, and did not go out of the house of Jehovah into the king's house till after the anointing of Joash and the death of Athaliah. The other third was to station itself at the gate *Sur* (סור), or, according to the Chronicles, *Yesod* (יסוד), foundation-gate. There is no doubt as to the identity of the gate *Sur* and the gate *Yesod*; only we cannot decide whether one of these names has simply sprung from a copyist's error, or whether the gate had two different names. The name יסוד, foundation-gate, suggests a gate in the outer court of the temple, at the hollow of either the Tyropœon or the Kedron; for the context precludes our thinking of a palace gate. The third division was to be posted "at the gate behind the runners;" or, as it is stated in ver. 19, "at the gate of the runners." It is very evident from ver. 19 that this gate led from the temple-court to the royal palace upon Zion, and was therefore on the western side of the court of the temple. This also follows from ver. 4 of the Chronicles, according to which this division was to act as "doorkeepers of the thresholds" (לְשַׁעֲרֵי הַתְּפָסִים), i.e. to keep guard at the gate of the thresholds. For we may safely infer, from a comparison with 1 Chron. ix. 19, that הַתְּפָסִים were the thresholds of the ascent to the temple. The last clause, "and shall keep guard over the house for defence," refers to all three divisions, and serves to define with greater precision the object for which they were stationed there. כִּפְסָה is not a proper name (LXX., Luther, and others), but an appellative in the sense of defence or resistance, from נָסָה, *depellere*. The meaning is, that they were to guard the house, to keep off the people, and not to let any of the party of Athaliah force a way into the temple.—In ver 7, לֹל יִצְאֵי הַשָּׁבָת, is an explanatory apposition to וְשָׁמַיִי הִירִיחַ בְּכֶם, "and the two parts in (of) you," namely, all who go out on the Sabbath, i.e. are relieved from duty. Their task, to observe the watch of the house of Jehovah with regard to the king, is more precisely defined in ver. 8 as signifying, that they were to surround the king with weapons

in their hands, and slay every one who attempted to force a way into their ranks. *בְּצֵאתוֹ יִבְרָא*, i.e. in all his undertakings, or in all his steps; *צֵאת וְבוֹא* being applied to the actions and pursuits of a man, as in Deut. xxviii. 6, xxxi. 2, etc. (see the Comm. on Num. xxvii. 17). Thenius has explained this incorrectly: "in his going out of the temple and entering into the palace."—Vers. 9-11. The execution of these plans. The high priest gave the captains "the spears and shields (*שִׁלְטָיִם*): see at 2 Sam. viii. 7) which (belonged) to king David, that were in the house of Jehovah," i.e. the weapons which David had presented to the sanctuary as dedicatory offerings. Instead of *הַחֲנִיתִי* we ought probably to read *הַחֲנִיחוֹת* (cf. Mic. iv. 3, Isa. ii. 4), after the *הַחֲנִיחוֹת* of the Chronicles, since the collective force of *חֲנִית* is very improbable in prose, and a *ח* might easily drop out through a copyist's error. Jehoiada gave the captains weapons from the temple, because, as has been already observed, they had come unarmed, and not, as Thenius imagines, to provide them with old and sacred weapons instead of their ordinary ones. In ver. 11 the position of all the divisions is given in a comprehensive manner, for the purpose of appending the further course of the affair, namely, the coronation of the king. "Thus the halberdiers stood, every one with his weapons in his hand, from the right wing of the house to the left wing, towards the altar (of burnt-offering) and the (temple-) house, round about the king," i.e. to cover the king on all sides. For it is evident that we are not to understand *עַל־הַפֶּלֶא סָבִיב* as signifying the encircling of the king, from the statement in ver. 12, according to which Jehoiada did not bring out the king's son till after the men had taken up their positions. The use of *הַרְצִים*, to signify the captains with the armed priests and Levites put under their command for this purpose, is an uncommon one, but it may be explained from the fact that *רָצִים* had retained the general meaning of royal halberdiers; and the priests and Levites under the command of the captains of the royal body-guard by this very act discharged the duty of the royal body-guard itself. The chronicler has used the indefinite expression *כָּל־הָעָם*, the whole of the people assembled in the temple-court.—Ver. 12. After the approaches to the temple had all been occupied in this manner, Jehoiada brought out the king's son from his home in the temple; or, he brought him forth, set the crown upon him, and handed him the testimony, i.e. the book of the

law, as the rule of his life and action as king, according to the precept in Deut. xvii. 18, 19. **וְיָמְדָהּ עָלָיו** is connected with **יָמַד**, **אֶת־הַנֶּזֶר** **עָלָיו**, because **יָמַד עָלָיו** has the general meaning "delivered to him, handed him," and does not specially affirm the putting on of the crown. **וַיַּמְלִכּוּ**, they made him king. The subject is the persons present, though, as a matter of course, the anointing was performed by Jehoiada and the priests, as the Chronicles expressly affirm. Clapping the hands was a sign of joyful acclamation, like the cry, "Long live the king" (cf. 1 Kings i. 39).

Vers. 13-16. *Death of Athaliah.*—Vers. 13, 14. As soon as Athaliah heard the loud rejoicing of the people, she came to the people into the temple, and when she saw the youthful king in his standing-place surrounded by the princes, the trumpeters, and the whole of the people, rejoicing and blowing the trumpets, she rent her clothes with horror, and cried out, Conspiracy, conspiracy! **הָרָצוֹן הָעֵם** does not mean the people running together, but the original reading in the text was probably **הָרָצוֹן הָעֵם**, the people and the halberdiers, and the *Vav* dropped out through an oversight of the copyist. By **הָרָצוֹן** we are to understand the captains of the halberdiers with the armed Levites, as in ver. 11; and **הָעֵם** is the people who had assembled besides (cf. ver. 19). In the Chronicles **הָרָצוֹן וְהַמְּהַלְלִים הַסֵּלָה** is in apposition to **הָעֵם**: the noise of the people, the halberdiers, and those who praised the king. The **עֲמֹד**, upon which the king stood, was not a pillar, but an elevated standing-place (*suggestus*) for the king at the eastern gate of the inner court (**בְּמִבְנֵי**, 2 Chron. xxiii. 13 compared with Ezek. xvi. 2), when he visited the temple on festive occasions (cf. ch. xxiii. 3), and it was most probably identical with the brazen scaffold (**בֵּיֹר**) mentioned in 2 Chron. vi. 13, which would serve to explain **כַּמִּשְׁפָּט**, "according to the right" (Angl. V. "as the manner was"). **הַחֲזָרִים** are not merely the captains mentioned in vers. 4, 9, and 10, but these together with the rest of the assembled heads of the nation (**רֹאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת**, 2 Chron. xiii. 2). **הַחֲצִצְרוֹת**, the trumpets, is an abbreviated expression for those blowing the trumpets, the trumpeters. The reference is to the Levitical musicians mentioned in 1 Chron. xiii. 8, xv. 24, etc.; for they are distinguished from **כָּל־הָעָם וְנֹרְאֵהוּ**, "all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing the trumpets," i.e. not all the military men of the land who were present in Jerusalem (Thenius), but the mass of the people present in the temple (Bertheau).—Ver. 15. Jehoiada then commanded the captains

פָּקְדֵי הַחַיִל, those placed over the army, i.e. the armed men of the Levites, to lead out Athaliah between the ranks, and to slay every one who followed her, i.e. who took her part (הָמָת, inf. abs. instead of imperative); for, as is added supplementarily in explanation of this command, the priest had (previously) said: "Let her not be slain in the house of Jehovah." The temple was not to be defiled with the blood of the usurper and murderess.—Ver. 16. Thus they made way for her on both sides, or, according to the correct explanation given by the Chaldee, יָשִׁיבוּ לָהּ יָדִים, they formed lines (*Spalier*, fences) and escorted her back, and she came by the way of the horses' entrance into the palace, and was there put to death. מִבֹּאֵי הַסּוּסִים is explained in the Chronicles by שַׁעַר הַסּוּסִים, entrance of the horse-gate. The entrance for the horses, i.e. the way which led to the royal mews, is not to be identified with the horse-gate mentioned in Neh. iii. 28; for this was a gate in the city wall, whereas the road from the temple to the royal mews, which were no doubt near the palace, was inside the wall.

Vers. 17-20. *Renewal of the covenant, extermination of the worship of Baal, and entrance of the king into the palace.*—Ver. 17. After Jehoash was crowned and Athaliah put to death, Jehoiada concluded the covenant (1) between Jehovah on the one hand and the king and people on the other, and (2) between the king and the people. The former was simply a renewal of the covenant which the Lord had made with Israel through Moses (Ex. xxiv.), whereby the king and the people bound themselves לַיהוָה לָעֵם לַיהוָה, i.e. to live as the people of the Lord, or to keep His law (cf. Deut. iv. 20, xxvii. 9, 10), and was based upon the "testimony" handed to the king. This covenant naturally led to the covenant between the king and the people, whereby the king bound himself to rule his people according to the law of the Lord, and the people vowed that they would be obedient and subject to the king as the ruler appointed by the Lord (cf. 2 Sam. v. 3). The renewal of the covenant with the Lord was necessary, because under the former kings the people had fallen away from the Lord and served Baal. The immediate consequence of the renewal of the covenant, therefore, was the extermination of the worship of Baal, which is mentioned at once in ver. 18, although its proper place in order of time is after ver. 18. All the people בְּלִיעֵם הָאָרֶץ, as in ver. 14) went to the temple of Baal, threw down his altars, broke his images (the columns of

Baal and Astarte) rightly, *i.e.* completely (הַיָּסֵד as in Deut. ix. 21), and slew the priest Mattan, probably the chief priest of Baal, before his altars. That the temple of Baal stood within the limits of the sanctuary, *i.e.* of the temple of Jehovah (Thenius), cannot be shown to be probable either from 2 Chron. xxiv. 7 or from the last clause of this verse. (For 2 Chron. xxiv. 7 see the fuller remarks on ch. xii. 5.) The words "and the priest set overseers over the house of Jehovah" do not affirm that Jehoiada created the office of overseer over the temple for the purpose of guarding against a fresh desecration of the temple by idolatry (Thenius), but simply that he appointed overseers over the temple, namely, priests and Levites entrusted with the duty of watching over the performance of worship according to the precepts of the law, as is more minutely described in vers. 18 and 19.—Ver. 19. And he took the captains, and they brought the king down out of the house of Jehovah, etc. The word יָקַד is not to be pressed, but simply affirms that Jehoiada entrusted the persons named with the duty of conducting the king into his palace. Beside the captains over a hundred (see at ver. 4) there are mentioned הַכָּרִי וְהַרָצִים, *i.e.* the royal halberdiers (the body-guard), who had passed over to the new king immediately after the fall of Athaliah and now followed their captains, and כָּל־עַם הָאָרֶץ, all the rest of the people assembled. Instead of the halberdiers there are mentioned in the Chronicles הָאֲדָרִים הַמְּשָׁלִים, the nobles and lords in the nation,—a completion implied in the facts themselves, since Jehoiada had drawn the heads of the nation into his plan, and on the other hand the express allusion to the body-guard might be omitted as of inferior importance. We cannot infer from יָרִיד that the bridge between Moriah and Zion was not yet in existence, as Thenius supposes, but simply that the bridge was lower than the temple-courts. Instead of שַׁעַר הַרָצִים, the gate of the runners (*i.e.* of the halberdiers), we find in the Chronicles שַׁעַר הָעֲלִיף, the upper gate, which appears to have been a gate of the temple, according to ch. xv. 35 and 2 Chron. xxvii. 3. The statement that they came by the way of the runners' gate into the house of the king is not at variance with this, for it may be understood as meaning that it was by the halberdiers' gate of the temple that the entry into the palace was carried out.—In ver. 20 this account is concluded with the general remark that all the people rejoiced, *sc.* at the coronation of Joash, and the city was quiet, when they slew Athaliah with

the sword. This is the way, so far as the sense is concerned, in which the last two clauses are to be connected.

CHAP. XII. REIGN OF KING JOASH OF JUDAH, AND REPAIRING OF THE TEMPLE.

All that is recorded of the forty years' reign of Joash, in addition to the general characteristics of the reign (vers. 1-4), is the repairing of the temple which was effected by him (vers. 5-17), and the purchased retreat of the Syrians from their invasion of Judah (vers. 18 and 19), and finally his violent death in consequence of a conspiracy formed against him, of which we have only a brief notice in vers. 20-22. The parallel account in 2 Chron. xxiv. supplies several additions to this: viz. concerning the wives of Joash, the distribution of the Levites at the repairing of the temple, the death of Jehoiada, and the seduction of Joash to idolatry by the chief men of Judah, and the stoning of the prophet Zechariah, who condemned this rebellion,—all of which can easily be fitted into our account.

Vers. 1-4 (1-5). *Reign of Joash*.—Ver. 1 (1, 2). His age on ascending the throne, viz. seven years (cf. ch. xi. 4).—Commencement and length of his reign. His mother's name was *Zibiah* of Beersheba.—Ver. 2 (3). Joash did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord בָּלִיַּיִם אֲשֶׁר וַיְהִי, "all his days that," etc., i.e. during the whole period of his life that Jehoiada instructed him (for אֲשֶׁר after substantives indicating time, place, and mode, see Ewald, § 331, c, 3; and for the use of the suffix attached to the noun defined by וַיְהִי אֲשֶׁר, compare ch. xiii. 14); not "all his life long, because Jehoiada had instructed him," although the *Athnach* under וַיְהִי favours this view. For Jehoiada had not instructed him before he began to reign, but he instructed him after he had been raised to the throne at the age of seven years, that is to say, so long as Jehoiada himself lived. The בָּלִיַּיִם אֲשֶׁר of the Chronicles is therefore a correct explanation. But after Jehoiada's death, Joash yielded to the petitions of the princes of Judah that he would assent to their worshipping idols, and at length went so far as to stone the son of his benefactor, the prophet Zechariah, on account of his candid reproof of this apostasy (2 Chron. xxiv. 17-22).—Ver. 3 (4). But the worship on the high places was not entirely suppressed, notwithstanding the fact that Jehoiada instructed him (on this standing formula see the Comm. on 1 Kings xv. 14).

Vers. 4-16 (5-17). *Repairing of the temple* (cf. 2 Chron. xxiv. 5-14).—Vers. 4, 5. That the temple, which had fallen into ruins, might be restored, Joash ordered the priests to collect all the money of the consecrated gifts, that was generally brought into the house of the Lord, and to effect therewith all the repairs that were needed in the temple. The general expression *נְסָף הַקֹּדֶשִׁים*, money of the holy gifts, *i.e.* money derived from holy gifts, is more specifically defined by *נְסָף עֹבֵר וְנִי*, according to which it consisted of three kinds of payments to the temple: viz. (1) *נְסָף עֹבֵר*, *i.e.* money of persons mustered (or numbered in the census); *עֹבֵר* is an abbreviated expression for *הַעֹבֵר הַפָּקִידִים*, “he who passes over to those who are numbered” (Ex. xxx. 13), as it has been correctly interpreted by the Chald., Rashi, Abarb., and others; whereas the explanation “money that passes” (Luther), or current coin, which Thenius still defends, yields no suitable sense, since it is impossible to see why only current coin should be accepted, and not silver in bars or vessels, inasmuch as Moses had accepted gold, silver, copper, and other objects of value *in natura*, for the building of the tabernacle (Ex. xxv. 2, 3, xxxv. 5, xxxvi. 5, 6). The brevity of the expression may be explained from the fact, that *נְסָף עֹבֵר* had become a technical term on the ground of the passage in the law already cited. The objection raised by Thenius, that the explanation adopted would be without any parallel, would, if it could be sustained, also apply to his own explanation “current money,” in which *עֹבֵר* is also taken as an abbreviation of *עֹבֵר לַפָּקִידִים* in Gen. xxiii. 16. There is still less ground for the other objection, that if *נְסָף עֹבֵר* denoted one kind of temple-revenue, *בָּל* or *אִישׁ* would necessarily have been used. (2) *אִישׁ . . . עֶרְבּוֹ*, “every kind of souls’ valuation money;” *אִישׁ* is more precisely defined by *עֶרְבּוֹ*, and the position in which it stands before *נְסָף* resembles the *בְּחֹרֵי* in Gen. xv. 10—literally, soul money of each one’s valuation. Thenius is wrong in his interpretation, “every kind of money of the souls according to their valuation,” to which he appends the erroneous remark, that *אִישׁ* is also used in Zech. x. 1 and Joel ii. 7 in connection with inanimate objects as equivalent to *בָּל*. *אִישׁ . . . עֶרְבּוֹ*, every kind of valuation, because both in the redemption of the male first-born (Num. xviii. 15, 16) and also in the case of persons under a vow a payment had to be made according to the valuation of the priest. (3) “All the money that cometh

into any one's mind to bring into the house of the Lord," *i.e.* all the money which was offered as a free-will offering to the sanctuary. This money the priests were to take to themselves, every one from his acquaintance, and therewith repair all the dilapidations that were to be found in the temple. In the Chronicles the different kinds of money to be collected for this purpose are not specified; but the whole is embraced under the general expression "the taxes of Moses the servant of God, and of the congregation of Israel, to the tent of the testimony," which included not only the contribution of half a shekel for the building of the temple, which is prescribed in Ex. xxx. 12 sqq., but also the other two taxes mentioned in this account.¹ Again, according to ver. 7 of the Chronicles, Joash gave the following reason for his command: "For Athaliah, the wicked woman, and her sons have demolished the house of God, and all the dedicated gifts of the house of Jehovah have they used for the Baals." We are not told in what the violent treatment or demolition (רָמָה) of the temple by Athaliah and her sons consisted. The circumstance that considerable repairs even of the stonework of the temple were required in the time of Joash, about 130 or 140 years after it was built, is quite conceivable without any intentional demolition. And in no case can we infer from these words, as Thenius has done, that Athaliah or her sons had erected a temple of Baal within the limits of the sanctuary. The application of all the dedicatory offerings of the house of Jehovah to the Baals, involves nothing more than that the gifts which were absolutely necessary for the preservation of the temple and temple-service were withdrawn from the sanctuary of Jehovah and applied to the worship of Baal, and therefore that the decay of the sanctuary would necessarily follow upon the neglect of the worship.—Vers. 6 sqq. But

¹ There is no ground either in the words or in the facts for restricting the perfectly general expression "taxes of Moses and of the congregation of Israel" to the payment mentioned in Ex. xxx. 12, as Thenius and Bertheau have done, except perhaps the wish to find a discrepancy between the two accounts, for the purpose of being able to accuse the chronicler, if not of intentional falsification, as De Wette does, at any rate of perverting the true state of the case. The assertion of Thenius, that the yearly payment of half a shekel, which was appointed in the law and regarded as atonement-money, appears to be directly excluded in our text, is simply founded upon the interpretation given to כֶּסֶף עֹזֶרָה as current money, which we have already proved to be false.

when the twenty-third year of the reign of Joash arrived, and the dilapidations had not been repaired, the king laid the matter before the high priest Jehoiada and the priests, and directed them not to take the money any more from their acquaintance, but to give it for the dilapidations of the temple; "and the priests consented to take no money, and not to repair the dilapidations of the house," *i.e.* not to take charge of the repairs. We may see from this consent how the command of the king is to be understood. Hitherto the priests had collected the money to pay for the repairing of the temple; but inasmuch as they had not executed the repairs, the king took away from them both the collection of the money and the obligation to repair the temple. The reason for the failure of the first measure is not mentioned in our text, and can only be inferred from the new arrangement made by the king (ver. 9): "Jehoiada took a chest,—of course by the command of the king, as is expressly mentioned in 2 Chron. xxiv. 8,—bored a hole in the door (the lid) thereof, and placed it by the side of the altar (of burnt-offering) on the right by the entrance of every one into the house of Jehovah, that the priests keeping the threshold might put thither (*i.e.* into the chest) all the money that was brought into the house of Jehovah."—Ver. 10. "And when they saw that there was much money in the chest, the king's writer and the high priest came, and bound up and reckoned the money that was found in the house of Jehovah." וַיִּבְדְּלוּ, to bind up the money in bags (*cf.* ch. v. 23). The binding is mentioned before the reckoning, because the pieces of money were not counted singly, but packed at once into bags, which were then weighed for the purpose of estimating the amount received.—Vers. 11, 12. "They gave the money weighed into the hands of those who did the work, who were placed over the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the appointed overlookers of the work; "and they paid it (as it was required) to the carpenters and builders, who worked at the house, and to the masons and the hewers of stone, and for the purchase of wood and hewn stones, to repair the dilapidations of the house, and for all that might be spent (וְכָל, *i.e.* be given out) for the house for repairing it." It is quite clear from this, that the assertion of J. D. Michaelis, De Wette, and others, that the priests had embezzled the money collected, is perfectly imaginary. For if the king had cherished any such suspicion against the priests, he would not have asked for their

consent to an alteration of the first arrangement or to the new measure; and still less would he have commanded that the priests who kept the door should put the money into the chest, for this would have been no safeguard against embezzlement. For if the door-keepers wished to embezzle, all that they would need to do would be to put only a part of the money into the chest. The simple reason and occasion for giving up the first arrangement and introducing the new arrangement with the chest, was that the first measure had proved to be insufficient for the accomplishment of the purpose expected by the king. For inasmuch as the king had not assigned any definite amount for the repairing of the temple, but had left it to the priests to pay for the cost of the repairs out of the money that was to be collected, one portion of which at least came to themselves, according to the law, for their own maintenance and to provide for the expenses of worship, it might easily happen, without the least embezzlement on the part of the priests, that the money collected was paid out again for the immediate necessities of worship and their own maintenance, and that nothing remained to pay for the building expenses. For this reason the king himself now undertook the execution of the requisite repairs. The reason why the chest was provided for the money to be collected was, first of all, that the money to be collected for the building might be separated from the rest of the money that came in and was intended for the priests; and secondly, that the contributions to be gathered for the building might be increased, since it might be expected that the people would give more if the collections were made for the express purpose of restoring the temple, than if only the legal and free-will offerings were simply given to the priests, without any one knowing how much would be applied to the building.—And because the king had taken the building into his own hand, as often as the chest was full he sent his secretary to reckon the money along with the high priest, and hand it over to the superintendents of the building.

If we compare with this the account in the Chronicles, it helps to confirm the view which we have obtained from an unprejudiced examination of the text as to the affair in question. According to ver. 5 of the Chronicles, Joash had commanded the priests and Levites to accelerate the repairs; “but the Levites did not hurry.” This may be understood as signifying that they were dilatory both in the collection of the money and

in the devotion of a portion of their revenues to the repairing of the temple. But that the king took the matter in hand himself, not so much because of the dilatoriness or negligence of the priests as because his first measure, regarded as an expedient, did not answer the purpose, is evident from the fact that, according to the Chronicles, he did not content himself with placing the chest at the entrance, but had a proclamation made at the same time in Judah and Jerusalem, to offer the tax of Moses for the repair of the temple (ver. 9)—evidently with no other intention than to procure more liberal contributions. For, according to ver. 10, all the chief men and all the people rejoiced thereat, and cast their gifts into the chest, i.e. they offered their gifts with joy for the purpose that had been proclaimed.—The other points of difference between the Chronicles and our text are unimportant. For instance, that they placed the chest “at the gate of the house of Jehovah on the outside.” The בֵּיתֵיךָ בְּבֹא־אֵלֶיךָ בֵּית merely defines the expression in our text, בֵּיתֵיךָ בְּבֹא־אֵלֶיךָ בֵּית, “to the right at the entrance into the temple,” more minutely, by showing that the ark was not placed on the inner side of the entrance into the court of the priests, but against the outer wall of it. This is not at variance with אֶל־הַחֲצִיטָה in ver. 10; for even apart from the account in the Chronicles, and according to our own text, this cannot be understood as signifying that the ark had been placed in the middle of the court, as Thenius explains in opposition to בְּבֹא־אֵלֶיךָ וְהוּא, but can only mean at the entrance which was on the right side of the altar, i.e. at the southern entrance into the inner court. Again, the further variation, that according to the Chronicles (ver. 11), when the chest was full, an officer of the high priest came with the scribe (not the high priest himself), furnishes simply a more exact definition of our account, in which the high priest is named; just as, according to ver. 10, the high priest took the chest and bored a hole in the lid, which no intelligent commentator would understand as signifying that the high priest did it with his own hand. But there is a real difference between vers. 14 and 15 of our text and ver. 14 of the Chronicles, though the solution of this suggests itself at once on a closer inspection of the words. According to our account, there were no golden or silver vessels, basons, knives, bowls, etc., made with the money that was brought in, but it was given for the repairing of the house. In the Chronicles, on the contrary, it is

stated that "when they had finished the repairs, they brought the remnant of the money to the king and Jehoiada, and he (the king) used it for vessels for the house of the Lord, for vessels of the service," etc. But if we take proper notice of כְּבִלֹתָם here, there is no ground for saying that there is any contradiction, since the words of our text affirm nothing more than that none of the money that came in was applied to the making of vessels of worship so long as the repairing of the building went on. What took place afterwards is not stated in our account, which is limited to the main fact; this we learn from the Chronicles.—Ver. 15. No return was required of the inspectors as to the money handed over to them, because they were convinced of their honesty.—Ver. 16. The money obtained from trespass-offerings and sin-offerings was not brought into the house of Jehovah, i.e. was not applied to the repairing of the temple, but was left for the priests. In the case of the trespass-offering compensation had to be made for the earthly debt according to the valuation of the priest, with the addition of a fifth in money; and this was assigned to the priests not only in the case of a שֹׁרֵק committed against Jehovah, but also when a neighbour had been injured in his property, if he had died in the meantime (see at Lev. v. 16 and Num. v. 9). On the other hand, in the case of the sin-offerings the priests received no money according to the law. Most of the commentators therefore assume, that those who lived at a distance had sent money to the priests, that they might offer sin-offerings with it, and what money was over they had retained for themselves. But there is not the slightest trace of any such custom, which is quite at variance with the idea of the sin-offering. It may probably have become a customary thing in the course of time, for those who presented these offerings to compensate the officiating priest for his trouble by a free-will gift.

Vers. 17 and 18. The brief account of *Hazael's campaign against Jerusalem* is completed by 2 Chron. xxiv. 23, 24. Hazael had gone down along the coast after defeating Israel (see ch. xiii. 3), for the purpose of making war upon Judah also, and had taken Gath, which Rehoboam had fortified (2 Chron. xi. 8). He then set his face, i.e. determined, to advance to Jerusalem; and Joash took the temple treasures, etc. According to the Chronicles, he sent an army against Judah and Jerusalem, which destroyed all the princes of the

nation and sent much booty to the king to Damascus, as the small army of the Syrians had smitten the very large army of Judah. To protect Jerusalem, after this defeat, from being taken by the Syrians, Joash sent all the treasures of the temple and palace to Hazael, and so purchased the withdrawal of the Syrians. In this way the two brief accounts of the war may be both reconciled and explained; whereas the opinion, still repeated by Thenius, that the two passages treat of different wars, has no tenable ground to rest upon. The Philistian city of *Gath* (see the Comm. on Josh. xiii. 3) appears to have belonged at that time to the kingdom of Judah, so that the Gathites were not among the Philistines who made an incursion into Judah in the reign of Joram along with the Arabian tribes of the south (2 Chron. xxi. 16). And it is impossible to determine when Gath was wrested from the Syrians again; probably in the time of Joash the son of Jehoahaz of Israel, as he recovered from the Syrians all the cities which they had taken from the Israelites under Jehoahaz (ch. xiii. 25), and even smote Amaziah the king of Judæa at Bethshemesh and took him prisoner (ch. xiv. 13; 2 Chron. xxv. 21 sqq.). "All the consecrated things, which Jehoshaphat, Joram, and Ahaziah had consecrated, and his own consecrated things," i.e. what he (Joash) himself had consecrated. The existence of such temple treasures is not at variance either with the previous account of the repairing of the temple, for Joash would not use the consecrated offerings for the restoration of the temple, as the current revenue of the temple was sufficient for the purpose, or with 2 Chron. xxiv. 7, where it is stated that Athaliah and her sons had applied all the קִלְשֵׁי יְהוָה to the Baals (see at ch. xii. 5, p. 367); for even if we are to understand by the sons of Athaliah not bastard sons (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 582), but the brethren of Joram whom the Philistines and Arabians had carried off, Ahaziah and Joram, although they both of them served Baal, may, from political considerations, have now and then made consecrated gifts to the temple, if only in a passing fit of religious fear.

Vers. 19–21. *Conspiracy against Joash*.—Not long after the departure of the Syrians, who had left Joash, according to 2 Chron. xxiv. 25, with many wounds, his servants formed a conspiracy against him and slew him upon his bed in the house Millo, which goeth down to Silla. This description of the locality is perfectly obscure for us. The conjecture that בְּיִסְדֵּי הַמִּלּוֹ

was the house in the castle of *Millo* which is so frequently mentioned (see at 1 Kings ix. 15 and 2 Sam. v. 9), is precluded by the fact that this castle is always called מִלּוֹ (with the article). מִלָּא is regarded by many as an abbreviation of מַסְלָה, "which goes down by the road;" and Thenius supposes that the reference is to the road which ran diagonally through the city from the Joppa gate to the Haram-area, corresponding to the present David's road. Others regard מִלָּא as the proper name of a place in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. It is impossible to get any certain meaning out of it, unless we alter the text according to arbitrary assumptions, as Thenius has done. The conspirators were *Jozachar* the son of *Shimeath*, and *Jehozabad* the son of *Shomer*, according to ver. 21; but according to the Chronicles (ver. 26), they were *Zabad* the son of *Shimeath* the Ammonitess, and *Jehozabad* the son of *Shimrith* the Moabitess. The identity of the first names is perfectly obvious. וְיָרִי is a copyist's error for וְיָרִי, and this is the contracted form of וְיָרִי. The difference in the second: son of *Shomer* according to our text, and son of the *Shimrith* according to the Chronicles, has probably also arisen from a slip of the pen, since שֹׁמֵר might easily be occasioned by the dropping out of the ה from the defectively written שֹׁמֵרֶת, although it is also possible that *Shomer* may be the name of the grandfather. Joash was buried with his fathers in the city of David; but according to ver. 25 of the Chronicles he was not buried in the graves of the kings. The two statements are not irreconcilable; and there may be good historical ground for the account in the Chronicles, as Bertheau acknowledges with perfect justice, in spite of the suspicion which has been cast upon it by Thenius.

CHAP. XIII. REIGNS OF JEHOAHAZ AND JOASH, KINGS OF ISRAEL.
DEATH OF ELISHA.

Vers. 1-9. REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ. — Jehu was followed by Jehoahaz his son, "in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah." This synchronistic statement is not only at variance with ver. 10, but cannot be very well reconciled with ch. xii. 1. If Jehoahaz began to reign in the twenty-third year of Joash king of Judah, and reigned seventeen years, his son cannot have followed him after his death in the thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, as is stated in ver. 10, for there are only fourteen years and possibly a few months between the twenty-third and thirty-

seventh years of Joash; and even if he ascended the throne at the commencement of the twenty-third year of the reign of Joash and died at the end of the thirty-seventh, they could only be reckoned as fifteen and not as seventeen years. Moreover, according to ch. xii. 1, Joash of Judah began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu, and therefore Athaliah, who ascended the throne at the same time as Jehu, reigned fully six years. If, therefore, the first year of Joash of Judah coincides with the seventh year of Jehu, the twenty-eighth year of Jehu must correspond to the twenty-second year of Joash of Judah; and in this year of Joash not only did Jehu die, but his son Jehoahaz ascended the throne. Consequently we must substitute the twenty-second year of Joash, or perhaps, still more correctly, the twenty-first year (Josephus), for the twenty-third.¹ If Jehu died in the earliest months of the twenty-eighth year of his reign, so that he only reigned twenty-seven years and one or two months, his death and his son's ascent of the throne might

¹ On the other hand, Thenius, who follows des Vignoles and Winer, not only defends the correctness of the account "in the twenty-third year of Joash," because it agrees with the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu (ch. x. 36), but also holds fast the seventeen years' duration of the reign of Jehoahaz on account of its agreement with ch. xiv. 1; for 6 years (Athaliah) + 40 years (Joash) = 46 years, and 28 years (Jehu) + 17 years (Jehoahaz) = 45 years; so that, as is there affirmed, Amaziah the son of Joash ascended the throne in the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz. But to arrive at this result he assumes that there is an error in ver. 10, namely, that instead of the thirty-seventh year we ought to read the thirty-ninth year there, according to the edit. Aldina of the LXX. But apart from the fact that, as we have shown above in the text, the datum "in the twenty-third year of Joash" does not harmonize with the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu, this solution of the difference is overthrown by the circumstance that, in order to obtain this agreement between ver. 1 and ver. 14, Thenius reckons the years of the reigns not only of Athaliah and Joash, but also of Jehu and Jehoahaz, as full years (the former 16 + 40, the latter 28 + 17); whereas, in order to bring the datum in ver. 1 (in the twenty-third year of Joash) into harmony with the emendation proposed in ver. 10 (in the thirty-ninth year of Joash), he reckons the length of the reign of Jehoahaz as only sixteen years (instead of seventeen). For example, if Jehoahaz reigned seventeen years, supposing that he ascended the throne in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah, he died in the fortieth year of Joash (not the thirty-ninth), and his son began to reign the same year. In that case Amaziah would have begun to reign in the first year of Jehoash of Israel, and not in the second, as is stated in ch. xiv. 1.—The reading of the LXX. (ed. Ald. ver. 10), "in the thirty-ninth year," is therefore nothing but a mistaken emendation resorted to for the purpose of removing a discrepancy, but of no critical value.

fall even in the closing months of the twenty-first year of the reign of Joash of Judah. And from the twenty-first to the thirty-seventh year of Joash, Jehoahaz may have reigned sixteen years and a few months, and his reign be described as lasting seventeen years.—Vers. 2, 3. As Jehoahaz trod in the footsteps of his forefathers and continued the sin of Jeroboam (the worship of the calves), the Lord punished Israel during his reign even more than in that of his predecessor. The longer and the more obstinately the sin was continued, the more severe did the punishment become. He gave them (the Israelites) into the power of the Syrian king Hazael and his son Benhadad בְּנֵי-חֲדָד, “the whole time,” *sc.* of the reign of Jehoahaz (*vid.* ver. 22); not of the reigns of Hazael and Benhadad, as Thenius supposes in direct opposition to vers. 24 and 25. According to ver. 7, the Syrians so far destroyed the Israelitish army, that only fifty horsemen, ten war-chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers were left.—Vers. 4 sqq. In this oppression Jehoahaz prayed to the Lord (וַיִּקְרָא אֶל-יְהוָה as in 1 Kings xiii. 6); and the Lord heard this prayer, because He saw their oppression at the hands of the Syrians, and gave Israel a saviour, so that they came out from the power of the Syrians and dwelt in their booths again, as before, *i.e.* were able to live peaceably again in their houses, without being driven off and led away by the foe. The saviour, יְשׁוּעָה, was neither an angel, nor the prophet Elisha, nor *quidam e ducibus Joasi*, as some of the earlier commentators supposed, nor a victory obtained by Jehoahaz over the Syrians, nor merely Jeroboam (Thenius); but the Lord gave them the saviour in the two successors of Jehoahaz, in the kings Jehoash and Jeroboam, the former of whom wrested from the Syrians all the cities that had been conquered by them under his father (ver. 25), while the latter restored the ancient boundaries of Israel (ch. xiv. 25). According to vers. 22-25, the oppression by the Syrians lasted as long as Jehoahaz lived; but after his death the Lord had compassion upon Israel, and after the death of Hazael, when his son Benhadad had become king, Jehoash recovered from Benhadad all the Israelitish cities that had been taken by the Syrians. It is obvious from this, that the oppression which Benhadad the son of Hazael inflicted upon Israel, according to ver. 3, falls within the period of his father's reign, so that it was not as king, but as commander-in-chief under his father, that he oppressed Israel, and therefore he is not even

called king in ver. 3.—Ver. 6. “Only they departed not,” etc., is inserted as a parenthesis and must be expressed thus: “although they departed not from the sin of Jeroboam.”—Ver. 7. “For (פ) he had not left,” etc., furnishes the ground for ver. 5: God gave them a saviour, . . . although they did not desist from the sin of Jeroboam, . . . for Israel had been brought to the last extremity; He (Jehovah) had left to Jehoahaz people (עם, people of war), only fifty horsemen, etc. For עֲמָתַי instead of הַחֲמִיָּא (ver. 6), see at 1 Kings xxi. 21. The suffix תַּי in ver. 6 refers to עֲמָתַי, just as that in כִּפְתֹּנִי in ver. 2 (see at ch. iii. 3). “And even the Asherah was (still) standing at Samaria,” probably from the time of Ahab downwards (1 Kings xvi. 33), since Jehu is not said to have destroyed it (ch. x. 26 sqq.). וְלִשְׁמֹר וְלִשְׁמֹר “and had made them like dust for trampling upon,”—an expression denoting utter destruction.—Vers. 8 and 9. Close of the reign of Jehoahaz. Jehoahaz had probably shown his might in the war with the Syrians, although he had been overcome.

Vers. 10–13. REIGN OF JEHOASH OR JOASH OF ISRAEL.—On the commencement of his reign see at ver. 1. He also walked in the sins of Jeroboam (compare ver. 11 with vers. 2 and 6). The war with Amaziah referred to in ver. 12 is related in the history of this king in ch. xiv. 8–14; and the close of the reign of Joash is also recorded there (vers. 15 and 16) with the standing formula. And even here it ought not to be introduced till the end of the chapter, instead of in vers. 12 and 13, inasmuch as the verses which follow relate several things belonging to the reign of Joash. But as they are connected with the termination of Elisha's life, it was quite admissible to wind up the reign of Joash with ver. 13.

Vers. 14–21. ILLNESS AND DEATH OF THE PROPHET ELISHA.—Ver. 14. When Elisha was taken ill with the sickness of which he was to die, king Joash visited him and wept over his face, *i.e.* bending over the sick man as he lay, and exclaimed, “My father, my father! the chariot of Israel and horsemen thereof!” just as Elisha had mourned over the departure of Elijah (ch. ii. 12). This lamentation of the king at the approaching death of the prophet shows that Joash knew how to value his labours. And on account of this faith which was manifested in his recognition of the prophet's worth, the Lord gave the king another gracious assurance through the dying Elisha, which was confirmed

by means of a symbolical action.—Vers. 15 sqq. “Take—said Elisha to Joash—bow and arrows, . . . and let thy hand pass over the bow” (הִרְכִּבְךָ), *i.e.* stretch the bow. He then placed his hands upon the king’s hands, as a sign that the power which was to be given to the bow-shot came from the Lord through the mediation of the prophet. He then directed him to open the window towards the east and shoot, adding as he shot off the arrow: “An arrow of salvation from the Lord, and an arrow of salvation against the Syrians; and thou wilt smite the Syrians at Aphek (see at 1 Kings xx. 26) to destruction.” The arrow that was shot off was to be a symbol of the help of the Lord against the Syrians to their destruction. This promise the king was then to appropriate to himself through an act of his own. Elisha therefore directed him (ver. 18) to “take the arrows;” and when he had taken them, said: הָרִץ אֶלְעִזָּה, “strike to the earth,” *i.e.* shoot the arrows to the ground, not “smite the earth with the bundle of arrows” (Thenius), which neither agrees with the shooting of the first arrow, nor admits of a grammatical vindication; for הָרִץ, when used of an arrow, signifies to shoot and to strike with the arrow shot off, *i.e.* to wound or to kill (cf. ch. ix. 24, 1 Kings xxii. 34). The shooting of the arrows to the earth was intended to symbolize the overthrow of the Syrians. “And the king shot three times, and then stood (still),” *i.e.* left off shooting.—Ver. 19. Elisha was angry at this, and said: “Thou shouldst shoot five or six times, thou wouldst then have smitten the Syrians to destruction; but now thou wilt smite them three times.” לִלְחֹם: it was to shoot, *i.e.* thou shouldst shoot; compare Ewald, § 237, c; and for אֵל הָרִץ, then hadst thou smitten, *vid.* Ewald, § 358, a. As the king was told that the arrow shot off signified a victory over the Syrians, he ought to have shot off all the arrows, to secure a complete victory over them. When, therefore, he left off after shooting only three times, this was a sign that he was wanting in the proper zeal for obtaining the divine promise, *i.e.* in true faith in the omnipotence of God to fulfil His promise.¹ Elisha was angry at this weakness of the king’s faith, and told him that by leaving off so soon he had deprived himself of a perfect victory over the Syrians.—Vers. 20,

¹ “When the king reflected upon the power of the kings of Syria, since he had not implicit faith in Elisha, he thought that it was enough if he struck the earth three times, fearing that the prophecy might not be fulfilled if he should strike more blows upon the ground.”—CLERICUS.

21. Elisha then died at a great age. As he had been called by Elijah to be a prophet in the reign of Ahab and did not die till that of Joash, and forty-one years elapsed between the year that Ahab died and the commencement of the reign of Joash, he must have held his prophetic office for at least fifty years, and have attained the age of eighty. "And they buried him just as marauding bands of Moabites entered the land. And it came to pass, that at the burial of a man they saw the marauding bands coming, and placed the dead man in the greatest haste in the grave of Elisha," for the purpose of escaping from the enemy. But when the (dead) man touched the bones of Elisha, he came to life again, and rose up upon his feet. וַיָּחַי מֵתָם בְּיָמָיו is a circumstantial clause. The difficult expression בָּא שָׁנָה, "a year had come," can only have the meaning given by the LXX. and Chald.: "when a year had come," and evidently indicates that the burial of Elisha occurred at the time when the yearly returning bands of Moabitish marauders invaded the land. Ewald (*Krit. Gramm.* p. 528) would therefore read בָּא, a coming of the year, in which case the words would be grammatically subordinate to the main clause. Luther renders it "the same year," *in ipso anno*, after the Vulgate and Syriac, as if the reading had been בְּיָמָיו. וַיָּחַי מֵתָם בְּיָמָיו, they, the people who had just buried a man. וַיָּחַי מֵתָם בְּיָמָיו, not threw, but placed hastily. וַיָּחַי מֵתָם בְּיָמָיו: and the man went and touched. וַיָּחַי מֵתָם בְּיָמָיו serves as a pictorial delineation of the thought, that as soon as the dead man touched the bones of Elisha he came to life. וַיָּחַי מֵתָם בְּיָמָיו is not only applied to the motion of inanimate objects, but also to the gradual progress of any transaction. The conjecture of Thenius and Hitzig, וַיָּחַי מֵתָם בְּיָמָיו, "and they went away," is quite unsuitable. The earlier Israelites did not bury their dead in coffins, but wrapped them in linen cloths and laid them in tombs hewn out of the rock. The tomb was then covered with a stone, which could easily be removed. The dead man, who was placed thus hurriedly in the tomb which had been opened, might therefore easily come into contact with the bones of Elisha. The design of this miracle of the restoration of the dead man to life was not to show how even in the grave Elisha surpassed his master Elijah in miraculous power (Ephr. Syr. and others), but to impress the seal of divine attestation upon the prophecy of the dying prophet concerning the victory of Joash over the Syrians (Wisd. xlviii. 13, 14), since the Lord thereby bore witness that He was not the God of the dead, but of the

living, and that His spirit was raised above death and corruptibility.—The opinion that the dead man was restored to life again in a natural manner, through the violent shaking occasioned by the fall, or through the coolness of the tomb, needs no refutation.

Vers. 22-25. The prophecy which Elisha uttered before his death is here followed immediately by the account of its fulfilment, and to this end the oppression of the Israelites by Hazael is mentioned once more, together with that turn of affairs which took place through the compassion of God after the death of Hazael and in the reign of his son Benhadad. וְהָיָה is a pluperfect: "Hazael *had* oppressed" (for the fact itself compare vers. 4 and 7). For the sake of the covenant made with the patriarchs the Lord turned again to the Israelites, and would not destroy them, and did not cast them away from His face עַד הַיּוֹם ("till now"), as was the case afterwards, but delivered them from the threatening destruction through the death of Hazael. For in the reign of his son and successor Benhadad, Joash the son of Jehoahaz took from him again (וְהָיָה is to be connected with וְהָיָה) the cities which he (Hazael) had taken from Jehoahaz in the war. These cities which Hazael had wrested from Jehoahaz were on this side of the Jordan, for Hazael had conquered all Gilead in the time of Jehu (ch. x. 32, 33). Joash recovered the former from Benhadad, whilst his son Jeroboam reconquered Gilead also (see at ch. xiv. 25).

CHAP. XIV. REIGNS OF AMAZIAH OF JUDAH, AND JEROBOAM II. OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 1-22. REIGN OF AMAZIAH OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxv.).—Vers. 1-7. *Length and spirit of his reign, and his victory over the Edomites.*—Ver. 1. Amaziah began to reign in the second year of Joash of Israel. Now as Joash of Israel ascended the throne, according to ch. xiii. 10, in the thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, the latter cannot have reigned thirty-nine full years, which might be reckoned as forty (ch. xii. 1), according to the principle mentioned at p. 186 sq. of reckoning the current years as complete years, if the commencement of his reign took place a month or two before Nisan, and his death occurred a month or two after, without its being necessary to assume a regency.—Vers. 2, 3. Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years in the same theocratical spirit as his father Joash, only not like his ancestor David, *i.e.*, according to the correct explanation in 2 Chron. xxv. 2, not

with שֶׁלֹם (see at 1 Kings xi. 4), since Amaziah, like his father Joash (see at ch. xii. 3), fell into idolatry in the closing years of his reign (cf. 2 Chron. xxv. 14 sqq.).—Only the high places were not taken away, etc.—Vers. 5, 6. After establishing his own government, he punished the murderers of his father with death; but, according to the law in Deut. xxiv. 16, he did not slay their children also, as was commonly the custom in the East in ancient times, and may very frequently have been done in Israel as well. The *Chethib* חֶתֶם is correct, and the *Keri* חֶתֶם is an unnecessary alteration made after Deuteronomy.—Ver. 7. The brief account of the defeat of the Edomites in the Salt Valley and of the taking of the city of *Sela* is completed by 2 Chron. xxv. 6–16. According to the latter, Amaziah sought to strengthen his own considerable army by the addition of 100,000 Israelitish mercenaries; but at the exhortation of a prophet he sent the hired Israelites away again, at which they were so enraged, that on their way home they plundered several of the cities of Judah and put many men to death. The Edomites had revolted from Judah in the reign of Joram (ch. viii. 20 sqq.); Amaziah now sought to re-establish his rule over them, in which he was so far successful, that he completely defeated them, slaying 10,000 in the battle and then taking their capital, so that his successor Uzziah was also able to incorporate the Edomitish port of Elath in his own kingdom once more (ver. 22). On the Salt Valley (יַם־הַמֶּלַח for יַם־הַמֶּלַח in the Chronicles), a marshy salt plain in the south of the Dead Sea, see at 2 Sam. viii. 13. According to ver. 12 of the Chronicles, in addition to the 10,000 who were slain in battle, 10,000 Edomites were taken prisoners and cast headlong alive from the top of a rock. הַר־הַבֵּטָח (*the rock*) with the article, because the epithet is founded upon the peculiar nature of the city, was probably the capital of the Edomites, called by the Greeks ἡ Πέτρα, and bore this name from its situation and the mode in which it was built, since it was erected in a valley surrounded by rocks, and that in such a manner that the houses were partly hewn in the natural rock. Of this commercial city, which was still flourishing in the first centuries of the Christian era, splendid ruins have been preserved in a valley on the eastern side of the ghor which runs down to the Elanitic Gulf, about two days' journey from the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, on the east of Mount *Hor*, to which the Crusaders gave the name of *vallis*

Moysi, and which the Arabs still call *Wady Musa* (see Robinson, *Pal.* ii. pp. 512 sqq., and for the history of this city, pp. 574 sqq., and Ritter's *Erdkunde*, xiv. pp. 1103 sqq.).

Vers. 8-14. *War with Joash of Israel*.—Ver. 8. Amaziah then sent a challenge to the Israelitish king Joash to go to war with him. The outward reason for this was no doubt the hostile acts that had been performed by the Israelitish troops, which had been hired for the war with Edom and then sent back again (2 Chron. xxv. 13). But the inward ground was the pride which had crept upon Amaziah in consequence of his victory over the Edomites, and had so far carried him away, that he not only forgot the Lord his God, to whom he was indebted for this victory, and brought to Jerusalem the gods of the Edomites which he had taken in the war and worshipped them, and silenced with threats the prophet who condemned this idolatry (2 Chron. xxv. 14 sqq.), but in his proud reliance upon his own power challenged the Israelitish king to war.—Vers. 9, 10. Jehoash (Joash) answered his insolent challenge, “Come, we will see one another face to face,” i.e. measure swords with one another in war, with a similar fable to that with which Lotham had once instructed his fellow-citizens (Judg. ix. 8 sqq.). “The thorn-bush on Lebanon asked the cedar on Lebanon for its daughter as a wife for his son, and beasts of the field went by and trampled down the thorn-bush.” This fable is, of course, not to be interpreted literally, as though Amaziah were the thorn-bush, and Jehoash the cedar, and the wild beasts the warriors; but the thorn-bush putting itself upon an equality with the cedar is a figurative representation of a proud man overrating his strength, and the desire expressed to the cedar of a wish surpassing the bounds of one’s condition; so that Thenius is not warranted in inferring from this that Amaziah had in his mind the subjugation of Israel to Judah again. The trampling down of the thorn-bush by a wild beast is only meant to set forth the sudden overthrow and destruction which may come unexpectedly upon the proud man in the midst of his daring plans. Ver. 10 contains the application of the parable. The victory over Edom has made thee high-minded. נִשְׂאֵת לִבְךָ: thy heart has lifted thee up, equivalent to, thou hast become high-minded. הִפְכִּיךָ, “be honoured,” i.e. be content with the fame thou hast acquired at Edom, “and stay at home.” Wherefore shouldst thou meddle with misfortune? הִתְנַחֵץ, to engage in

conflict or war. Misfortune is thought of as an enemy, with whom he wanted to fight.—Vers. 11, 12. But Amaziah paid no attention to this warning. A battle was fought at *Beth-shemesh* (Ain-Shems, on the border of Judah and Dan, see at Josh. xv. 10); Judah was smitten by Israel, so that every one fled to his home.—Ver. 13. Jehoash took king Amaziah prisoner, and then came to Jerusalem, and had four hundred cubits of the wall broken down at the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, and then returned to Samaria with the treasures of the palace and temple, and with hostages. The *Chethib* יכח is to be pointed יכחִי, the vowel *i* being placed after *כ*, as in several other cases (see Ewald, § 18, *b*). There is no ground for altering יכחִי after the Chronicles (Thenius), although the reading in the Chronicles elucidates the thought. For if Jehoash took Amaziah prisoner at Beth-shemesh and then came to Jerusalem, he no doubt brought his prisoner with him, for Amaziah remained king and reigned for fifteen years after the death of Jehoash (ver. 17). The *Ephraim gate*, which is generally supposed to be the same as the gate of Benjamin (Jer. xxxvii. 13, xxxviii. 7; Zech. xiv. 10; compare Neh. viii. 16, xii. 39), stood in the middle of the north wall of Jerusalem, through which the road to Benjamin and Ephraim ran; and the *corner gate* was at the north-western corner of the same wall, as we may see from Jer. xxxi. 38 and Zech. xiv. 10. If, then, Jehoash had four hundred cubits of the wall thrown down at the gate Ephraim to the corner gate, the distance between the two gates was not more than four hundred cubits, which applies to the northern wall of Zion, but not to the second wall, which defended the lower city towards the north, and must have been longer, and which, according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 5, was probably built for the first time by Hezekiah (*vid.* Krafft, *Topographie v. Jerus.* pp. 117 sqq.). Jehoash destroyed this portion of the Zion wall, that the city might be left defenceless, as Jerusalem could be most easily taken on the level northern side.¹—The treasures of the temple and palace, which Jehoash took away, cannot, according to ch. xii. 19, have

¹ Thenius takes a different view. According to the description which Josephus gives of this event (*Ant.* ix. 9, 3), he assumes that Jehoash had the four hundred cubits of the city wall thrown down, that he might get a magnificent gate (?) for himself and the invading army; and he endeavours to support this assumption by stating that the space between the Ephraim gate and the corner gate was much more than four hundred cubits. But this

been very considerable. בְּנֵי הַמִּעֲרֹבוֹת, sons of the citizenships, i.e. hostages (*obsides*, Vulg.). He took hostages in return for the release of Amaziah, as pledges that he would keep the peace.

Vers. 15-17. The repetition of the notice concerning the end of the reign of Joash, together with the formula from ch. xiii. 12 and 13, may probably be explained from the fact, that in the annals of the kings of Israel it stood after the account of the war between Jehoash and Amaziah. This may be inferred from the circumstance that the name of Joash is spelt invariably יוֹאָשׁ here, whereas in the closing notices in ch. xiii. 12 and 13 we have the later form יוֹאָז, the one which was no doubt adopted by the author of our books. But he might be induced to give these notices once more as he found them in his original sources, from the statement in ver. 17, that Amaziah outlived Jehoash fifteen years, seeing therein a manifestation of the grace of God, who would not destroy Amaziah notwithstanding his pride, but delivered him, through the death of his victor, from further injuries at his hands. As Amaziah ascended the throne in the second year of the sixteen years' reign of Jehoash, and before his war with Israel made war upon the Edomites and overcame them, the war with Israel can only fall in the closing years of Jehoash, and this king cannot very long have survived his triumph over the king of Judah.

Vers. 18-22. *Conspiracy against Amaziah*.—Ver. 19. Amaziah, like his father Joash, did not die a natural death. They made a conspiracy against him at Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish, whither murderers were sent after him, who slew him there. The earlier commentators sought for the cause of this conspiracy in the unfortunate result of the war with Jehoash; but this conjecture is at variance with the circumstance that the conspiracy did not break out till fifteen years or more after that event. It is true that in 2 Chron. xxv. 27 we read "from the time that Amaziah departed from the Lord, they formed a conspiracy against him;" but even this statement cannot be understood in any other way than that Amaziah's apostasy gave occasion for discontent, which eventually led to a conspiracy.

assertion is based upon an assumption which cannot be sustained, namely, that the second wall built by Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 5) was already in existence in the time of Amaziah, and that the gates mentioned were in this wall. The subjective view of the matter in Josephus has no more worth than that of a simple conjecture.

For his apostasy began with the introduction of Edomitish deities into Jerusalem after the defeat of the Edomites, and therefore before the war with Jehoash, in the first part of his reign, whereas the conspiracy cannot possibly have lasted fifteen years or more before it came to a head. *Lachish*, in the lowlands of Judah, has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Um Lakis* (see at Josh x. 3).—Ver. 20. "They lifted him upon the horses," i.e. upon the hearse to which the king's horses had been harnessed, and brought him to Jerusalem, where he was buried with his fathers, i.e. in the royal tomb.—Ver. 21. All the people of Judah, i.e. the whole nation, not the whole of the men of war (Thenius), thereupon made his son *Azariah* (*Uzziah*) king, who was only sixteen years old. עֲזַרְיָה or עֲזִיָּה is the name given to this king here and ch. xv. 1, 6, 8, 17, 23, and 27, and 1 Chron. iii. 12; whereas in ch. xv. 13, 30, 32, 34, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1, 3, 11, etc., and also Isa. i. 1, vi. 1, Hos. i. 1, Amos i. 1, and Zech. xiv. 5, he is called עֲזִיָּה or עֲזִיָּהוּ (*Uzziah*). This variation in the name is too constant to be attributable to a copyist's error. Even the conjecture that *Azariah* adopted the name *Uzziah* as king, or that it was given to him by the soldiers after a successful campaign (Thenius), does not explain the use of the two names in our historical books. We must rather assume that the two names, which are related in meaning, were used promiscuously. עֲזַרְיָה signifies "in Jehovah is help;" עֲזִיָּה, "whose strength is Jehovah." This is favoured by the circumstance adduced by Bertheau, that among the descendants of Kohath we also find an *Uzziah* who bears the name *Azariah* (1 Chron. vi. 9 and 21), and similarly among the descendants of Heman an *Uzziel* with the name *Azarel* (1 Chron. xxv. 4 and 18).—Ver. 22. Immediately after his ascent of the throne, *Uzziah* built, i.e. fortified, *Eloth*, the Idumæan port (see at 1 Kings ix. 26), and restored it to Judah again. It is evident from this that *Uzziah* completed the renewed subjugation of Edom which his father had begun. The position in which this notice stands, immediately after his ascent of the throne and before the account of the duration and character of his reign, may be explained in all probability from the importance of the work itself, which not only distinguished the commencement of his reign, but also gave evidence of its power.

Vers. 23–29. REIGN OF JEROBOAM II. OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 23.

The statement that Jeroboam the son of Joash (Jehoash) ascended the throne in the fifteenth year of Amaziah, agrees with ver. 17, according to which Amaziah outlived Jehoash fifteen years, since Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years. On the other hand, the forty-one years' duration of his reign does not agree with the statement in ch. xv. 8, that his son Zachariah did not become king till the thirty-eighth year of Azariah (Uzziah); and therefore Thenius proposes to alter the number 41 into 51, Ewald into 53. For further remarks, see ch. xv. 8. Jeroboam also adhered firmly to the image-worship of his ancestors, but he raised his kingdom again to great power.—Ver. 25. He brought back (הָשִׁיב), i.e. restored, the boundary of Israel towards Hamath in the north, to the point to which the kingdom extended in the time of Solomon (1 Kings viii. 65), to the sea of the Arabah (the present Ghor), i.e. to the Dead Sea (compare Deut. iii. 17, and iv. 49, from which this designation of the southern border of the kingdom of the ten tribes arose), "according to the word of the Lord, which He had spoken through the prophet Jonah," who had probably used this designation of the southern boundary, which was borrowed from the Pentateuch, in the announcement which he made. The extent of the kingdom of Israel in the reign of Jeroboam is defined in the same manner in Amos vi. 14, but instead of יַם הָעֲרָבָה the נַחַל הָעֲרָבָה is mentioned, i.e. in all probability the Wady *el Ahsy*, which formed the boundary between Moab and Edom; from which we may see that Jeroboam had also subjugated the Moabites to his kingdom, which is not only rendered probable by ch. iii. 6 sqq., but is also implied in the words that he restored the former boundary of the kingdom of Israel.—On the prophet Jonah, the son of Amittai, see the Comm. on Jon. i. 1. *Gath-Hepher*, in the tribe of Zebulun, is the present village of *Mesched*, to the north of Nazareth (see at Josh. xix. 13).—Vers. 26, 27. The higher ground for this strengthening of Israel in the time of Jeroboam was to be found in the compassion of God. The Lord saw the great oppression and helpless condition of Israel, and had not yet pronounced the decree of rejection. He therefore sent help through Jeroboam. מֶלֶךְ מִצְרָיִם without the article, and governed by אֲנִי יְהוָה (see Ewald, § 293, a), signifies very bitter, מֶלֶךְ having taken the meaning of מִצְרָיִם. This is the explanation adopted in all the ancient versions, and also by Dietrich in Ges. *Lex.* וְאִתָּם עֲצוּר וְנִי, verbatim from Deut.

xxxii. 36, to show that the kingdom of Israel had been brought to the utmost extremity of distress predicted there by Moses, and it was necessary that the Lord should interpose with His help, if His people were not utterly to perish. לֹא דָבַר: He had not yet spoken, i.e. had not yet uttered the decree of rejection through the mouth of a prophet. To blot out the name under the heavens is an abbreviated expression for : among the nations who dwelt under the heavens.—Vers. 28, 29. Of the rest of the history of Jeroboam we have nothing more than an intimation that he brought back Damascus and Hamath of Judah to Israel, i.e. subjugated it again to the kingdom of Israel. לְיִהוּדָה is a periphrastic form for the genitive, as proper names do not admit of any form of the construct state, and in this case the simple genitive would not have answered so well to the fact. For the meaning is : “whatever in the two kingdoms of Damascus and Hamath had formerly belonged to Judah in the times of David and Solomon.” By Damascus and Hamath we are not to understand the cities, but the kingdoms ; for not only did the city of Hamath never belong to the kingdom of Israel, but it was situated outside the boundaries laid down by Moses for Israel (see at Num. xxxiv. 8). It cannot, therefore, have been re-conquered (הָשִׁיב) by Jeroboam. It was different with the city of Damascus, which David had conquered and even Solomon had not permanently lost (see at 1 Kings xi. 24). Consequently in the case of Damascus the capital is included in the kingdom.—Ver. 29. As Jeroboam reigned forty-one years, his death occurred in the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah. If, then, his son did not begin to reign till the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah, as is stated in ch. xv. 8, he cannot have come to the throne immediately after his father's death (see at ch. xv. 8).

CHAP. XV. REIGNS OF AZARIAH OF JUDAH, ZACHARIAH, SHALLUM, MENAHEM, PEKAHIAH, AND PEKAH OF ISRAEL, AND JOTHAM OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1–7. REIGN OF AZARIAH (UZZIAH) OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxvi).—The statement that “in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam Azariah began to reign” is at variance with ch. xiv. 2, 16, 17, and 23. If, for example, Azariah ascended the throne in the fifteenth year of Joash of Israel, and with his twenty-nine years' reign outlived Joash fifteen years (ch. xiv. 2, 17); if, moreover, Jeroboam followed his father Joash in the

fifteenth year of Amaziah (ch. xiv. 23), and Amaziah died in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam; Azariah (Uzziah) must have become king in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam, since, according to ch. xiv. 21, the people made him king after the murder of his father, which precludes the supposition of an interregnum. Consequently the *datum* "in the twenty-seventh year" can only have crept into the text through the confounding of the numerals כז (15) with כז (27), and we must therefore read "in the fifteenth year."—Vers. 2 sqq. Beside the general characteristics of Uzziah's fifty-two years' reign, which are given in the standing formula, not a single special act is mentioned, although, according to 2 Chron. xxvi., he raised his kingdom to great earthly power and prosperity; probably for no other reason than because his enterprises had exerted no permanent influence upon the development of the kingdom of Judah, but all the useful fruits of his reign were destroyed again by the ungodly Ahaz. Uzziah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father Amaziah had done. For as the latter was unfaithful to the Lord in the closing years of his reign, so did Uzziah seek God only so long as Zechariah, who was experienced in divine visions, remained alive, and God gave success to his enterprises, so that during this time he carried on successful wars against the Philistines and Arabians, fortified the walls of Jerusalem with strong towers, built watch-towers in the desert, and constructed cisterns for the protection and supply of his numerous flocks, promoted agriculture and vine-growing, and organized a numerous and well-furnished army (2 Chron. xxvi. 5-15). But the great power to which he thereby attained produced such haughtiness, that he wanted to make himself high priest in his kingdom after the manner of the heathen kings, and usurping the sacred functions, which belonged according to the law to the Levitical priests alone, to offer incense in the temple, for which he was punished with leprosy upon the spot (ver. 5 compared with 2 Chron. xxvi. 16 sqq.). The king's leprosy is described in our account also as a punishment from God. וַיִּכֹּת : Jehovah smote him, and he became leprous. This presupposes an act of guilt, and confirms the fuller account of this guilt given in the Chronicles, which Thenius, following the example of De Wette and Winer, could only call in question on the erroneous assumption "that the powerful king wanted to restore the regal high-priesthood exercised by David and Solomon." Oehler (*Herzog's Cycl.*)

has already shown that such an opinion is perfectly "groundless," since it is nowhere stated that David and Solomon performed with their own hands the functions assigned in the law to the priests in connection with the offering of sacrifice, as the co-operation of the priests is not precluded in connection with the sacrifices presented by these kings (2 Sam. vi. 17, and 1 Kings iii. 4, etc.).—Uzziah being afflicted with leprosy, was obliged to live in a separate house, and appoint his son Jotham as president of the royal house to judge the people, *i.e.* to conduct the administration of the kingdom.—The time when this event occurred is not stated either in our account or in the Chronicles. But this punishment from God cannot have fallen upon him before the last ten years of his fifty-two years' reign, because his son, who was only twenty-five years old when his father died (ver. 33, and 2 Chron. xxvii. 1), undertook the administration of the affairs of the kingdom at once, and therefore must have been at least fifteen years old. **בֵּית הַחֲשִׁירִית** is taken by Winer, Gesenius, and others, after the example of Iken, to signify *nosocomium*,

an infirmary or lazaret-house, in accordance with the verb **חָשַׁר**,

jecit, II. *debilis, imbecillis fuit*. But this meaning cannot be traced in Hebrew, where **חָשַׁר** is used in no other sense than free, set at liberty, *manumissus*. Consequently the rendering adopted by Aquila is correct, *ὄλκος ἐλευθερίας*; and the explanation given by Kimchi of this epithet is, that the persons who lived there were those who were sent away from human society, or perhaps more correctly, those who were released from the world and its privileges and duties, or cut off from intercourse with God and man.—Ver. 7. When Uzziah died, he was buried with his fathers in the city of David, but because he died of leprosy, not in the royal family tomb, but, as the Chronicles (ver. 23) add to complete the account, "in the burial-field of the kings;" so that he was probably buried in the earth according to our mode. His son Jotham did not become king till after Uzziah's death, as he had not been regent, but only the administrator of the affairs of the kingdom during his father's leprosy.

Vers. 8–12. REIGN OF ZACHARIAH OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 8. "In the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah, Zachariah the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel six months." As Jeroboam died in the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah, according to our remarks on ch.

xiv. 29, there is an interregnum of eleven years between his death and the ascent of the throne by his son, as almost all the chronologists since the time of Usher have assumed. It is true that this interregnum may be set aside by assuming that Jeroboam reigned fifty-one or fifty-three years instead of forty-one, without the synchronism being altered in consequence. But as it is not very probable that the numeral letters נב or ננ should be confounded with נכ, and as the conflict for the possession of the throne, which we meet with after the very brief reign of Zachariah, when taken in connection with various allusions in the prophecies of Hosea, rather favours the idea that the anarchy broke out immediately after the death of Jeroboam, we regard the assumption of an interregnum as resting on a better foundation than the removal of the chronological discrepancy by an alteration of the text.—Vers. 9 sqq. Zachariah also persevered in the sin of his fathers in connection with the calf-worship; therefore the word of the Lord pronounced upon Jehu (ch. x. 30) was fulfilled in him.—*Shallum* the son of Jabesh formed a conspiracy and put him to death קָבַל־עַם, before people, *i.e.* openly before the eyes of all.¹ As Israel would not suffer itself to be brought to repentance and to return to the Lord, its God and King, by the manifestations of divine grace in the times of Joash and Jeroboam, any more than by the severe judgments that preceded them, and the earnest admonitions of the prophets Hosea and Amos; the judgment of rejection could not fail eventually to burst forth upon the nation, which so basely despised the grace, long-suffering, and covenant-faithfulness of God. We therefore see the kingdom hasten with rapid steps towards its destruction after the death of Jeroboam. In the sixty-two years between the death of Jeroboam and the conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser anarchy prevailed twice, in all for the space of twenty years, and six kings followed one another, only one of whom, *viz.* Menahem, died a natural death, so as to be succeeded by his son upon the throne. The other five were dethroned and murdered by rebels, so that, as Witsius has truly said, with the murder of Zachariah not only was the declaration of Hosea (i. 4) fulfilled, "I visit the blood-guiltiness of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu," but also the parallel utterance, "and I destroy the kingdom of the house of Israel," since the

¹ Ewald in the most marvellous manner has made קָבַל־עַם into a king (*Gesch.* iii. p. 598).

monarchy in Israel really ceased with Zachariah. "For the successors of Zachariah were not so much kings as robbers and tyrants, unworthy of the august name of kings, who lost with ignominy the tyranny which they had wickedly acquired, and as wickedly exercised."—WITSIUS, *Δεκαφυλ.* p. 320.

Vers. 13–16. REIGN OF SHALLUM.—Shallum reigned only a full month (חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים), as in Deut. xxi. 13; see at Gen. xxix. 14). *Menahem* the son of Gadi then made war upon him from Tirzah; and by him he was smitten and slain. Menahem must have been a general or the commander-in-chief, as Josephus affirms. As soon as he became king he smote *Tiphsach*,—i.e. Thapsacus on the Euphrates, which has long since entirely disappeared, probably to be sought for in the neighbourhood of the present *Rakka*, by the ford of *el Hamman*, the north-eastern border city of the Israelitish kingdom in the time of Solomon (1 Kings v. 4), which came into the possession of the kingdom of Israel again when the ancient boundaries were restored by Jeroboam II. (ch. xiv. 25 and 28), but which had probably revolted again during the anarchy which arose after the death of Jeroboam,—“and all that were therein, and the territory thereof, from Tirzah; because they opened not (to him), therefore he smote it, and had them that were with child ripped up.” מִתִּירְזָה לְתִפְסַח does not mean that Menahem laid the land or district waste from Tirzah to Tiphsach, but is to be taken in connection with מָחָה in this sense: he smote Tiphsach proceeding from Tirzah, etc. The position of this notice, namely, immediately after the account of the usurpation of the throne by Menahem and before the history of his reign, is analogous to that concerning Elath in the case of Uzziah (ch. xiv. 22), and, like the latter, is to be accounted for from the fact that the expedition of Menahem against Tiphsach formed the commencement of his reign, and, as we may infer from ver. 19, became very eventful not only for his own reign, but also for the kingdom of Israel generally. The reason why he proceeded from Tirzah against Tiphsach, was no doubt that it was in Tirzah, the present Tallusa, which was only three hours to the east of Samaria (see at 1 Kings xiv. 17), that the army of which Menahem was commander was posted, so that he had probably gone to Samaria with only a small body of men to overthrow Shallum, the murderer of Zachariah and usurper of the throne, and to make himself king. It is possible

that the army commanded by Menahem had already been collected in Tirzah to march against the city of Tiph-sach, which had revolted from Israel when Shallum seized upon the throne by the murder of Zachariah; so that after Menahem had removed the usurper, he carried out at once the campaign already resolved upon, and having taken Tiph-sach, punished it most cruelly for its revolt. On the cruel custom of ripping up the women with child, *i.e.* of cutting open their wombs, see ch. viii. 12, Amos i. 13, and Hos. xiv. 1. *Tiph-sach*, *Thapsacus*, appears to have been a strong fortress; and from its situation on the western bank of the Euphrates, at the termination of the great trade-road from Egypt, Phœnicia, and Syria to Mesopotamia and the kingdoms of Inner Asia (Movers, *Phœniz.* ii. 2, pp. 164, 165; and Ritter, *Erdrkunde*, x. pp. 1114-15), the possession of it was of great importance to the kingdom of Israel.¹

Vers. 17-22. REIGN OF MENAHEM.—Menahem's reign lasted ten full years (see at ver. 23), and resembled that of his pre-

¹ There is no foundation for the view propounded by Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 599), Simson (*Hosea*, pp. 20, 21), Thenius, and many others, that *Tiph-sach* was a city between Tirzah and Samaria, which Menahem laid waste on his march from Tirzah to Samaria to dethrone Shallum; for it rests upon nothing more than the perfectly unwarrantable and ungrammatical combination of מִתְרַצָּה with אֶת-נְבוּלָה, "its boundaries toward Tirzah" (Sims.), and upon the two worthless objections: (1) that the great distance of מִתְרַצָּה from יִכָּה precludes the rendering "going out from Tirzah;" and (2) that Menahem was not the man to be able to conquer Thapsacus on the Euphrates. But there is no foundation for the latter assertion, as we have no standard by which to estimate the strength and bravery of the Israelitish army commanded by Menahem. And the first objection falls to the ground with the correct rendering of מִתְרַצָּה, *viz.* "proceeding from Tirzah," which is preferred even by Ewald and Thenius. With this rendering, the words by no means affirm that Menahem smote Tiph-sach from Tirzah *on the way to Samaria*. This is merely an inference drawn from ver. 13, according to which Menahem went from Tirzah to Samaria to overthrow Shallum. But this inference is open to the following objections: (1) that it is very improbable that there was a strong fortress between Tirzah and Samaria, which Menahem was obliged to take on his march before he could overthrow the usurper in the capital of the kingdom; and (2) that the name Tiph-sach, *trajectus*, ford, is by no means a suitable one for a city situated on the mountains between Tirzah and Samaria, and therefore, in order to carry out the hypothesis in question, Thenius proposes to alter *Tiph-sach* into *Tappuach*, without any critical warrant for so doing.

decessors in its attitude towards God. In ver 18, the expression *כָּל יְמֵי* (all his days) is a very strange one, inasmuch as no such definition of time occurs in connection with the usual formula, either in this chapter (cf. vers. 24 and 28) or elsewhere (cf. ch. iii. 3, x. 31, xiii. 2, 11, etc.). The LXX. have instead of this, *ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ* (in his days). If we compare ver. 29, *בְּיָמֵי פֶקַח בָּא* (in the days of Pekah came, etc.), *בָּא בְּיָמָיו* might possibly be regarded as the original reading, from which a copyist's error *כָּל יְמֵי* arose, after which *כָּל יְמֵי* was connected with the preceding clause.—Ver. 19. In the time of Menahem, *Pul* king of Assyria invaded the land, and Menahem gave him 1000 talents of silver—more than two and a half millions of thalers (£375,000)—“that his hands might be with him, to confirm the kingdom in his hand.” These words are understood by the majority of commentators from the time of Ephraem Syrus, when taken in connection with Hos. v. 13, as signifying that Menahem invited Pul, that he might establish his government with his assistance. But the words of Hosea, “Ephraim goes to the Assyrian,” *sc.* to seek for help (ch. v. 13, cf. vii. 11 and viii. 9), are far too general to be taken as referring specially to Menahem; and the assumption that Menahem invited Pul into the land is opposed by the words in the verse before us, “Pul came over the land.” Even the further statement that Menahem gave to Pul 1000 talents of silver when he came into the land, that he might help him to establish his government, presupposes at the most that a party opposed to Menahem had invited the Assyrians, to overthrow the usurper. At any rate, we may imagine, in perfect harmony with the words of our account, that Pul marched against Israel of his own accord, possibly induced to do so by Menahem's expedition against Thapsacus, and that his coming was simply turned to account as a good opportunity for disputing Menahem's possession of the throne he had usurped, so that Menahem, by paying the tribute mentioned, persuaded the Assyrian to withdraw, that he might deprive the opposing party of the Assyrian support, and thereby establish his own rule.—Ver. 20. To collect the requisite amount, Menahem imposed upon all persons of property a tax of fifty shekels each. *וַיֵּצֵא* with *עַל*, he caused to arise, *i.e.* made a collection. *וְהָיָא* in a causative sense, from *וָצָא*, to arise, to be paid (ch. xii. 13). *בְּנֵי חַיִל*: not warriors, but men of property, as in Ruth ii. 1, 1 Sam. ix. 1. *לְאִישׁ אֶחָד*, for the individual. *Pul* was the first

king of Assyria who invaded the kingdom of Israel and prepared the way for the conquest of this kingdom by his successors, and for the extension of the Assyrian power as far as Egypt. According to the thorough investigation made by Marc. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Assurs u. Babels*, pp. 128 sqq.), *Pul*, whose name has not yet been discovered upon the Assyrian monuments, was the last king of Nineveh of the family of the *Derketades*, who still ruled over Babylon according to Berosus, and the last king but one of this dynasty.¹

Vers. 23-26. REIGN OF PEKAHIAH.—Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign "in the fiftieth year of Uzziah." As Menahem had begun to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah and reigned ten years, he must have died in the forty-ninth year of Uzziah; and therefore, if his son did not become king till the fiftieth year, some months must have elapsed between the death of Menahem and Pekahiah's ascent of the throne, probably because, in the existing disorganization of the kingdom, the possession of the throne by the latter was opposed. Pekahiah reigned in the spirit of his predecessors, but only for two years, as his aide-de-camp (פֶּכָח, see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8) *Pekah* conspired against him and slew him in the citadel (מִצְדָּה, see at 1 Kings xvi. 8) of the king's palace, with *Argob* and *Aryeh*. Argob and Aryeh were not fellow-conspirators of Pekah, who helped to slay the king, but *principes Pekachjæ*, as Seb. Schmidt expresses it, probably aides-de-camp of Pekahiah, who were slain by the conspirators when defending their king. We must take the words in this sense on account of what follows: וְעִם פֶּכָח וְעִם חֲמִשָּׁים אֲנָשִׁים מִגִּלְעָדִים, "and with him (Pekah) were fifty men of the Gileadites" (i.e. they helped him). The Gileadites probably belonged

¹ It is true that some trace of his expedition has been found in the monuments, since an inscription has been deciphered with tolerable certainty, stating that king *Minikhimmi* of *Samirina* (Menahem of Shomron or Samaria) paid tribute to an Assyrian king. But the name of this Assyrian king is not determined with certainty, as Rawlinson and Oppert read it *Tiglat-palassar*, and suppose Tiglath-pileser to be intended; whereas M. v. Niebuhr (p. 182, note 1) imagines it to be the full name of *Pul*, since no Assyrian king ever had a name of one syllable like *Pul* as his official name, and even before that Hincks had detected in the name *Minikhimmi* the king Menahem who had to purchase the friendship of the Assyrian ruler *Pul* with 1000 talents of silver. (Comp. J. Brandis, *über d. histor. Gewinn aus der Entzifferung der assyr. Inschriften*, Berl. 1856, p. 50.)

to the king's body-guard, and were under the command of the aides-de-camp of Pekah.

Vers. 27–31. **REIGN OF PEKAH.**—Pekah the son of Remaliah reigned twenty years.¹ During his reign the Assyrian king *Tiglath-pileser* came, and after conquering the fortified cities round Lake Merom took possession of Gilead and Galilee, namely the whole land of Naphtali, and led the inhabitants captive to Assyria. Tiglath-pileser (תִּגְלַת פִּלְעֶסֶר or תִּגְלַת פִּלְסֶר, ch. xvi. 7; פִּלְסֶר or תִּגְלַת פִּלְסֶר, 1 Chron. v. 26, and 2 Chron. xxviii. 20; *Θεγλαθβαλασάρ* or *Θαλγαθφελλασάρ*, LXX.; written *Tiglat-palatsira* or *Tiglat-palatsar* on the Assyrian monuments, and interpreted by Gesenius and others “ruler of the Tigris,” although the reading of the name upon the monuments is still uncertain, and the explanation given a very uncertain one, since Tiglat or Tilgat is hardly identical with *Diglat* = Tigris, but is probably a name of the goddess *Derketo*, *Atergatis*), was, according to M. v. Niebuhr (pp. 156, 157), the last king of the *Derketade* dynasty, who, when the Medes and Babylonians threw off the Assyrian supremacy after the death of Pul, attempted to restore and extend the ancient dominion.² His expedition against Israel

¹ As this is apparently at variance not only with ver. 30, according to which Pekah was slain in the twentieth year of Jotham, *i.e.* in the fourth year of Ahaz, but also with ch. xvii. 1, according to which Hosea the murderer of Pekah became king in the twelfth year of Ahaz and reigned nine years, Ewald has added וְהָיָה אַחֲרָיו after וְהָיָה without any hesitation, and lengthened Pekah's reign to twenty-nine years, whereas Thenius proposes to alter twenty into thirty. But we do not thereby obtain an actual agreement either with ver. 30 or with ch. xvii. 1, so that in both these passages Thenius is obliged to make further alterations in the text. For instance, if Pekah had reigned for thirty years from the fifty-second or closing year of Uzziah's reign, Hosea would have ascended the throne in the fourteenth year of Ahaz, supposing that he really became king immediately after the murder of Pekah, and not in the twelfth, as is stated in ch. xvii. 1. It is only with a reign of twenty-eight years and a few months (one year of Uzziah, sixteen of Jotham, and eleven of Ahaz), which might be called twenty-nine years, that the commencement of Hosea's reign could fall in the twelfth year of Ahaz. But the discrepancy with ver. 30, that Hosea conspired against Pekah and slew him in the twentieth year of Jotham, is not removed thereby. For further remarks see at ver. 30 and ch. xvii. 1.

² M. Duncker (*Gesch. des Alterthums*, i. pp. 658, 659) also assumes that the dynasty changed with the overthrow of the Derketades, but he places it considerably earlier, about the year 900 or 950 B.C., because on the one hand Niebuhr's reasons for his view cannot be sustained, and on the

falls, according to ver. 29 and ch. xvi. 9, in the closing years of Pekah, when Ahaz had come to the throne in Judah. The enumeration of his conquests in the kingdom of Israel commences with the most important cities, probably the leading fortifications. Then follow the districts of which he took possession, and the inhabitants of which he led into captivity. The cities mentioned are *Ijon*, probably the present *Ayun* on the north-eastern edge of the Merj Ayun; *Abel-Beth-Maacah*, the present *Abil el Kamh*, on the north-west of Lake Huleh (see at 1 Kings xv. 20); *Janoach*, which must not be confounded with the *Janocha* mentioned in Josh. xvi. 6, 7, on the border of Ephraim and Manasseh, but is to be sought for in Galilee or the tribe-territory of Naphtali, and has not yet been discovered; *Kedesh*, on the mountains to the west of Lake Huleh, which has been preserved as an insignificant village under the ancient name (see at Josh. xii. 22); *Hazor*, in the same region, but not yet traced with certainty (see at Josh. xi. 1). *Gilead* is the whole of the land to the east of the Jordan, the territory of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half-Manasseh (1 Chron. v. 26), which had only been wrested from the Syrians again a short time before by Jeroboam II., and restored to Israel (ch. xiv. 25, compared with ch. x. 33). *הַנַּפְתָּלִי* (the feminine form of *נַפְתָּלִי*, see Ewald, § 173, *h*) is more precisely defined by the apposition "all the land of Naphtali" (see at 1 Kings ix. 11).—In the place of *אֲשׁוּרָה*, "to the land of Assyria," the different regions to which the captives were transported are given in 1 Chron. v. 26. For further remarks on this point see at ch. xvii. 6.—Ver. 30. Pekah met with his death in a conspiracy organized by *Hosea* the son of Elah, who made himself king "in the twentieth year of Jotham." There is something very strange in this chronological datum, as Jotham only reigned sixteen years (ver. 33), and Ahaz began to reign in the seventeenth year of

other hand there are distinct indications that the change in the reigning family must have taken place about this time: viz. 1. in the ruins of the southern city of Nineveh, at Kalah, where we find the remains of the palaces of two rulers, who sat upon the throne of Assyria between the years 900 and 830, whereas the castles of Ninos and his descendants must undoubtedly have stood in the northern city, in Nineveh; 2. in the circumstance that from the time mentioned the Assyrian kingdom advanced with fresh warlike strength and in a fresh direction, which would agree with the change in the dynasty.—Which of these two assumptions is the correct one, cannot yet be decided in the present state of the researches on this subject.

Pekah (ch. xvi. 1); so that Pekah's death would fall in the fourth year of Ahaz. The reason for this striking statement can only be found, as Usher has shown (*Chronol. sacr.* p. 80), in the fact that nothing has yet been said about Jotham's successor Ahaz, because the reign of Jotham himself is not mentioned till vers. 32 sqq.¹

VERS. 32-38. REIGN OF JOTHAM OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxvii.). —Ver. 32. "In the second year of Pekah Jotham began to reign." This agrees with the statement in ver. 27, that Pekah became king in the last year of Uzziah, supposing that it occurred at the commencement of the year. Jotham's sixteen years therefore came to a close in the seventeenth year of Pekah's reign (ch. xvi. 1). His reign was like that of his father Uzziah (compare vers. 34, 35 with vers. 3, 4), except, as is added in Chron. ver. 2, that he did not force himself into the temple of the Lord, as Uzziah had done (2 Chron. xxvi. 16).

¹ Other attempts to solve this difficulty are either arbitrary and precarious, e.g. the conjectures of the earlier chronologists quoted by Winer (*R. W. s. v. Jotham*), or forced, like the notion of Vaihinger in Herzog's *Cycl.* (art. *Jotham*), that the words בְּרֵעֵינָהם לִיּוֹתָם are to be eliminated as an interpolation, in which case the datum "in the twentieth year" becomes perfectly enigmatical; and again the assertion of Hitzig (*Comm. z. Jesaj.* pp. 72, 73), that instead of in the twentieth year of Jotham, we should read "in the twentieth year of Ahaz the son of Jotham," which could only be consistently carried out by altering the text of not less than seven passages (viz. ver. 33, ch. xvi. 1, and 2, 17; 2 Chron. xxvii. 1 and 8, and xxviii. 1); and lastly, the assumption of Thenius, that the words from בְּשָׁנָה to עֵינָה have crept into the text through a double mistake of the copyist and an arbitrary alteration of what had been thus falsely written, which is much too complicated to appear at all credible, even if the reasons which are supposed to render it probable had been more forcible and correct than they really are. For the first reason, viz. that the statement in what year of the contemporaneous ruler a king came to the throne is *always* first given when the history of this king commences, is disproved by ch. i. 17; the second, that the name of the king by the year of whose reign the accession of another is defined is invariably introduced with the epithet king of Judah or king of Israel, is shown by ch. xii. 2 and xvi. 1 to be not in accordance with fact; and the third, that this very king is never described by the introduction of his father's name, as *he is* here, except where the intention is to prevent misunderstanding, as in ch. xiv. 1, 23, or in the case of usurpers without ancestors (ver. 32, xvi. 1 and 15), is also incorrect in its first portion, for in the case of Amaziah in ch. xiv. 23 there was no misunderstanding to prevent, and even in the case of Joash in ch. xiv. 1 the epithet king of Israel would have been quite sufficient to guard against any misunderstanding.

All that is mentioned of his enterprises in the account before us is that he built the upper gate of the house of Jehovah, that is to say, that he restored it, or perhaps added to its beauty. The upper gate, according to Ezek. ix. 2 compared with ch. viii. 3, 5, 14 and 16, is the gate at the north side of the inner or upper court, where all the sacrifices were slaughtered, according to Ezek. xl. 38-43. We also find from 2 Chron. xxvii. 3 sqq. that he built against the wall of *Ophel*, and several cities in the mountains of Judah, and castles and towers in the forests, and subdued the Ammonites, so that they paid him tribute for three years. Jotham carried on with great vigour, therefore, the work which his father had began, to increase the material prosperity of his subjects.—Ver. 37. In those days the Lord began to send against Judah *Rezin*, etc. It is evident from the position of this verse at the close of the account of Jotham, that the incursions of the allied Syrians and Israelites into Judah under the command of *Rezin* and *Pekah* commenced in the closing years of Jotham, so that these foes appeared before Jerusalem at the very beginning of the reign of Ahaz.—It is true that the Syrians had been subjugated by Jeroboam II. (ch. xiv. 28); but in the anarchical condition of the Israelitish kingdom after his death, they had no doubt recovered their independence. They must also have been overcome by the Assyrians under *Pul*, for he could never have marched against Israel without having first of all conquered Syria. But as the power of the Assyrians was greatly weakened for a time by the falling away of the Medes and Babylonians, the Syrians had taken advantage of this weakness to refuse the payment of tribute to Assyria, and had formed an alliance with *Pekah* of Israel to conquer Judah, and thereby to strengthen their power so as to be able to offer a successful resistance to any attack from the side of the Euphrates.—But as ch. xvi. 6 sqq. and ch. xvii. show, it was otherwise decreed in the counsels of the Lord.

CHAP. XVI. REIGN OF KING AHAZ OF JUDAH.

With the reign of Ahaz a most eventful change took place in the development of the kingdom of Judah. Under the vigorous reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, by whom the earthly prosperity of the kingdom had been studiously advanced, there had been, as we may see from the prophecies of Isaiah, chs. ii.-vi., which date from this time, a prevalence of luxury and self-security, of un-

righteousness and forgetfulness of God, among the upper classes, in consequence of the increase of their wealth. Under Ahaz these sins grew into open apostasy from the Lord; for this weak and unprincipled ruler trod in the steps of the kings of Israel, and introduced image-worship and idolatrous practices of every kind, and at length went so far in his ungodliness as to shut up the doors of the porch of the temple and suspend the temple-worship prescribed by the law altogether. The punishment followed this apostasy without delay. The allied Syrians and Israelites completely defeated the Judæans, slew more than a hundred thousand men and led away a much larger number of prisoners, and then advanced to Jerusalem to put an end to the kingdom of Judah by the conquest of the capital. In this distress, instead of seeking help from the Lord, who promised him deliverance through the prophet Isaiah, Ahaz sought help from Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria, who came and delivered him from the oppression of Rezin and Pekah by the conquest of Damascus, Galilee, and the Israelitish land to the east of the Jordan, but who then oppressed him himself, so that Ahaz was obliged to purchase the friendship of this conqueror by sending him all the treasures of the temple and palace.—In the chapter before us we have first of all the general characteristics of the idolatry of Ahaz (vers. 2-4), then a summary account of his oppression by Rezin and Pekah, and his seeking help from the king of Assyria (vers. 5-9), and lastly a description of the erection of a heathen altar in the court of the temple on the site of the brazen altar of burnt-offering, and of other acts of demolition performed upon the older sacred objects in the temple-court (vers. 10-18). The parallel account in 2 Chron. xxviii. supplies many additions to the facts recorded here.

Vers. 1-4. On the time mentioned, "in the seventeenth year of Pekah Ahaz became king," see at ch. xv. 32. The datum "twenty years old" is a striking one, even if we compare with it ch. xviii. 2. As Ahaz reigned only sixteen years, and at his death his son Hezekiah became king at the age of twenty-five years (ch. xviii. 2), Ahaz must have begotten him in the eleventh year of his age. It is true that in southern lands this is neither impossible nor unknown,¹ but in the case of the kings of Judah

¹ In the East they marry girls of nine or ten years of age to boys of twelve or thirteen (Volney, *Reise*, ii. p. 360). Among the Indians husbands of ten years of age and wives of eight are mentioned (Thevenot, *Reisen*, iii. pp. 100

it would be without analogy. The reading found in the LXX., Syr., and Arab. at 2 Chron. xxviii. 1, and also in certain codd., viz. five and twenty instead of twenty, may therefore be a preferable one. According to this, Hezekiah, like Ahaz, was born in his father's sixteenth year.—Ver. 3. "Ahaz walked in the way of the kings of Israel," to which there is added by way of explanation in 2 Chron. xxviii. 2, "and also made molten images to the Baals." This refers, primarily, simply to the worship of Jehovah under the image of a calf, which they had invented; for this was the way in which all the kings of Israel walked. At the same time, in ch. viii. 18 the same formula is so used of Joram king of Judah as to include the worship of Baal by the dynasty of Ahab. Consequently in the verse before us also the way of the kings of Israel includes the worship of Baal, which is especially mentioned in the Chronicles.—"He even made his son pass through the fire," i.e. offered him in sacrifice to Moloch in the valley of Benhinnom (see at ch. xxiii. 10), after the abominations of the nations, whom Jehovah had cast out before Israel. Instead of בָּנָי we have the plural בָּנָי in 2 Chron. xxviii. 3, and in ver. 16 מְלָכֵי אַשּׁוּר, kings of Asshur, instead of מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, although only one, viz. Tiglath-pileser, is spoken of. This repeated use of the plural shows very plainly that it is to be understood rhetorically, as expressing the thought in the most general manner, since the number was of less importance than the fact.¹ So far as the fact is concerned, we have here the first instance of an actual Moloch-sacrifice among the Israelites, i.e. of one performed by slaying and burning. For although the phrase

and 165). In Abyssinia boys of twelve and even ten years old marry (Rüppell, *Abessinien*, ii. p. 59). Among the Jews in Tiberias, mothers of eleven years of age and fathers of thirteen are not uncommon (Burckh. *Syrien*, p. 570); and Lynch saw a wife there, who to all appearance was a mere child about ten years of age, who had been married two years already. In the *epist. ad N. Carbonelli*, from Hieronymi *epist. ad Vitalem*, 132, and in an ancient *glossa*, Bochart has also cited examples of one boy of ten years and another of nine, *qui nutricem suam gravidavit*, together with several other cases of a similar kind from later writers. Cf. Bocharti *Opp.* i. (*Geogr. sacr.*) p. 920, ed. Lugd. 1692.

¹ The Greeks and Romans also use the plural instead of the singular in their rhetorical style of writing, especially when a father, a mother, or a son is spoken of. Cf. Cic. *de prov. cons.* xiv. 35: *si ad jucundissimos liberos, si ad clarissimum generum redire properaret*, where Julia, the only daughter of Cæsar, and the wife of Pompey the Great, is referred to; and for other examples see Caspari, *der Syr. Ephraimit. Krieg*, p. 41.

הַעֲבִיר בְּאֵשׁ or מִלֵּךְ does not in itself denote the slaying and burning of the children as Moloch-sacrifices, but primarily affirms nothing more than the simple passing through fire, a kind of februation or baptism of fire (see at Lev. xviii. 21); such passages as Ezek. xvi. 21 and Jer. vii. 31, where sacrificing in the valley of Benhinnom is called slaying and burning the children, show most distinctly that in the verse before us הַעֲבִיר בְּאֵשׁ is to be taken as signifying actual sacrificing, i.e. the burning of the children slain in sacrifice to Moloch, and, as the emphatic וְנִם indicates, that this kind of idolatrous worship, which had never been heard of before in Judah and Israel, was introduced by Ahaz.¹ In the Chronicles, therefore, הַעֲבִיר is correctly explained by וַיִּבְעֹר, "he burned;" though we cannot infer from this that הַעֲבִיר is always a mere conjecture for הַבְעִיר, as Geiger does (*Urschrift u. Uebers. der Bibel*, p. 305). The offering of his son for Moloch took place, in all probability, during the severe oppression of Ahaz by the Syrians, and was intended to appease the wrath of the gods, as was done by the king of the Moabites in similar circumstances (ch. iii. 27).—In ver. 4 the idolatry

¹ "If this idolatry had occurred among the Israelites before the time of Ahaz, its abominations would certainly not have been passed over by the biblical writers, who so frequently mention other forms of idolatry." These are the correct words of Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 65), who only errs in the fact that on the one hand he supposes the origin of human sacrifices in the time of Ahaz to have been inwardly connected with the appearance of the Assyrians, and traces them to the acquaintance of the Israelites with the Assyrian fire-deities *Adrammelech* and *Anammelech* (ch. xvii. 31), and on the other hand gives this explanation of the phrase, "cause to pass through the fire for Moloch," which is used to denote the sacrificing of children: "the burning of children was regarded as a *passage*, whereby, after the separation of the impure and earthly dross of the body, the children attained to union with the deity" (p. 329). To this J. G. Müller has correctly replied (in Herzog's *Cyclop.*): "This mystic, pantheistic, moralizing view of human sacrifices is not the ancient and original view of genuine heathenism. It is no more the view of Hither Asia than the Mexican view (i.e. the one which lay at the foundation of the custom of the ancient Mexicans, of passing the new-born boy four times through the fire). The Phœnician myths, which Movers (p. 329) quotes in support of his view, refer to the offering of human sacrifices in worship, and the moral view is a later addition belonging to Hellenism. The sacrifices were rather given to the gods as food, as is evident from innumerable passages (compare the primitive religions of America), and they have no moral aim, but are intended to reward or bribe the gods with costly presents, either because of calamities that have already passed, or because of those that are anticipated with alarm; and, as Movers himself admits (p. 301), to make atonement for ceremonial sins, i.e. to follow smaller sacrifices by those of greater value."

is described in the standing formulæ as sacrificing upon high places and hills, etc., as in 1 Kings xiv. 23. The temple-worship prescribed by the law could easily be continued along with this idolatry, since polytheism did not exclude the worship of Jehovah. It was not till the closing years of his reign that Ahaz went so far as to close the temple-hall, and thereby suspend the temple-worship (2 Chron. xxviii. 24); in any case it was not till after the alterations described in vers. 11 sqq. as having been made in the temple.

Vers. 5-9. Of the war which the allied Syrians and Israelites waged upon Ahaz, only the principal fact is mentioned in ver. 5, namely, that the enemy marched to Jerusalem to war, but were not able to make war upon the city, *i.e.* to conquer it; and in ver. 6 we have a brief notice of the capture of the port of Elath by the Syrians. We find ver. 5 again, with very trifling alterations, in Isa. vii. 1 at the head of the prophecy, in which the prophet promises the king the help of God and predicts that the plans of his enemies will fail. According to this, the allied kings intended to take Judah, to dethrone Ahaz, and to instal a vassal king, viz. the son of Tabeel. We learn still more concerning this war, which had already begun, according to ch. xv. 37, in the closing years of Jotham, from 2 Chron. xxviii. 5-15; namely, that the two kings inflicted great defeats upon Ahaz, and carried off many prisoners and a large amount of booty, but that the Israelites set their prisoners at liberty again, by the direction of the prophet *Oded*, and after feeding and clothing them, sent them back to their brethren. It is now generally admitted that these statements are not at variance with our account (as Ges., Winer, and others maintain), but can be easily reconciled with it, and simply serve to complete it.¹ The only questions in dispute are, whether the two accounts refer to two different campaigns, or merely to two different events in the same campaign, and whether the battles to which the Chronicles allude are to be placed before or after the siege of Jerusalem mentioned in our text. The first question cannot be absolutely decided, since there are no decisive arguments to

¹ Compare C. P. Caspari's article on the Syro-Ephraimitish war in the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz (*Univers. Progr. von Christiania*, 1849), where the different views concerning the relation between the two accounts are fully discussed, and the objections to the credibility of the account given in the Chronicles most conclusively answered.

be found in favour of either the one supposition or the other ; and even "the *one* strong argument" which Caspari finds in Isa. vii. 6 against the idea of two campaigns is not conclusive. For if the design which the prophet there attributes to the allied kings, "we will make a breach in Judah," i.e. storm his fortresses and his passes and conquer them, does obviously presuppose, that at the time when the enemy spake or thought in this manner, Judah was still standing uninjured and unconquered, and therefore the battles mentioned in 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6 cannot yet have been fought ; it by no means follows from the connection between Isa. vii. 6 and ver. 1 (of the same chapter) that ver. 6 refers to plans which the enemy had only just formed at the time when Isaiah spoke (ch. vii. 4 sqq.). On the contrary, Isaiah is simply describing the plans which the enemy devised and pursued, and which they had no doubt formed from the very commencement of the war, and now that they were marching against Jerusalem, hoped to attain by the conquest of the capital. All that we can assume as certain is, that the war lasted longer than a year, since the invasion of Judah by these foes had already commenced before the death of Jotham, and that the greater battles (2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6) were not fought till the time of Ahaz, and it was not till his reign that the enemy advanced to the siege of Jerusalem.—With regard to the second question, it cannot be at all doubtful that the battles mentioned preceded the advance of the enemy to the front of Jerusalem, and therefore our account merely mentions the last and principal event of the war, and that the enemy was compelled to retreat from Jerusalem by the fact that the king of Assyria, Tiglath-pileser, whom Ahaz had called to his help, marched against Syria and compelled Rezin to hurry back to the defence of his kingdom.—It is more difficult to arrange the account of the capture of Elath by the Syrians (ver. 6) among the events of this war. The expression וְהָיָה merely assigns it in a perfectly general manner to the period of the war. The supposition of Thenius, that it did not take place till after the siege of Jerusalem had been relinquished, and that Rezin, after the failure of his attempt to take Jerusalem, that he might not have come altogether in vain, marched away from Jerusalem round the southern point of the Dead Sea and conquered Elath, is impossible, because he would never have left his own kingdom in such a defenceless state to

the advancing Assyrians. We must therefore place the taking of Elath by Rezin before his march against Jerusalem, though we still leave it undecided how Rezin conducted the war against Ahaz: whether by advancing along the country to the east of the Jordan, defeating the Judæans there (2 Chron. xxviii. 5), and then pressing forward to Elath and conquering that city, while Pekah made a simultaneous incursion into Judah from the north and smote Ahaz, so that it was not till after the conquest of Elath that Rezin entered the land from the south, and there joined Pekah for a common attack upon Jerusalem, as Caspari supposes; or whether by advancing into Judah along with Pekah at the very outset, and after he had defeated the army of Ahaz in a great battle, sending a detachment of his own army to Idumæa, to wrest that land from Judah and conquer Elath, while he marched with the rest of his forces in combination with Pekah against Jerusalem.—“Rezin brought Elath to Aram and drove the Jews out of Elath, and Aramæans came to Elath and dwelt therein to this day.” **וַיָּשִׁיב** does not mean “to lead back” here, but literally to turn, to bring to a person; for Elath had never belonged to Aram before this, but was an Edomitish city, so that even if we were to read **וַיָּבִיחַ** for **וַיָּשִׁיב**, **וַיָּבִיחַ** could not mean to bring back. But there is no ground whatever for altering **וַיָּבִיחַ** into **וַיָּבִיחַ** (Cler., Mich., Ew., Then., and others), whereas the form **וַיָּבִיחַ** is at variance with such an alteration through the assumption of an exchange of **ו** and **י**, because **וַיָּבִיחַ** is never written *defective* **וַיָּבִיחַ** except in Ezek xxv. 14. There are also no sufficient reasons for altering **וַיָּבִיחַ** into **וַיָּבִיחַ** (*Keri*); **וַיָּבִיחַ** is merely a Syriac form for **וַיָּבִיחַ** with the dull Syriac *u*-sound, several examples of which form occur in this very chapter,—*e.g.* **וַיָּבִיחַ** for **וַיָּבִיחַ** ver. 7, **וַיָּבִיחַ** for **וַיָּבִיחַ** ver. 10, and **וַיָּבִיחַ** for **וַיָּבִיחַ** ver. 6,—whereas **וַיָּבִיחַ**, with additions, is only written *plene* twice in the ancient books, and that in the Chronicles, where the *scriptio plena* is generally preferred (2 Chron. xxv. 14 and xxviii. 17), but is always written *defective* (**וַיָּבִיחַ**). Moreover the statement that “*Edomites* (Edomites, not the Edomites) came thither,” etc., would be very inappropriate, since Edomites certainly lived in this Idumæan city in perfect security, even while it was under Judæan government. And there would be no sense in the expression “the Edomites dwelt there *to this day*,” since the Edomites remained in their own land to the time of the captivity.

All this is applicable to *Aramæans* alone. As soon as Rezin had conquered this important seaport town, it was a very natural thing to establish an Aramæan colony there, which obtained possession of the trade of the town, and remained there till the time when the annals of the kings were composed (for it is to this that the expression עַרְמִיָּים הָיָה refers), even after the kingdom of Rezin had long been destroyed by the Assyrians, since Elath and the Aramæans settled there were not affected by that blow.¹ As soon as the Edomites had been released by Rezin from the control of Judah, to which they had been brought back by Amaziah and Uzziah (ch. xiv. 7, 22), they began plundering Judah again (2 Chron. xxviii. 17); and even the Philistines took possession of several cities in the lowland, to avenge themselves for the humiliation they had sustained at the hand of Uzziah (2 Chron. xxviii. 18).—Ver. 7. In this distress Ahaz turned to Tiglath-pileser, without regarding either the word of Isaiah in ch. vii. 4 sqq., which promised salvation, or the prophet's warning against an alliance with Assyria, and by sending the gold and silver which were found in the treasures of the temple and palace, purchased his assistance against Rezin and Pekah. Whether this occurred immediately after the invasion of the land by the allied kings, or not till after they had defeated the Judæan army and advanced against Jerusalem, it is impossible to discover either from this verse or from 2 Chron. xxviii. 16; but probably it was after the first great victory gained by the foe, with which Isa. vii. and viii. agree.—On קִיִּים for קָטִים see Ewald, § 151, b.—Ver. 9. Tiglath-pileser then marched against Damascus, took the city, slew Rezin, and led the inhabitants away to *Kir*, as Amos had prophesied (Amos i. 3–5). קִיר, *Kir*, from which, according to Amos ix. 7, the Aramæans had emigrated to Syria, is no doubt a district by the river *Kur* (Κύρος, Κύρρος), which taking its rise in Armenia, unites with the Araxes and flows into the Caspian Sea, although from the length of the river Kur it is impossible to define precisely the locality in which they were

¹ If we only observe that אַרְמִיָּים has not the article, and therefore the words merely indicate the march of an Aramæan colony to Elath, it is evident that אַרְמִיָּים would be unsuitable; for when the יְהוּדִים had been driven from the city which the Syrians had conquered, it was certainly not some Edomites but the Edomites who took possession again. Hence Winer, Caspari, and others are quite right in deciding that אַרְמִיָּים is the only correct reading.

placed; and the statement of Josephus (*Ant.* ix. 13, 3), that the Damascenes were transported *εἰς τὴν ἄνω Μηδίαν*, is somewhat indefinite, and moreover has hardly been derived from early historical sources (see M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, p. 158). Nothing is said here concerning Tiglath-pileser's invasion of the kingdom of Israel, because this has already been mentioned at ch. xv. 29 in the history of Pekah.

Vers. 10-18. Ahaz paid Tiglath-pileser a visit in Damascus, "to present to him his thanks and congratulations, and possibly also to prevent a visit from Tiglath-pileser to himself, which would not have been very welcome" (Thenius). The form הִנֵּחַ is neither to be altered into הִנֵּחַ nor regarded as a copyist's error for הִנֵּחַ, as we have several words in this chapter that are formed with the dull Syriac *u*-sound. The visit of Ahaz to Damascus is simply mentioned on account of what follows, namely, that Ahaz saw an altar there, which pleased him so much that he sent a picture and model of it "according to all the workmanship thereof," i.e. its style of architecture, to Urijah the priest (see Isa. viii. 2), and had an altar made like it for the temple, upon which, on his return to Jerusalem, he ordered all the burnt-offerings, meat-offerings, and drink-offerings to be presented. The allusion here is to the offerings which he commanded to be presented for his prosperous return to Jerusalem.—Vers. 14 sqq. Soon after this Ahaz went still further, and had "the copper altar before Jehovah," i.e. the altar of burnt-offering in the midst of the court before the entrance into the Holy Place, removed "from the front of the (temple-) house, from (the spot) between the altar (the new one built by Urijah) and the house of Jehovah (i.e. the temple-house), and placed at the north side of the altar." הִנֵּחַ does not mean *removit*, caused to be taken away, but *admovit*, and is properly to be connected with עֲלִיָּהוּ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, notwithstanding the fact that וְהִנֵּחַ is inserted between for the sake of greater clearness, as Maurer has already pointed out.¹ On the use of the article with הַמִּזְבֵּחַ in the construct state, see Ewald, § 290, d.—Ver.

¹ There is nothing in the text to support the view of Thenius, that Urijah had the brazen altar of burnt-offering erected by Solomon moved farther forwards, nearer to the temple-house, and the new one put in its place, whence it was afterwards shifted by Ahaz and the new one moved a little farther to the south, that is to say, that he placed the two altars close to one another, so that they now occupied the centre of the court.



15. He also commanded that the daily morning and evening sacrifice, and the special offerings of the king and the people, should be presented upon the new altar, and thereby put a stop to the use of the Solomonian altar, "about which he would consider." The *Chethib* יִצְחִי is not to be altered; the *pron. suff.* stands before the noun, as is frequently the case in the more diffuse popular speech. The new altar is called "the great altar," probably because it was somewhat larger than that of Solomon. הַזֶּקֶר: used for the burning of the sacrifices. מִנְחַת הָעֶרֶב is not merely the meat-offering offered in the evening, but the whole of the evening sacrifice, consisting of a burnt-offering and a meat-offering, as in 1 Kings xviii. 29, 36. יְהִי־לִי לְזִכָּר, the brazen altar "will be to me for deliberation," i.e. I will reflect upon it, and then make further arrangements. On זִכָּר in this sense see Prov. xx. 25. In the opinion of Ahaz, the altar which had been built after the model of that of Damascus was not to be an idolatrous altar, but an altar of Jehovah. The reason for this arbitrary removal of the altar of Solomon, which had been sanctified by the Lord Himself at the dedication of the temple by fire from heaven, was, in all probability, chiefly that the Damascene altar pleased Ahaz better; and the innovation was a sin against Jehovah, inasmuch as God Himself had prescribed the form for His sanctuary (cf. Ex. xxv. 40, xxvi. 30; 1 Chron. xxviii. 19), so that any altar planned by man and built according to a heathen model was practically the same as an idolatrous altar.—The account of this altar is omitted from the Chronicles; but in ver. 23 we have this statement instead: "Ahaz offered sacrifice to the gods of Damascus, who smote him, saying, The gods of the kings of Aram helped them; I will sacrifice to them that they may help me: and they were the ruin of him and of all Israel." Thenius and Bertheau find in this account an alteration of our account of the copying of the Damascene altar introduced by the chronicler as favouring his design, namely, to give as glaring a description as possible of the ungodliness of Ahaz. But they are mistaken. For even if the notice in the Chronicles had really sprung from this alone, the chronicler would have been able from the standpoint of the Mosaic law to designate the offering of sacrifice upon the altar built after the model of an idolatrous Syrian altar as sacrificing to these gods. But it is a question whether the chronicler had in his mind merely the sacrifices offered

upon that altar in the temple-court, and not rather sacrifices which Ahaz offered upon some *bamah* to the gods of Syria, when he was defeated and oppressed by the Syrians, for the purpose of procuring their assistance. As Ahaz offered his son in sacrifice to Moloch according to ver. 3, he might just as well have offered sacrifice to the gods of the Syrians.—Vers. 17, 18. Ahaz also laid his hand upon the other costly vessels of the court of the temple. He broke off the panels of the Solomonian stands, which were ornamented with artistic carving, and removed the basins from the stands, and took the brazen sea from the brazen oxen upon which they stood, and placed it upon a stone pavement. The ׀ before אֲדִירֵי־הַיָּם can only have crept into the text through a copyist's error, and the singular must be taken distributively: he removed from them (the stands) every single basin. מִצֵּפֶת אֲבָנִים (without the article) is not the stone pavement of the court of the temple, but a pedestal made of stones (*βάσις λιθίνη*, LXX.) for the brazen sea. The reason why, or the object with which Ahaz mutilated these sacred vessels, is not given. The opinion expressed by Ewald, Thenius, and others, that Ahaz made a present to Tiglath-pileser with the artistically wrought panels of the stands, the basins, and the oxen of the brazen sea, is not only improbable in itself, since you would naturally suppose that if Ahaz had wished to make a "valuable and very welcome present" to the Assyrian king, he would have chosen some perfect stands with their basins for this purpose, and not merely the panels and basins; but it has not the smallest support in the biblical text,—on the contrary, it has the context against it. For, in the first place, if the objects named had been sent to Tiglath-pileser, this would certainly have been mentioned, as well as the sending of the temple and palace treasures. And, again, the mutilation of these vessels is placed between the erection of the new altar which was constructed after the Damascene model, and other measures which Ahaz adopted as a protection against the king of Assyria (ver. 18). Now if Ahaz, on his return from visiting Tiglath-pileser at Damascus, had thought it necessary to send another valuable present to that king in order to secure his permanent friendship, he would hardly have adopted the measures described in the next verse.—Ver. 18. "The covered Sabbath-stand, which they had built in the house (temple), and the outer

entrance of the king he turned (*i.e.* removed) into the house of Jehovah before the king of Assyria." מִסְכָּה הַשֹּׁמֵרֶת (*Keri* מִסְכָּה, from סָכַךְ, to cover) is no doubt a covered place, stand or hall in the court of the temple, to be used by the king whenever he visited the temple with his retinue on the Sabbath or on feast-days; and "the outer entrance of the king" is probably the special ascent into the temple for the king mentioned in 1 Kings x. 5. In what the removal of it consisted it is impossible to determine, from the want of information as to its original character. According to Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 621) and Thenius, הֵסִיב בֵּית יְהוָה means, "he altered (these places), *i.e.* he robbed them of their ornaments, in the house of Jehovah." This is quite arbitrary. For even if בֵּית יְהוָה could mean "in the house of Jehovah" in this connection, הֵסִיב does not mean to disfigure, and still less "to deprive of ornaments." In ch. xxiii. 34 and xxiv. 17 it signifies to alter the name, not to disfigure it. Again, מִפְּנֵי מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, "for fear of the king of Assyria," cannot mean, in this connection, "to make presents to the king of Assyria." And with this explanation, which is grammatically impossible, the inference drawn from it, namely, that Ahaz sent the ornaments of the king's stand and king's ascent to the king of Assyria along with the vessels mentioned in ver. 17, also falls to the ground. If the alterations which Ahaz made in the stands and the brazen sea had any close connection with his relation to Tiglath-pileser, which cannot be proved, Ahaz must have been impelled by fear to make them, not that he might send them as presents to him, but that he might hide them from him if he came to Jerusalem, to which 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21 seems to refer. It is also perfectly conceivable, as Züllich (*Die Cherubimwagen*, p. 56) conjectures, that Ahaz merely broke off the panels from the stands and removed the oxen from the brazen sea, that he might use these artistic works to decorate some other place, possibly his palace.—Whether these artistic works were restored or not at the time of Hezekiah's reformation or in that of Josiah, we have no accounts to show. All that can be gathered from ch. xxv. 13, 14, Jer. lii. 17, and xxvii. 19, is, that the stands and the brazen sea were still in existence in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and that on the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans they were broken in pieces and carried away to Babylon as brass. The brazen oxen are also specially mentioned in Jer.

lii. 20, which is not the case in the parallel passage 2 Kings xxv. 13; though this does not warrant the conclusion that they were no longer in existence at that time.—Vers. 19, 20. Conclusion of the reign of Ahaz. According to 2 Chron. xxviii. 27, he was buried in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

CHAP. XVII. REIGN OF HOSHEA AND DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL. THE PEOPLE CARRIED AWAY TO ASSYRIA AND MEDIA. TRANSPORTATION OF HEATHEN COLONISTS TO SAMARIA.

Vers. 1-6. REIGN OF HOSHEA KING OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 1. In the twelfth year of Ahaz began Hoshea to reign. As Hoshea conspired against Pekah, according to ch. xv. 30, in the fourth year of Ahaz, and after murdering him made himself king, whereas according to the verse before us it was not till the twelfth year of Ahaz that he really became king, his possession of the throne must have been contested for eight years. The earlier commentators and almost all the chronologists have therefore justly assumed that there was an eight years' anarchy between the death of Pekah and the commencement of Hoshea's reign. This assumption merits the preference above all the attempts made to remove the discrepancy by alterations of the text, since there is nothing at all surprising in the existence of anarchy at a time when the kingdom was in a state of the greatest inward disturbance and decay. Hoshea reigned nine years, and "did that which was evil in the eyes of Jehovah, though not like the kings of Israel before him" (ver. 2). We are not told in what Hoshea was better than his predecessors, nor can it be determined with any certainty, although the assumption that he allowed his subjects to visit the temple at Jerusalem is a very probable one, inasmuch as, according to 2 Chron. xxx. 10 sqq., Hezekiah invited to the feast of the Passover, held at Jerusalem, the Israelites from Ephraim and Manasseh as far as to Zebulun, and some individuals from these tribes accepted his invitation. But although Hoshea was better than his predecessors, the judgment of destruction burst upon the sinful kingdom and people in his reign, because he had not truly turned to the Lord; a fact which has been frequently repeated in the history of the world, namely, that the last rulers of a decaying kingdom have not been so bad as their forefathers. "God is

accustomed to defer the punishment of the elders in the greatness of His long-suffering, to see whether their descendants will come to repentance ; but if this be not the case, although they may not be so bad, the anger of God proceeds at length to visit iniquity (cf. Ex. xx. 5).” Seb. Schmidt.—Ver. 3. “Against him came up *Salmanasar* king of Assyria, and Hoshea became subject to him and rendered him tribute” (מְנַחֵם, as in 1 Kings v. 1). מְנַחֵם, *Σαλαμανασσάρ* (LXX.), *Salmanasar*, according to the more recent researches respecting Assyria, is not only the same person as the *Shalman* mentioned in Hos. x. 14, but the same as the *Sargon* of Isa. xx. 1, whose name is spelt *Sargina* upon the monuments, and who is described in the inscriptions on his palace at Khorsabad as ruler over many subjugated lands, among which *Samirina* (Samaria ?) also occurs (*vid.* Brandis *üb. d. Gewinn*, pp. 48 sqq. and 53 ; M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* pp. 129, 130 ; and M. Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterth.* i. pp. 687 sqq.). The occasion of this expedition of *Salmanasar* appears to have been simply the endeavour to continue the conquests of his predecessor *Tiglath-pileser*. There is no ground whatever for Maurer’s assumption, that he had been asked to come to the help of a rival of Hoshea ; and the opinion that he came because Hoshea had refused the tribute which had been paid to Assyria from the time of *Menahe*m downwards, is at variance with the fact that in ch. xv. 29 *Tiglath-pileser* is simply said to have taken a portion of the territory of Israel ; but there is no allusion to any payment of tribute or feudal obligation on the part of *Pekah*. *Salmanasar* was the first to make king *Hoshea* subject and tributary. This took place at the commencement of *Hoshea*’s reign, as is evident from the fact that *Hoshea* paid the tribute for several years, and in the sixth year of his reign refused any further payment.—Ver. 4. The king of Assyria found a conspiracy in *Hoshea* ; for he had sent messengers to *So* the king of Egypt, and did not pay the tribute to the king of Assyria, as year by year. The Egyptian king מֶסֶם, *So*, possibly to be pronounced מֶסֶם, *Seveh*, is no doubt one of the two *Shebeks* of the twenty-fifth dynasty, belonging to the Ethiopian tribe ; but whether he was the second king of this dynasty, *Sābātākā* (Brugsch, *hist. d’Egypte*, i. p. 244), the *Sevechus* of Manetho, who is said to have ascended the throne, according to Wilkinson, in the year 728, as *Vitringa* (*Isa.* ii. p. 318), Gesenius, Ewald, and others suppose, or the first king

of this Ethiopian dynasty, *Sabako* the father of *Sevechus*, which is the opinion of Usher and Marsham, whom M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* pp. 458 sqq. and 463) and M. Duncker (i. p. 693) have followed in recent times, cannot possibly be decided in the present state of Egyptological research.¹—As soon as *Salmanasar* received intelligence of the conduct of *Hoshea*, which is called חֲשֵׁב, conspiracy, as being rebellion against his acknowledged superior, he had him arrested and put into prison in chains, and then overran the whole land, advanced against *Samaria* and besieged that city for three years, and captured it in the ninth year of *Hoshea*. These words are not to be understood as signifying that *Hoshea* had been taken prisoner before the siege of *Samaria* and thrown into prison, because in that case it is impossible to see how *Salmanasar* could have obtained possession of his person.² We must rather assume, as many commentators have done, from R. Levi ben Gersom down to Maurer and Thenius, that it was not till the conquest of his capital *Samaria* that *Hoshea* fell into the hands of the Assyrians and was cast into a prison; so that the explanation to be given of the introduction of this circum-

¹ It is true that M. Duncker says, "Synchronism gives *Sabakon*, who reigned from 726 to 714;" but he observes in the note at pp. 713 sqq. that the Egyptian chronology has only been firmly established as far back as the commencement of the reign of *Psammetichus* at the beginning of the year 664 B.C., that the length of the preceding dodekarchy is differently given by *Diodorus Sic.* and *Manetho*, and that the date at which *Tarakos* (*Tirhaka*), who succeeded *Sevechus*, ascended the throne is so very differently defined, that it is impossible for the present to come to any certain conclusion on the matter. Compare with this what M. v. Niebuhr (pp. 458 sqq.) adduces in proof of the difficulty of determining the commencement and length of the reign of *Tirhaka*, and the manner in which he proposes to solve the difficulties that arise from this in relation to the synchronism between the Egyptian and the Biblical chronology.

² The supposition of the older commentators, that *Hoshea* fought a battle with *Salmanasar* before the siege of *Samaria*, and was taken prisoner in that battle, is not only very improbable, because this would hardly be passed over in our account, but has very little probability in itself. For "it is more probable that *Hoshea* betook himself to *Samaria* when threatened by the hostile army, and relied upon the help of the Egyptians, than that he went to meet *Salmanasar* and fought with him in the open field" (Maurer). There is still less probability in *Ewald's* view (*Gesch.* iii. p. 611), that "*Salmanasar* marched with unexpected rapidity against *Hoshea*, summoned him before him that he might hear his defence, and then, when he came, took him prisoner, and threw him into prison in chains, probably into a prison on the border of the

stance before the siege and conquest of Samaria must be, that the historian first of all related the eventual result of Hoshea's rebellion against Salmanasar so far as Hoshea himself was concerned, and then proceeded to describe in greater detail the course of the affair in relation to his kingdom and capital. This does not necessitate our giving to the word וַיִּצְוֵהוּ the meaning "he assigned him a limit" (Thenius); but we may adhere to the meaning which has been philologically established, namely, arrest or incarcerate (Jer. xxxiii. 1, xxxvi. 5, etc.). עַל may be given thus: "he overran, that is to say, the entire land." The three years of the siege of Samaria were not full years, for, according to ch. xviii. 9, 10, it began in the seventh year of Hoshea, and the city was taken in the ninth year, although it is also given there as three years.—Ver. 6. The ninth year of Hoshea corresponds to the sixth year of Hezekiah and the year 722 or 721 B.C., in which the kingdom of the ten tribes was destroyed.

Ver. 6b. *The Israelites carried into exile.*—After the taking of Samaria, Salmanasar led Israel into captivity to Assyria, and assigned to those who were led away dwelling-places in *Chalach* and on the *Chabor*, or the river *Gozan*, and in cities of Media. According to these clear words of the text, the places to which the ten tribes were banished are not to be sought for in Mesopotamia, but in provinces of Assyria and Media. חֲלָח is neither the city of חֲלָח built by Nimrod (Gen. x. 11), nor the *Cholwan* of *Abulfeda* and the Syriac writers, a city five days' journey to the north of Bagdad, from which the district bordering on the Zagrus probably received the name of *Χαλωνίτις* or *Καλωνίτις*, but the province *Καλαχηνή* of Strabo (xi. 8, 4; 14, 12, and xvi. 1, 1), called *Καλακηνή* by Ptolemæus (vi. 1), on the eastern side of the Tigris near Adiabene, to the north of Nineveh on the border of Armenia. חֲבֹר is not the חֲבֹר in Upper Mesopotamia (Ezek. i. 3, iii. 15, etc.), which flows into the

land;" to which he adds this explanatory remark: "there is no other way in which we can understand the brief words in ch. xvii. 4 as compared with ch. xviii. 9-11. . . . For if Hoshea had defended himself to the utmost, Salmanasar would not have had him arrested and incarcerated afterwards, but would have put him to death at once, as was the case with the king of Damascus." But Hoshea would certainly not have been so infatuated, after breaking away from Assyria and forming an alliance with So of Egypt, as to go at a simple summons from Salmanasar and present himself before him, since he could certainly have expected nothing but death or imprisonment as the result.

Euphrates near *Kirkesion* (*Carchemish*), and is called **חַבּוּר** (*Chebar*) or **חַבְּרוּ** (*Chabur*) by the Syriac writers, **خابور** (*Chabûr*) by Abulfeda and Edrisi, **Χαβώρας** by Ptolemæus, **Ἀβόρρας** (*Aboras*) by Strabo and others, as Michaelis, Gesenius, Winer, and even Ritter assume; for the epithet "river of *Gozan*" is not decisive in favour of this, since *Gozan* is not necessarily to be identified with the district of *Gauzanitis*, now *Kaushan*, situated between the rivers of *Chaboras* and *Saokoras*, and mentioned in Ptol. v. 18, 4, inasmuch as Strabo (xvi. 1, 1, p. 736) also mentions a province called **Χαζηνή** above Nineveh towards Armenia, between *Calachene* and *Adiabene*. Here in northern Assyria we also find both a mountain called **Χαβώρας**, according to Ptol. vi. 1, on the boundary of Assyria and Media, and the river *Chabor*, called by Yakut in the *Moshtarik* **خابور الحسانية** (*Khabur Chasanîæ*), to distinguish it from the Mesopotamian *Chaboras* or *Chebar*. According to Marasz. i. pp. 333 sq., and Yakut, *Mosht.* p. 150, this *Khabur* springs from the mountains of the land of *Zauzan*, **زوزان**, i.e. of the land between the mountains of Armenia, Adserbeidjan, Diarbekr, and Mosul (Marasz. i. p. 522), and is frequently mentioned in Assemani as a tributary of the Tigris. It still bears the ancient name *Khabûr*, taking its rise in the neighbourhood of the upper *Zab* near *Amadijeh*, and emptying itself into the Tigris a few hours below *Jezirah* (cf. Wichelhaus, pp. 471, 472; Asah. Grant, *Die Nestorianer*, v. *Preiswerk*, pp. 110 sqq.; and Ritter, *Erdk.* ix. pp. 716 and 1030). This is the river that we are to understand by **חַבּוּר**. It is a question in dispute, whether the following words **בְּחַבּוּר** are in apposition to **בְּחַבּוּר**: "by the Chabor the river of *Gozan*," or are to be taken by themselves as indicating a peculiar district "by the river *Gozan*." Now, however the absence of the prep. **בְּ**, and even of the copula **ו**, on the one hand, and the words of Yakut, "*Khabur*, a river of *Chasania*," on the other, may seem to favour the former view, we must decide in favour of the latter, for the simple reason that in 1 Chron. v. 26 **בְּחַבּוּר** is separated from **חַבּוּר** by **וְהָרָא**. The absence of the preposition **בְּ** or of the copula **ו** before **בְּחַבּוּר** in the passage before us may be accounted for from the assumption that the first two names, in *Chaluk* and on the *Khabur*, are more closely connected, and also the two which follow, "on the river *Gozan* and in the cities of *Media*."

The river *Gozan* or of *Gozan* is therefore distinct from *חַבּוּר* (*Khabur*), and to be sought for in the district in which *Tav-zavia*, the city of Media mentioned by Ptol. (vi. 2), was situated. In all probability it is the river which is called *Kisil* (the red) *Ozan* at the present day, the *Mardos* of the Greeks, which takes its rise to the south-east of the Lake *Urumiah* and flows into the Caspian Sea, and which is supposed to have formed the northern boundary of Media.¹ The last locality mentioned agrees with this, viz. "and in the cities of Media," in which Thenius proposes to read *הָרִי*, mountains, after the LXX, instead of *עָרֵי*, cities, though without the least necessity.

Vers. 7-23. *The causes which occasioned this catastrophe*.—To the account of the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, and of the transportation of its inhabitants into exile in Assyria, the prophetic historian appends a review of the causes which led to this termination of the greater portion of the covenant-nation, and finds them in the obstinate apostasy of Israel from the Lord its God, and in its incorrigible adherence to idolatry. Ver. 7. *וַיְהִי כִּי*, "and it came to pass when" (not because, or that): compare Gen. vi. 1, xxvi. 8, xxvii. 1, xlv. 24, Ex. i. 21, Judg. i. 28, vi. 7, etc. The apodosis does not follow till ver. 18, as vers. 7-17 simply contain a further explanation of Israel's sin. To show the magnitude of the sin, the writer recalls to mind the great benefit conferred in the redemption from Egypt, whereby the Lord had laid His people under strong obligation to adhere faithfully to Him. The words refer to the first commandment (Ex. xx. 2, 3; Deut. v. 6, 7). It

¹ The explanation given in the text of the geographical names, receives some confirmation from the Jewish tradition, which describes northern Assyria, and indeed the mountainous region or the district on the border of Assyria and Media towards Armenia, as the place to which the ten tribes were banished (*vid. Wichelhaus ut sup. pp. 474 sqq.*). Not only Ewald (*Gesch. iii. p. 612*), but also M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass. p. 159*), has decided in favour of this view; the latter with this remark: "According to the present state of the investigations, Chalah and Chabor are no doubt to be sought for on the slope of the Gordyæan mountains in the Kalachene of Strabo, the Kalakine of Ptolemæus, and on the tributary of the Tigris, which is still called Chabor, therefore quite close to Nineveh. The *Yudhi* mountains in this region possibly bear this name with some allusion to the colony." But with reference to the river *Gozan*, Niebuhr is doubtful whether we are to understand by this the *Kisil Ozan* or the waters in the district of Gauzanitis by the Khebar, and gives the preference to the latter as the simpler of the two, though it is difficult to see in what respect it is simpler than the other.

is from this that the "fearing of other gods" is taken, whereas **מִתַּת יְיָ פָּרַעַה** recall Ex. xviii. 10.—Ver. 8. The apostasy of Israel manifested itself in two directions: 1. in their walking in the statutes of the nations who were cut off from before them, instead of in the statutes of Jehovah, as God had commanded (cf. Lev. xviii. 4, 5, and 26, xx. 22, 23, etc.; and for the formula **הַנְּוִיִּם אֲשֶׁר הוֹדִישׁ וְנָוִי**, which occurs repeatedly in our books—e.g. ch. xvi. 3, xxi. 2, and 1 Kings xiv. 24 and xxi. 26—compare Deut. xi. 23 and xviii. 12); and 2. in their walking in the statutes which the kings of Israel had made, i.e. the worship of the calves. **אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ**: it is evident from the parallel passage, ver. 19b, that the subject here stands before the relative.—Ver. 9. **וַיִּחַפְּאוּ דְבָרִים**: "they covered words which were not right concerning Jehovah their God," i.e. they sought to conceal the true nature of Jehovah by arbitrary perversions of the word of God. This is the explanation correctly given by Hengstenberg (*Dissert.* vol. i. p. 210, transl.); whereas the interpretation proposed by Thenius, "they trifled with things which were not right against Jehovah," is as much at variance with the usage of the language as that of Gesenius (*thes.* p. 505), *perfide egerunt res . . . in Jehovah*, since **חָפַא** with **עַל** simply means to cover over a thing (cf. Isa. iv. 5). This covering of words over Jehovah showed itself in the fact that they built **בָּמֹת** (altars on high places), and by worshipping God in ways of their own invention concealed the nature of the revealed God, and made Jehovah like the idols. "In all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city." **מִגִּדְלֵי נֹצְרִים** is a tower built for the protection of the flocks in the steppes (2 Chron. xxvi. 10), and is mentioned here as the smallest and most solitary place of human abode in antithesis to the large and fortified city. Such *bamoth* were the houses of high places and altars built for the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, beside which no others are mentioned by name in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which restricts itself to the principal facts, although there certainly must have been others.—Ver. 10. They set up for themselves monuments and *asherim* on every high hill, etc.—a practice condemned in 1 Kings xiv. 16, 23, as early as the time of Jeroboam. In this description of their idolatry, the historian, however, had in his mind not only the ten tribes, but also Judah, as is evident from ver. 13, "Jehovah testified against Israel and Judah through His

prophets," and also from ver. 19.—Ver. 11. "And burned incense there upon all the high places, like the nations which Jehovah drove out before them." הִנְלִיחַ, lit. to lead into exile, is applied here to the expulsion and destruction of the Canaanites, with special reference to the banishment of the Israelites.—Ver. 12. They served the clods, i.e. worshipped clods or masses of stone as gods (עֲלִילִים, see at 1 Kings xv. 12), notwithstanding the command of God in Ex. xx. 3 sqq., xxiii. 13, Lev. xxvi. 1, etc.—Vers. 13 sqq. And the Lord was not satisfied with the prohibitions of the law, but bore witness against the idolatry and image-worship of Israel and Judah through all His prophets, who exhorted them to turn from their evil way and obey His commandments. But it was all in vain; they were stiff-necked like their fathers. Judah is mentioned as well as Israel, although the historian is simply describing the causes of Israel's rejection to indicate beforehand that Judah was already preparing the same fate for itself, as is still more plainly expressed in vers. 19, 20; not, as Thenius supposes, because he is speaking here of that which took place before the division of the kingdom. The *Chethib* בְּלִנְבִיאוֹ בְּלִחֻזָּה is not to be read בְּלִנְבִיאוֹ וּבְלִחֻזָּה (Houbig., Then., Ew. § 156, e), but after the LXX. בְּלִנְבִיאוֹ בְּלִחֻזָּה, "through all His prophets, every seer," so that בְּלִחֻזָּה is in apposition to בְּלִנְבִיאוֹ, and serves to bring out the meaning with greater force, so as to express the idea, "prophets of every kind, that the Lord had sent." This reading is more rhetorical than the other, and is recommended by the fact that in what follows the copula ו is omitted before הַקוֹחִי also on rhetorical grounds. וַאֲשֶׁר שָׁלַחְתִּי וְנִי: "and according to what I demanded of you through my servants the prophets." To the law of Moses there was added the divine warning through the prophets. יִקְשֹׁ אֶת־עַרְפָּם has sprung from Deut. x. 16. The stiff-necked fathers are the Israelites in the time of Moses.—Ver. 15. "They followed vanity and became vain:" *verbatim* as in Jer. ii. 5. A description of the worthlessness of their whole life and aim with regard to the most important thing, namely, their relation to God. Whatever man sets before him as the object of his life apart from God is הֶבֶל (cf. Deut. xxxii. 21) and idolatry, and leads to worthlessness, to spiritual and moral corruption (Rom. i. 21). "And (walked) after the nations who surrounded them," i.e. the heathen living near them. The concluding words of the verse have the ring of

Lev. xviii. 3.—Vers. 16 and 17. The climax of their apostasy: "They made themselves molten images, two (golden) calves" (1 Kings xii. 28), which are called **פִּסְכָּה** after Ex. xxxii. 4, 8, and Deut. ix. 12, 16, "and Asherah," i.e. idols of Astarte (for the fact, see 1 Kings xvi. 33), "and worshipped all the host of heaven (sun, moon, and stars), and served Baal"—in the time of Ahab and his family (1 Kings xvi. 32). The worshipping of all the host of heaven is not specially mentioned in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, but occurs first of all in Judah in the time of Manasseh (ch. xxi. 3). The fact that the host of heaven is mentioned between Asherah and Baal shows that the historian refers to the Baal and Astarte worship, and has borrowed the expression from Deut. iv. 19 and xvii. 3, to show the character of this worship, since both Baal and Astarte were deities of a sidereal nature. The first half of ver. 17 rests upon Deut. xviii. 10, where the worship of Moloch is forbidden along with soothsaying and augury. There is no allusion to this worship in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, although it certainly existed in the time of Ahab. The second half of ver. 17 also refers to the conduct of Ahab (see at 1 Kings xxi. 20).—Vers. 18 sqq. This conduct excited the anger of God, so that He removed them from His face, and only left the tribe (i.e. the kingdom) of Judah (see above, p. 179), although Judah also did not keep the commandments of the Lord and walked in the statutes of Israel, and therefore had deserved rejection. Ver. 19 contains a parenthesis occasioned by **וְיָשָׁבְתָה** 'ו' (ver. 18b). The statutes of Israel in which Judah walked are not merely the worship of Baal under the Ahab dynasty, so as to refer only to Joram, Ahaziah, and Ahaz (according to ch. viii. 18, 27, and xvi. 3), but also the worship on the high places and worship of idols, which were practised under many of the kings of Judah.—Ver. 20. **וַיִּסְרָם** is a continuation of **וַיִּתְּנֵם** in ver. 18, but so that what follows also refers to the parenthesis in ver. 19. "Then the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel," not merely the ten tribes, but all the nation, and humbled them till He thrust them from His face. **וַיִּסְרָם** differs from **וַיִּשְׁלֵךְ בַּחֲמֵי**. The latter denotes driving into exile; the former, simply that kind of rejection which consisted in chastisement and deliverance into the hand of plunderers, that is to say, penal judgments by which the Lord sought to lead Israel and Judah to turn to Him and to His commandments, and to preserve

them from being driven among the heathen. **נָתַן יְהוָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל** as in Judg. ii. 14.—Ver. 21. **כִּי קָרַע יְהוָה**: “for He (Jehovah) rent Israel from the house of David.” This view is apparently more correct than that Israel rent the kingdom from the house of David, not only because it presupposes too harsh an ellipsis to supply **אֶת־הַמַּמְלָכָה**, but also because we never meet with the thought that Israel rent the kingdom from the house of David, and in 1 Kings xi. 31 it is simply stated that Jehovah rent the kingdom from Solomon; and to this our verse refers, whilst the following words **וַיִּמְלִיכֵנוּ יְהוָה** recall 1 Kings xii. 20. The **כִּי** is explanatory: the Lord delivered up His people to the plunderers, for He rent Israel from the house of David as a punishment for the idolatry of Solomon, and the Israelites made Jeroboam king, who turned Israel away from Jehovah, etc. The *Chethib* **וַיִּרְא** is to be read **וַיִּרְא**, the *Hiphil* of **וַיִּרְא** = **וַיִּרְא**, “he caused to depart away from the Lord.” The *Keri* **וַיִּרְא**, *Hiphil* of **וַיִּרְא**, he drove away, turned from the Lord (cf. Deut. xiii. 11), is not unusual, but it is an unnecessary gloss.—Vers. 22, 23. The sons of Israel (the ten tribes) walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, till the Lord removed them from His face, thrust them out of the land of the Lord, as He had threatened them through all His prophets, namely, from the time of Jeroboam onwards (compare 1 Kings xiv. 15, 16, and also Hos. i. 6, ix. 16, Amos iii. 11, 12, v. 27, Isa. xxviii. etc.). The banishment to Assyria (see ver. 6) lasted “unto this day,” i.e. till the time when our books were written.¹

¹ As the Hebrew **עַד**, like the German *bis*, is not always used in an exclusive sense, but is frequently abstracted from what lies behind the *terminus ad quem* mentioned, it by no means follows from the words, “the Lord rejected Israel . . . to this day,” that the ten tribes returned to their own country after the time when our books were written, viz. about the middle of the sixth century B.C. And it is just as impossible to prove the opposite view, which is very widely spread, namely, that they are living as a body in banishment even at the present day. It is well known how often the long-lost ten tribes have been discovered, in the numerous Jewish communities of southern Arabia, in India, more especially in Malabar, in China, Turkistan, and Cashmir, or in Afghanistan (see Ritter's *Erdkunde*, x. p. 246), and even in America itself; and now Dr. Asahel Grant (*Die Nestorianer oder die zehn Stämme*) thinks that he has found them in the independent Nestorians and the Jews living among them; whereas others, such as Witsius (*Δεκαφυλ.* c. iv. sqq.), J. D. Michaelis (*de exsilio decem tribuum*, comm. iii.), and last of all Robinson in the work quoted by Ritter, l. c. p. 245 (*The Nestorians*, etc., New York, 1841), have endeavoured to prove that the ten tribes became partly mixed

Vers. 24-41. THE SAMARITANS AND THEIR WORSHIP.—After the transportation of the Israelites, the king of Assyria brought colonists from different provinces of his kingdom into the cities of Samaria. The king of Assyria is not Salmanasar, for it is evident from ver. 25 that a considerable period intervened between the carrying away of the Israelites and the sending of colonists into the depopulated land. It is true that Salmanasar only is mentioned in what precedes, but the section vers. 24-41 is not so closely connected with the first portion of the chapter, that the same king of Assyria must necessarily be spoken of in both. According to Ezra iv. 2, it was Esarhaddon who removed the heathen settlers to Samaria. It is true that the attempt has been made to reconcile this with the assumption that the king

up with the Judæans during the Babylonian captivity, and partly attached themselves to the exiles who were led back to Palestine by Zerubbabel and Ezra; that a portion again became broken up at a still later period by mixing with the rest of the Jews, who were scattered throughout all the world after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and a further portion a long time ago by conversion to Christianity, so that every attempt to discover the remnants of the ten tribes anywhere must be altogether futile. This view is in general the correct one, though its supporters have mixed up the sound arguments with many that are untenable. For example, the predictions quoted by Ritter (p. 250), probably after Robinson (viz. Jer. i. 4, 5, 17, 19, and Ezek. xxxvii. 11 sqq.), and also the prophetic declarations cited by Witsius (v. §§ 11-14: viz. Isa. xiv. 1, Mic. ii. 12, Jer. iii. 12, xxx. 3, 4, xxxiii. 7, 8), prove very little, because for the most part they refer to Messianic times and are to be understood spiritually. So much, however, may certainly be gathered from the books of Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, that the Judæans whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive were not all placed in the province of Babylonia, but were also dispersed in the different districts that constituted first the Assyrian, then the Chaldæan, and afterwards the Persian empire on the other side of the Euphrates, so that with the cessation of that division which had been so strictly maintained to suit the policy of the Israelitish kings, the ancient separation would also disappear, and their common mournful lot of dispersion among the heathen would of necessity bring about a closer union among all the descendants of Jacob; just as we find that the kings of Persia knew of no difference between Jews and Israelites, and in the time of Xerxes the grand vizier Haman wanted to exterminate all the Jews (not the Judæans merely, but all the Hebrews). Moreover, the edict of Cyrus (Ezra i. 1-4), "who among you of *all* his people," and that of Artaxerxes (Ezra vii. 13), "whoever in my kingdom is willing of the *people of Israel*," gave permission to all the Israelites of the twelve tribes to return to Palestine. And who could maintain with any show of reason, that no one belonging to the ten tribes availed himself of this permission? And though Grant argues, on the other side, that with regard to the 50,000 whom Cyrus sent away to their home it is expressly stated that they were of those "whom

of Assyria mentioned in our verse is Salmanasar, by the conjecture that one portion of these colonists was settled there by Salmanasar, another by Esarhaddon; and it has also been assumed that in this expedition Esarhaddon carried away the last remnant of the ten tribes, namely, all who had fled into the mountains and inaccessible corners of the land, and to some extent also in Judæa, during Salmanasar's invasion, and had then collected together in the land again after the Assyrians had withdrawn. But there is not the smallest intimation anywhere of a second transplantation of heathen colonists to Samaria, any more than of a second removal of the remnant of the Israelites who were left behind in the land after the time of Salmanasar. The prediction in Isa. vii. 8, that in sixty-five years more

Nebuchadnezzar had carried away into Babylon" (Ezra ii. 1), with which ch. i. 5 may also be compared, "then rose up the heads of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites, etc.;" these words apply to the majority of those who returned, and undoubtedly prove that the ten tribes as such did not return to Palestine, but they by no means prove that a considerable number of members of the remaining tribes may not have attached themselves to the large number of citizens of the kingdom of Judah who returned. And not only Lightfoot (*Hor. hebr. in Ep. 1 ad Cor. Addenda ad c. 14, Opp. ii. p. 929*) and Witsius (p. 346), but the Rabbins long before them in *Seder Olam rab. c. 29, p. 86*, have inferred from the fact that the number of persons and families given separately in Ezra ii. only amounts to 30,360, whereas in ver. 64 the total number of persons who returned is said to have been 42,360 heads, besides 7337 men-servants and maid-servants, that this excess above the families of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, who are mentioned by name, may have come from the ten tribes. Moreover, those who returned did regard themselves as the representatives of the twelve tribes; for at the dedication of the new temple (Ezra vi. 17) they offered "sin-offerings for all Israel, according to the number of the twelve tribes." And those who returned with Ezra did the same. As a thanksgiving for their safe return to their fatherland, they offered in sacrifice "twelve oxen for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven sheep, and twelve he-goats for a sin-offering, all as a burnt-offering for Jehovah" (Ezra viii. 35). There is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of those who returned with Zerubbabel and Ezra belonged to the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi; which may be explained very simply from the fact, that as they had been a much shorter time in exile, they had retained a much stronger longing for the home given by the Lord to their fathers than the tribes that were carried away 180 years before. But that they also followed in great numbers at a future time, after those who had returned before had risen to a state of greater ecclesiastical and civil prosperity in their own home, is an inference that must be drawn from the fact that in the time of Christ and His apostles, Galilee, and in part also Perea, was very densely populated by Israelites; and this population cannot be traced back either to the Jews who returned to Jerusalem and Judæa

Ephraim was to be destroyed, so that it would be no longer a people, even if it referred to the transplantation of the heathen colonists to Samaria by Esarhaddon, as Usher, Hengstenberg, and others suppose, would by no means necessitate the carrying away of the last remnant of the Israelites by this king, but simply the occupation of the land by heathen settlers, with whom the last remains of the Ephraimites intermingled, so that Ephraim ceased to be a people. As long as the land of Israel was merely laid waste and deprived of the greater portion of its Israelitish population, there always remained the possibility that the exiles might one day return to their native land and once more form one people with those who were left behind, and so long might Israel be still regarded as a nation; just as the Judæans, when

under Zerubbabel and Ezra, or to the small number of Israelites who were left behind in the land when the Assyrian deportation took place. On the other hand, even the arguments adduced by Grant in support of his view, viz. (1) that we have not the slightest historical evidence that the ten tribes ever left Assyria again, (2) that on the return from the Babylonian captivity they did not come back with the rest, prove as *argumenta a silentio* but very little, and lose their force still more if the assumptions upon which they are based—namely, that the ten tribes who were transported to Assyria and Media had no intercourse whatever with the Jews who were led away to Babylon, but kept themselves unmixed and quite apart from the Judæans, and that as they did not return with Zerubbabel and Ezra, they did not return to their native land at any later period—are, as we have shown above, untenable. Consequently the further arguments of Grant, (3) that according to Josephus (*Ant.* xi. 5, 2) the ten tribes were still in the land of their captivity in the first century, and according to Jerome (*Comm. on the Prophets*) in the fifth; and (4) that in the present day they are still in the country of the ancient Assyrians, since the Nestorians, both according to their own statement and according to the testimony of the Jews there, are *Beni Yisrael*, and that of the ten tribes, and are also proved to be Israelites by many of the customs and usages which they have preserved (*Die Nestor.* pp. 113 sqq.); prove nothing more than that there may still be descendants of the Israelites who were banished thither among the Jews and Nestorians living in northern Assyria by the Uramiah-lake, and by no means that the Jews living there are the unmixed descendants of the ten tribes. The statements made by the Jews lose all their importance from the fact, that Jews of other lands maintain just the same concerning themselves. And the Mosaic manners and customs of the Nestorians prove nothing more than that they are of Jewish origin. In general, the Israelites and Jews who have come into heathen lands from the time of Salmanasar and Nebuchadnezzar onwards, and have settled there, have become so mixed up with the Jews who were scattered in all quarters of the globe from the time of Alexander the Great, and more especially since the destruction of the Jewish state by the Romans, that the last traces of the old division into tribes have entirely disappeared.

in exile in Babylon, did not cease to be a people, because they looked forward with certain hope to a return to their fatherland after a banishment of seventy years. But after heathen colonists had been transplanted into the land, with whom the remainder of the Israelites who were left in the land became fused, so that there arose a mixed Samaritan people of a predominantly heathen character, it was impossible to speak any longer of a people of Ephraim in the land of Israel. This transplantation of colonists out of Babel, Cutha, etc., into the cities of Samaria might therefore be regarded as the point of time at which the nation of Ephraim was entirely dissolved, without any removal of the last remnant of the Israelites having taken place. We must indeed assume this if the ten tribes were deported to the very last man, and the Samaritans were in their origin a purely heathen people without any admixture of Israelitish blood, as Hengstenberg assumes and has endeavoured to prove. But the very opposite of this is unmistakeably apparent from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 9, according to which there were not a few Israelites left in the depopulated land in the time of Josiah. (Compare Kalkar, *Die Samaritaner ein Mischvolk*, in Pelt's *theol. Mitarbeiten*, iii. 3, pp. 24 sqq.).—We therefore regard Esarhaddon as the Assyrian king who brought the colonists to Samaria. The object to אֲנִי may be supplied from the context, more especially from אֲנִי, which follows. He brought inhabitants from *Babel*, i.e. from the country, not the city of Babylon, from *Cuthah*, etc. The situation of *Cuthah* or *Cuth* (ver. 30) cannot be determined with certainty. M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 166) follows Josephus, who speaks of the Cuthæans in *Ant.* ix. 14, 3, and x. 9, 7, as a people dwelling in Persia and Media, and identifies them with the *Kossæans*, *Kissians*, *Khushiya*, *Chuzi*, who lived to the north-east of Susa, in the north-eastern portion of the present Khusistan; whereas Gesenius (*thes.* p. 674); Rosenmüller (*bibl. Altkk.* i. 2, p. 29), and J. D. Michaelis (*Supplem. ad Lex. hebr.* p. 1255)

have decided in favour of the *Cutha* (كوثى or كوثا) in the Babylonian *Irak*, in the neighbourhood of the *Nahr Malca*, in support of which the fact may also be adduced, that, according to a communication from Spiegel (in the *Auslande*, 1864, No. 46, p. 1089), *Cutha*, a town not mentioned elsewhere, was situated by the wall in the north-east of Babylon, probably on the spot where the hill *Ohaimir* with its ruins stands. The greater

number of colonists appear to have come from *Cutha*, because the Samaritans are called כוּתִיִּים by the Rabbins. אַרְוָה, *Arva*, is almost always, and probably with correctness, regarded as being the same place as the אֶרֶב (*Irvah*) mentioned in ch. xviii. 34 and xix. 13, as the conjecture naturally suggests itself to every one that the *Arvæans* removed to Samaria by Esarhaddon were inhabitants of the kingdom of *Arva* destroyed by the Assyrian king, and the form אֶרֶב is probably simply connected with the appellative explanation given to the word by the Masoretes. As *Irváh* is placed by the side of *Henah* in ch. xviii. 34 and xix. 13, *Arva* can hardly be any other than the country of *Hebeh*, situated on the Euphrates between *Anah* and the *Chabur* (M. v. Niebuhr, p. 167). *Hamath* is *Epiphania* on the Orontes: see at 1 Kings viii. 65 and Num. xiii. 21. *Sepharvaim* is no doubt the *Sippara* (Σιπφάρα) of Ptolem. (v. 18, 7), the southernmost city of Mesopotamia on the Euphrates, above the Nahr Malca, the Ἡλιοπόλις ἐν Σιππάρουσι or Σιππαρηνῶν πόλις, which Berosus and Abydenus mention (in Euseb. *Præpar. evang.* ix. 12 and 41, and *Chronic. Armen.* i. pp. 33, 36, 49, 55) as belonging to the time of the flood.—שְׁמֶרֶן: this is the first time in which the name is evidently applied to the kingdom of Samaria.—Vers. 25-28. In the earliest period of their settlement in the cities of Samaria the new settlers were visited by lions, which may have multiplied greatly during the time that the land was lying waste. The settlers regarded this as a punishment from Jehovah, *i.e.* from the deity of the land, whom they did not worship, and therefore asked the king of Assyria for a priest to teach them the right, *i.e.* the proper, worship of the God of the land; whereupon the king sent them one of the priests who had been carried away, and he took up his abode in Bethel, and instructed the people in the worship of Jehovah. The author of our books also looked upon the lions as sent by Jehovah as a punishment, according to Lev. xxvi. 22, because the new settlers did not fear Him. הַלְוִיִּים: the lions which had taken up their abode there. וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם: that they (the priest with his companions) went away and dwelt there. There is no need therefore to alter the plural into the singular.

The priest sent by the Assyrian king was of course an Israelitish priest of the calves, for he was one of those who had been carried away and settled in Bethel, the chief seat of Jeroboam's image-worship, and he also taught the colonists to

fear or worship Jehovah after the manner of the land. This explains the state of divine worship in the land as described in vers. 29 sqq. "Every separate nation (עַם אֶחָד : see Ewald, § 313, a) made itself its own gods, and set them up in the houses of the high places (בְּיַד הַבָּמֹת : see at 1 Kings xii. 31, and for the singular בַּיִת, Ewald, § 270, c) which the Samaritans (הַשְׁמֹרִיטִים), not the colonists sent thither by Esarhaddon, but the former inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel, who are so called from the capital Samaria) had made (built); every nation in the cities where they dwelt."—Ver. 30. The people of Babel made themselves סְבוֹת בָּנוּת, *daughters' booths*. Selden (*de Diis Syr.* ii. 7), Münter (*Relig. der Babyl.* pp. 74, 75), and others understand by these the temples consecrated to Mylitta or Astarte, the *καμάραι*, or covered little carriages, or tents for prostitution (Herod. i. 199); but Beyer (*Addit. ad Seld.* p. 297) has very properly objected to this, that according to the context the reference is to idols or objects of idolatrous worship, which were set up in the בְּיַד הַבָּמֹת. It is more natural to suppose that small tent-temples are meant, which were set up as idols in the houses of the high places along with the images which they contained, since according to ch. xxiii. 7 women wove בָּתִּים, little temples, for the Asherah, and Ezekiel speaks of patch-work *Bamoth*, i.e. of small temples made of cloth. It is possible, however, that there is more truth than is generally supposed in the view held by the Rabbins, that סְבוֹת בָּנוּת signifies an image of the "hen," or rather the constellation of "the clucking-hen" (*Gluckhenne*), the Pleiades,—*simulacrum gallinæ celestis in signo Tauri nidulantis*, as a *symbolum Veneris celestis*, as the other idols are all connected with animal symbolism. In any case the explanation given by Movers, *involucra seu secreta mulierum*, female lingams, which were handed by the hierodulæ to their paramours instead of the Mylitta-money (*Phöniz.* i. p. 596), is to be rejected, because it is at variance with the usage of speech and the context, and because the existence of female lingams has first of all to be proved. For the different views, see Ges. *thes.* p. 952, and Leyrer in Herzog's *Cycl.*—The Cuthæans made themselves as a god, נֵרְגַל, *Nergal*, i.e., according to Winer, Gesenius, Stuhr, and others, the planet *Mars*, which the Zabians call نيرج, *Nerig*, as the god of war (*Codex Nasar.* i. 212, 224), the Arabs ميريخ, *Mirrig*; where-as older commentators identified *Nergal* with the sun-god *Bel*,

deriving the name from נֵר , light, and בַּי , a fountain = fountain of light (Selden, ii. 8, and Beyer, *Add.* pp. 301 sqq.). But these views are both of them very uncertain. According to the Rabbins (Rashi, R. Salomo, Kimchi), *Nergal* was represented as a cock. This statement, which is ridiculed by Gesenius, Winer, and Thenius, is proved to be correct by the Assyrian monuments, which contain a number of animal deities, and among them the cock standing upon an altar, and also upon a gem a priest praying in front of a cock (see Layard's *Nineveh*). The pugnacious cock is found generally in the ancient ethnical religions in frequent connection with the gods of war (cf. J. G. Müller in Herzog's *Cycl.*). אַשִׁמָּא , *Ashima*, the god of the people of Hamath, was worshipped, according to rabbinical statements, under the figure of a bald he-goat (see Selden, ii. 9). The suggested combination of the name with the Phœnician deity *Esmun*, the Persian *Asuman*, and the Zendic *açmano*, i.e. heaven, is very uncertain.—Ver. 31. Of the idols of the *Avvæans*, according to rabbinical accounts in Selden, *l.c.*, *Nibchaz* had the form of a dog (נִבְחָז , *latrator*, from נָבַח), and *Tartak* that of an ass. Gesenius regards *Tartak* as a demon of the lower regions, because in Pehlwi *tar*—*thakh* signifies deep darkness or hero of darkness, and *Nibchaz* as an evil demon, the נִבְחָז of the Zabians, whom Norberg in his *Onomast. cod. Nasar.* p. 100, describes as *horrendus rex infernalis: posito ipsius throno ad telluris, i.e. lucis et caliginis confinium, sed imo acherontis fundo pedibus substrato*, according to *Codex Adami*, ii. 50, lin. 12.—With regard to the gods of the Sepharvites, *Adrammelech* and *Anammelech*, it is evident from the offering of children in sacrifice to them that they were related to Moloch. The name אַדְרַמְלֵךְ , which occurs as a personal name in ch. xix. 37 and Isa. xxxvii. 38, has been explained either from the Semitic אדר as meaning “glorious king,” or from the Persian اذر , *azr*, in which case it means “fire-king,” and is supposed to refer to the sun (see Ges. on *Isaiah*, ii. p. 347). עֵנֶפֶלֶךְ is supposed by Hyde (*de relig. vet. Persarum*, p. 131) to be the group of stars called *Cepheus*, which goes by the name of “the shepherd and flock” and “the herd-stars” in the Oriental astrology, and in this case עֵנֶם might answer to the Arabic عنان = *Enan*. Movers, on the other hand (*Phöniz.* i. pp. 410, 411), regards them as two names of the same deity, a

double-shaped Moloch, and reads the *Chethib* אלה ספרים as the singular אל הספרים, the god of Sepharvaim. This double god, according to his explanation, was a sun-being, because Sepharvaim, of which he was *πολιούχος*, is designated by Berosus as a city of the sun. This may be correct; but there is something very precarious in the further assumption, that "*Adar-Melech* is to be regarded as the sun's fire, and indeed, since *Adar* is Mars, that he is so far to be thought of as a destructive being," and that *Anammelech* is a contraction of עין סלך, *oculus Molechi*, signifying the ever-watchful eye of Saturn; according to which *Adrammelech* is to be regarded as the solar Mars, *Anammelech* as the solar Saturn. The explanations given by Hitzig (*on Isa.* p. 437) and Benfey (*die Monatsnamen*, pp. 187, 188) are extremely doubtful.—Ver. 32. In addition to these idols, *Jehovah* also was worshipped in temples of the high places, according to the instructions of the Israelitish priest sent by the king of Assyria. יהוי: "and they were (also) worshipping Jehovah, and made themselves priests of the mass of the people" (מקצותם) as in 1 Kings xii. 31). יהוי עשים להם: "and they (the priests) were preparing them (sacrifices) in the houses of the high places."—Ver. 33 sums up by way of conclusion the description of the various kinds of worship.

Vers. 34–41. This mixed *cultus*, composed of the worship of idols and the worship of Jehovah, they retained till the time when the books of the Kings were written. "Unto this day they do after the former customs." משפטים הראשונים can only be the religious usages and ordinances which were introduced at the settlement of the new inhabitants, and which are described in vers. 28–33. The prophetic historian observes still further, that "they fear not Jehovah, and do not according to their statutes and their rights, nor according to the law and commandment which the Lord had laid down for the sons of Jacob, to whom He gave the name of Israel" (see 1 Kings xviii. 31), i.e. according to the Mosaic law. משפטים and חקתם, "their statutes and their right," stands in antithesis to החקתה הטהרה which Jehovah gave to the children of Israel. If, then, the clause, "they do not according to their statutes and their right," is not to contain a glaring contradiction to the previous assertion, "unto this day they do after their first (former) rights," we must understand by חקתם ומשפטים the statutes and the right of the ten tribes, i.e. the worship of Jehovah under

the symbols of the calves, and must explain the inexactness of the expression "*their statutes and their right*" from the fact that the historian was thinking of the Israelites who had been left behind in the land, or of the remnant of the Israelitish population that had become mixed up with the heathen settlers (ch. xxiii. 19, 20; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 9, 33). The meaning of the verse is therefore evidently the following: The inhabitants of Samaria retain to this day the *cultus* composed of the worship of idols and of Jehovah under the form of an image, and do not worship Jehovah either after the manner of the ten tribes or according to the precepts of the Mosaic law. Their worship is an amalgamation of the Jehovah image-worship and of heathen idolatry (cf. ver. 41).—To indicate the character of this worship still more clearly, and hold it up as a complete breach of the covenant and as utter apostasy from Jehovah, the historian describes still more fully, in vers. 35-39, how earnestly and emphatically the people of Israel had been prohibited from worshipping other gods, and urged to worship Jehovah alone, who had redeemed Israel out of Egypt and exalted it into His own nation. For ver. 35 compare Ex. xx. 5; for ver. 36, the exposition of ver. 7, also Ex. xxxii. 11, vi. 6, xx. 23; Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, etc. In ver. 37 the committal of the *thorah* to writing is presupposed. For ver. 39, see Deut. xiii. 5, xxiii. 15, etc.—Ver. 40. They did not hearken, however (the subject is, of course, the ten tribes), but they (the descendants of the Israelites who remained in the land) do after their former manner. כְּשִׁמְעוֹן הָרִאשׁוֹן is their manner of worshipping God, which was a mixture of idolatry and of the image-worship of Jehovah, as in ver. 34.—In ver. 41 this is repeated once more, and the whole of these reflections are brought to a close with the additional statement, that their children and grandchildren do the same to this day.—In the period following the Babylonian captivity the Samaritans relinquished actual idolatry, and by the adoption of the Mosaic book of the law were converted to monotheism. For the later history of the Samaritans, of whom a small handful have been preserved to the present day in the ancient Sichem, the present Nablus, see Theod. Guil. Joh. Juynboll, *commentarii in historiam gentis Samaritanæ*, Lugd. Bat. 1846, 4, and H. Petermann, *Samaria and the Samaritans*, in Herzog's *Cycl.*

III.—HISTORY OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF THE TEN TRIBES TO THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.

CHAPS. XVIII.—XXV.

At the time when the kingdom of the ten tribes was destroyed, Judah found itself in a state of dependence upon the imperial power of Assyria, into which it had been brought by the ungodly policy of Ahaz. But three years before the expedition of Salmanasar against Samaria, the pious Hezekiah had ascended the throne of his ancestor David in Jerusalem, and had set on foot with strength and zeal the healing of Judah's wounds, by exterminating idolatry and by restoring the legal worship of Jehovah. As Hezekiah was devoted to the Lord his God with undivided heart and trusted firmly in Him, the Lord also acknowledged him and his undertakings. When Sennacherib had overrun Judah with a powerful army after the revolt of Hezekiah, and had summoned the capital to surrender, the Lord heard the prayer of His faithful servant Hezekiah and saved Judah and Jerusalem from the threatening destruction by the miraculous destruction of the forces of the proud Sennacherib (ch. xviii. and xix.), whereby the power of Assyria was so weakened that Judah had no longer much more to fear from it, although it did chastise Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 sqq.). Nevertheless this deliverance, through and in the time of Hezekiah, was merely a postponement of the judgment with which Judah had been threatened by the prophets (Isaiah and Micah), of the destruction of the kingdom and the banishment of its inhabitants. Apostasy from the living God and moral corruption had struck such deep and firm roots in the nation, that the idolatry, outwardly suppressed by Hezekiah, broke out again openly immediately after his death; and that in a still stronger degree, since his son and successor Manasseh not only restored all the abominations of idolatry which his father had rooted out, but even built altars to idols in the courts of the temple of Jehovah, and filled Jerusalem with innocent blood from one end to the other (ch. xxi.), and thereby filled up the measure of sins, so that the Lord had to announce through His prophets to the godless king and people His decree to destroy Jerusalem and cast out the remaining portion of the people of His inheritance

among the heathen, and to show the severity of His judgments in the fact that Manasseh was led away captive by the officers of the Assyrian king. And even though Manasseh himself renounced all gross idolatry and restored the legal worship in the temple after his release and return to Jerusalem, as the result of this chastisement, this alteration in the king's mind exerted no lasting influence upon the people generally, and was completely neutralized by his successor Amon, who did not walk in the way of Jehovah, but merely worshipped his father's idols. In this state of things even the God-fearing Josiah, with all the stringency with which he exterminated idolatry, more especially after the discovery of the book of the law, was unable to effect any true change of heart or sincere conversion of the people to their God, and could only wipe out the outward signs and traces of idolatry, and establish the external supremacy of the worship of Jehovah. The people, with their carnal security, imagined that they had done quite enough for God by restoring the outward and legal form of worship, and that they were now quite sure of the divine protection; and did not hearken to the voice of the prophets, who predicted the speedy coming of the judgments of God. Josiah had warded off the bursting forth of these judgments for thirty years, through his humiliation before God and the reforms which he introduced; but towards the end of his reign the Lord began to put away Judah from before His face for the sake of Manasseh's sins, and to reject the city which He had chosen that His name might dwell there (ch. xxii.—xxiii. 27). Necho king of Egypt advanced to extend his sway to the Euphrates and overthrow the Assyrian empire. Josiah marched to meet him, for the purpose of preventing the extension of his power into Syria. A battle was fought at Megiddo, the Judæan army was defeated, Josiah fell in the battle, and with him the last hope of the sinking state (ch. xxiii. 29, 30; 2 Chron. xxxv. 23, 24). In Jerusalem Jehoahaz was made king by the people; but after a reign of three months he was taken prisoner by Necho at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and led away to Egypt, where he died. Eliakim, the elder son of Josiah, was appointed by Necho as Egyptian vassal-king in Jerusalem, under the name of Jehoiakim. He was devoted to idolatry, and through his love of show (Jer. xxii. 13 sq.) still further ruined the kingdom, which was already exhausted by the tribute to be paid to Egypt. In the fourth year of his

reign Pharaoh-Necho succumbed at Carchemish to the Chaldaean power, which was rising under Nebuchadnezzar upon the ruins of the Assyrian kingdom. At the same time Jeremiah proclaimed to the incorrigible nation that the Lord of Sabaoth would deliver Judah with all the surrounding nations into the hand of His servant Nebuchadnezzar, that the land of Judah would be laid waste and the people serve the king of Babylon seventy years (Jer. xxv.). Nebuchadnezzar appeared in Judah immediately afterwards to follow up his victory over Necho, took Jerusalem, made Jehoiakim his subject, and carried away Daniel, with many of the leading young men, to Babylon (ch. xxiv. 1). But after some years Jehoiakim revolted; whereupon Nebuchadnezzar sent fresh troops against Jerusalem to besiege the city, and after defeating Jehoiachin, who had in the meantime followed his father upon the throne, led away into captivity to Babylon, along with the kernel of the nation, nobles, warriors, craftsmen, and smiths, and set upon the throne Mattaniah, the only remaining son of Josiah, under the name of Zedekiah (ch. xxiv. 2-17). But when he also formed an alliance with Pharaoh-Hophra in the ninth year of his reign, and revolted from the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar advanced immediately with all his forces, besieged Jerusalem, and having taken the city and destroyed it, put an end to the kingdom of Judah by slaying Zedekiah and his sons, and carrying away all the people that were left, with the exception of a very small remnant of cultivators of the soil (ch. xxiv. 18-xxv. 26), a hundred and thirty-four years after the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes.

CHAP. XVIII. REIGN OF KING HEZEKIAH. SENNACHERIB INVADES JUDAH AND THREATENS JERUSALEM.

Vers. 1-8. *Length and character of Hezekiah's reign.*¹—Vers. 1, 2. In the third year of Hoshea of Israel, Hezekiah became

¹ On comparing the account of Hezekiah's reign given in our books (ch. xviii.-xx.) with that in 2 Chron. xxix.-xxxii., the different plans of these two historical works are at once apparent. The prophetic author of our books first of all describes quite briefly the character of the king's reign (ch. xviii. 1-8), and then gives an elaborate description of the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib and of his attempt to get Jerusalem into his power, together with the destruction of the proud Assyrian force and Sennacherib's

king over Judah, when he was twenty-five years old. According to vers. 9 and 10, the fourth and sixth years of Hezekiah corresponded to the seventh and ninth of Hoshea; consequently his first year apparently ran parallel to the fourth of Hoshea, so that Josephus (*Ant.* ix. 13, 1) represents him as having ascended the throne in the fourth year of Hoshea's reign. But there is no necessity for this alteration. If we assume that the commencement of his reign took place towards the close of the third year of Hoshea, the fourth and sixth years of his reign coincided for the most part with the sixth and ninth years of Hoshea's reign. The name *הֶזְקִיָּהוּ* or *הֶזְקִיָּה* (vers. 9, 13, etc.) is given in its complete form *יְהוָה הֶזְקִיָּהוּ*, "whom Jehovah strengthens," in 2 Chron. xxix. sqq. and Isa. i. 1; and *הֶזְקִיָּה* in Hos. i. 1 and Mic. i. 1. On his age when he ascended the throne, see the Comm. on ch. xvi. 2. The name of his mother, *אֲבִי*, is a strongly contracted form of *אֲבִיָּה* (2 Chron. xxix. 1).—Vers. 3 sqq. As ruler Hezekiah walked in the footsteps of his ancestor David. He removed the high places and the other objects of idolatrous worship, trusted in Jehovah, and adhered firmly to Him without wavering; therefore the Lord made all his undertakings prosper. *הַמִּצְבֹּת*, *הַמִּזְבֵּחַ*, and *הָאֲשֵׁרִי* (see at 1 Kings xiv. 23) embrace all the objects of idolatrous worship, which had been introduced into Jerusalem and Judah in the reigns of the former kings,

hasty return to Nineveh and death (ch. xviii. 13-19, 37); and, finally, he also gives a circumstantial account of Hezekiah's illness and recovery, and also of the arrival of the Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem, and of Hezekiah's conduct on that occasion (ch. xx.). The chronicler, on the other hand, has fixed his chief attention upon the religious reformation carried out by Hezekiah, and therefore first of all describes most elaborately the purification of the temple from all idolatrous abominations, the restoration of the Jehovah-cultus and the feast of passover, to which Hezekiah invited all the people, not only the subjects of his own kingdom, but the remnant of the ten tribes also (2 Chron. xxix.-xxxi.); and then simply gives in ch. xxxii. the most summary account of the attack made by Sennacherib upon Jerusalem and the destruction of his army, of the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah, and of his great riches, the Babylonian embassy being touched upon in only the most casual manner. The historical character of the elaborate accounts given in the Chronicles of Hezekiah's reform of worship and his celebration of the passover, which Thenius follows De Wette and Gramberg in throwing doubt upon, has been most successfully defended by Bertheau as well as others.—On the disputed question, in what year of Hezekiah's reign the solemn passover instituted by him fell, see the thorough discussion of it by C. P. Caspari (*Beitr. z. Einleit. in d. B. Jesaja*, pp. 109 sqq.), and our Commentary on the Chronicles, which has yet to appear.

and more especially in that of Ahaz. The singular **הַאֲשֵׁרָה** is used in a collective sense = **הַאֲשֵׁרִים** (2 Chron. xxxi. 1). The only other idol that is specially mentioned is the brazen serpent which Moses made in the wilderness (Num. xxi. 8, 9), and which the people with their leaning to idolatry had turned in the course of time into an object of idolatrous worship. The words, "to this day were the children of Israel burning incense to it," do not mean that this took place without interruption from the time of Moses down to that of Hezekiah, but simply, that it occurred at intervals, and that the idolatry carried on with this idol lasted till the time of Hezekiah, namely, till this king broke in pieces the brazen serpent, because of the idolatry that was associated with it. For further remarks on the meaning of this symbol, see the Comm. on Num. xxi. 8, 9. The people called (**הִקְרָא**, one called) this serpent **נְחָשֶׁת**, *i.e.* a brazen thing. This epithet does not involve anything contemptuous, as the earlier commentators supposed, nor the idea of "Brass-god" (Ewald).—Ver. 5. The verdict, "after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah," refers to Hezekiah's confidence in God (**בְּיָהוָה**), in which he had no equal, whereas in the case of Josiah his conscientious adherence to the Mosaic law is extolled in the same words (ch. xxiii. 25); so that there is no ground for saying that there is a contradiction between our verse and ch. xxiii. 25 (Thenius).—Ver. 6. **"וַיִּבֶן בְּיָהוָה"**: he adhered faithfully to Jehovah (**בְּיָהוָה** as in 1 Kings xi. 2), and departed not from Him, *i.e.* he never gave himself up to idolatry.—Ver. 7. The Lord therefore gave him success in all his undertakings (**הַשְׂכִּיל**, see at 1 Kings ii. 3), and even in his rebellion against the king of Assyria, whom he no longer served, *i.e.* to whom he paid no more tribute. It was through Ahaz that Judah had been brought into dependence upon Assyria; and Hezekiah released himself from this, by refusing to pay any more tribute, probably after the departure of Salmanasar from Palestine, and possibly not till after the death of that king. Sennacherib therefore made war upon Hezekiah to subjugate Judah to himself again (see vers. 13 sqq.).—Ver. 8. Hezekiah smote the Philistines to Gaza, and their territory from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city, *i.e.* all the towns from the least to the greatest (see at ch. xvii. 9). He thus chastised these enemies for their invasion of Judah in the time of Ahaz, wrested from them the cities which they had taken at that time (2 Chron.

xxviii. 18), and laid waste all their country to *Gaza*, i.e. *Ghuzzeh*, the most southerly of the chief cities of Philistia (see at Josh. xiii. 3). This probably took place after the defeat of Sennacherib (cf. 2 Chron. xxxii. 22, 23).

In vers. 9-12 the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes by Salmanasar, which has already been related according to the annals of the kingdom of Israel in ch. xvii. 3-6, is related once more according to the annals of the kingdom of Judah, in which this catastrophe is also introduced as an event that was memorable in relation to all the covenant-nation.

Vers. 13-37. *Sennacherib invades Judah and threatens Jerusalem*.¹—Sennacherib, סַנְחַרִּיב (*Sanchēribh*), Σενναχηρίμ (LXX.), Σεναχάρηβος (Joseph.), Σαναχάρηβος (Herodot.), whose name has not yet been deciphered with certainty upon the Assyrian monuments or clearly explained (see J. Brandis *über den histor. Gewinn aus der Entzifferung der assyr. Inschriften*, pp. 103 sqq., and M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, p. 37), was the successor of Salmanasar (Sargina according to the monuments). He is called βασιλεὺς Ἀραβίων τε καὶ Ἀσσυρίων by Herodotus (ii. 141), and reigned, according to Berosus, eighteen years. He took all the fortified cities in Judah (צָרָה, with the masculine suffix instead of the feminine: cf. Ewald, § 184, c). The בָּ, *all*, is not to be pressed; for, beside the strongly fortified capital Jerusalem, he had not yet taken the fortified cities of Lachish and Libnah (ver. 17 and ch. xix. 8) at the time, when, according to vers. 14 sqq., he sent a division of his army against Jerusalem, and summoned Hezekiah to surrender that city. According to Herodotus (*l.c.*), the real object of his campaign was Egypt, which is also apparent from ch. xix. 24, and is confirmed by Isa. x. 24; for which reason *Tirhaka* marched against him (ch. xix. 8; cf. M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 171, 172).—Vers. 14 sqq. On the report of Sennacherib's approach, Hezekiah made provision at once for the safety of Jerusalem. He had the city fortified more strongly, and the fountain of the

¹ We have a parallel and elaborate account of this campaign of Sennacherib and his defeat (ch. xviii. 13-xix. 37), and also of Hezekiah's sickness and recovery and the arrival of the Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem (ch. xx. 1-19), in Isa. xxxvi.-xxxix., and a brief extract, with certain not unimportant supplements, in 2 Chron. xxxii. These three narratives, as is now generally admitted, are drawn independently of one another from a collection of the prophecies of Isaiah, which was received into the annals of the kingdom (2 Chron. xxxii. 32), and serve to confirm and complete one another.

upper Gihon and the brook near the city stopped up (see at ver. 17), to cut off the supply of water from the besiegers, as is stated in 2 Chron. xxxii. 2-8, and confirmed by Isa. xxii. 8-11. In the meantime Sennacherib had pressed forward to *Lachish*, i.e. *Um Lakis*, in the plain of Judah, on the south-west of Jerusalem, seven hours to the west of *Eleutheropolis* on the road to Egypt (see at Josh. x. 3); so that Hezekiah, having doubts as to the possibility of a successful resistance, sent ambassadors to negotiate with him, and promised to pay him as much tribute as he might demand if he would withdraw. The confession "I have sinned" is not to be pressed, inasmuch as it was forced from Hezekiah by the pressure of distress. Since Asshur had made Judah tributary by faithless conduct on the part of Tiglath-pileser towards Ahaz, there was nothing really wrong in the shaking off of this yoke by the refusal to pay any further tribute. But Hezekiah certainly did wrong, when, after taking the first step, he was alarmed at the disastrous consequences, and sought to purchase once more the peace which he himself had broken, by a fresh submission and renewal of the payment of tribute. This false step on the part of the pious king, which arose from a temporary weakness of faith, was nevertheless turned into a blessing through the pride of Sennacherib and the covenant-faithfulness of the Lord towards him and his kingdom. Sennacherib demanded the enormous sum of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold (more than two and a half million thalers, or £375,000); and Hezekiah not only gave him all the gold and silver found in the treasures of the temple and palace, but had the gold plates with which he had covered the doors and doorposts of the temple (2 Chron. xxix. 3) removed, to send them to the king of Assyria. מִן־כָּנֹתֶיךָ, lit. the supports, i.e. the posts, of the doors.

These negotiations with Sennacherib on the part of Hezekiah are passed over both in the book of Isaiah and also in the Chronicles, because they had no further influence upon the future progress of the war.—Vers. 17 sqq. For though Sennacherib did indeed take the money, he did not depart, as he had no doubt promised, but, emboldened still further by this submissiveness, sent a detachment of his army against Jerusalem, and summoned Hezekiah to surrender the capital. "He sent Tartan, Rabсарis, and Rabshakeh." Rabshakeh only is mentioned in Isaiah, as the chief speaker in the negotiations

which follow, although in Isa. xxxvii. 6 and 24 allusion is evidently made to the other two. Tartan had no doubt the chief command, since he is not only mentioned first here, but conducted the siege of Ashdod, according to Isa. xx. 1. The three names are probably only official names, or titles of the offices held by the persons mentioned. For רַב־כְּרִיס means *princeps eunuchorum*, and רִבְשָׁקָה chief cup-bearer. חֲרִיתִן is explained by Hitzig on Isa. xx. 1 as derived from the Persian

تارتن, *Tār-tan*, "high person or vertex of the body," and in Jer. xxxix. 3 as "body-guard;" but this is hardly correct, as the other two titles are Semitic. These generals took up their station with their army "at the conduit of the upper pool, which ran by the road of the fuller's field," i.e. the conduit which flowed from the upper pool—according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 30, the basin of the upper *Gihon* (*Birket el Mamilla*)—into the lower pool (*Birket es Sultān*: see at 1 Kings i. 33). According to Isa. vii. 3, this conduit was in existence as early as the time of Ahaz. The "end" of it is probably the locality in which the conduit began at the upper pool or Gihon, or where it first issued from it. This conduit which led from the upper Gihon into the lower, and which is called in 2 Chron. xxxii. 30 "the outflow of the upper Gihon," Hezekiah stopped up, and conducted the water downwards, i.e. underground, towards the west into the city of David; that is to say, he conducted the water of the upper Gihon, which had previously flowed along the western side of the city outside the wall into the lower Gihon and so away down the valley of Ben-hinnom, into the city itself by means of a subterranean channel,¹ that he might retain this water for the use of the city in the event of a siege of Jerusalem, and keep it from the besiegers. This water was probably collected in the cistern (הַבְּרִיקָה) which Hezekiah made, i.e. ordered to be constructed (ch. xx. 20), or the reservoir "between the two walls for the waters of the old pool," mentioned in Isa. xxii. 11, i.e. most probably the reservoir still existing at some distance to the east of the Joppa gate on the western side of the road which leads to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the so-called "pool of Hezekiah," which the natives call *Birket el Hamman*,

¹ We may get some idea of the works connected with this aqueduct from the description of the "sealed fountain" of the Solomon's pool at *Ain Saleh* in Tobler, *Topogr. v. Jerus.* ii. pp. 857 sqq., *Dritte Wanderung*.

"Bathing-pool," because it supplies a bath in the neighbourhood, or *B. el Batrak*, "Patriarch's pool" (see Robinson, *Pal.* i. p. 487, and *Fresh Researches into the Topography of Jerusalem*, pp. 111 sqq.), since this is still fed by a conduit from the *Mamilla* pool (see E. G. Schultz, *Jerusalem*, p. 31, and Tobler, *Denksblätter*, pp. 44 sqq.).¹—Ver. 18. Hezekiah considered it beneath his dignity to negotiate personally with the generals of Sennacherib. He sent three of his leading ministers out to the front of the city: *Eliakim* the son of *Hilkiah*, the captain of the castle, who had only received the appointment to this office a short time before in *Shebna's* place (*Isa.* xxii. 20, 21); *Shebna*, who was still secretary of state (סֹפֵר: see at 2 Sam. viii. 17); and *Joach* the son of *Asaph*, the chancellor (מְזִכִּיר: see at 2 Sam. viii. 16).

Rabshakeh made a speech to these three (vers. 19–25), in which he tried to show that Hezekiah's confidence that he would be able to resist the might of the king of Assyria was perfectly vain, since neither Egypt (ver. 21), nor his God (ver. 22), nor his forces (ver. 23), would be able to defend him.—Ver. 19. "The great king:" the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian kings all assumed this title (cf. *Ezek.* xxvi. 7; *Dan.* ii. 37), because

¹ The identity of the בְּרִכָּה, which Hezekiah constructed as a reservoir for the overflow of the upper Gihon that was conducted into the city (ch. xx. 20), with the present "pool of Hezekiah" is indeed very probable, but not quite certain. For in very recent times, on digging the foundation for the Evangelical church built on the northern slope of Zion, they lighted upon a large well-preserved arched channel, which was partly cut in the rock, and, where this was not the case, built in level layers and coated within with a hard cement about an inch thick and covered with large stones (Robinson, *New Inquiries as to the Topography of Jerusalem*, p. 113, and *Bibl. Res.* p. 318), and which might possibly be connected with the channel made by Hezekiah to conduct the water of the upper Gihon into the city, although this channel does not open into the pool of Hezekiah, and the walls, some remains of which are still preserved, may belong to a later age. The arguments adduced by Thenius in support of the assumption that the "lower" or "old pool" mentioned in *Isa.* xxii. 9 and 11 is different from the lower Gihon-pool, and to be sought for in the Tyropœon, are inconclusive. It by no means follows from the expression, "which lies by the road of the fuller's field," i.e. by the road which runs past the fuller's field, that there was another upper pool in Jerusalem beside the upper pool (Gihon); but this additional clause simply serves to define more precisely the spot by the conduit mentioned where the Assyrian army took its stand; and it by no means follows from the words of *Isa.* xxii. 11, "a gathering of waters have ye made between the two walls for the waters of the old pool," that this gathering of waters was made in the Tyropœon, and that this "old

kings of conquered lands were subject to them as vassals (see at Isa. x. 8). "What is this confidence that thou cherishest?" i.e. how vain or worthless is this confidence!—Ver. 20. "Thou sayest . . . it is only a lip-word . . . : counsel and might for battle;" i.e. if thou speakest of counsel and might for battle, that is only *דבר שפתים*, a word that merely comes from the lips, not from the heart, the seat of the understanding, i.e. a foolish and inconsiderate saying (cf. Prov. xiv. 23; Job xi. 2).—*אמרת* is to be preferred to the *אמרת* of Isaiah as the more original of the two. *עתה*, now, sc. we will see on whom thou didst rely, when thou didst rebel against me.—Ver. 21. On Egypt? "that broken reed, which runs into the hand of any one who would lean upon it (thinking it whole), and pierces it through." This figure, which is repeated in Ezek. xxix. 6, 7, is so far suitably chosen, that the Nile, representing Egypt, is rich in reeds. What Rabshakeh says of Egypt here, Isaiah had already earnestly impressed upon his people (Isa. xxx. 3-5), to warn them against trusting in the support of Egypt, from which one party in the nation expected help against Assyria.—Ver. 22. Hezekiah (and Judah) had a stronger ground of confidence in Jehovah his God. Even this

pool," as distinguished from the lower pool (ver. 9), was an upper pool, which was above the king's pool mentioned in Neh. iii. 15. For even if *בן הכתמים* occurs in ch. xxv. 4, Jer. xxxix. 4, lii. 7, in connection with a locality on the south-east side of the city, the Old Testament says nothing about two pools in the Tyropœon at the south-east corner of Jerusalem, but simply mentions a fountain gate, which probably derived its name from the present fountain of the Virgin, and the king's pool, also called *Shelach* in Neh. ii. 14, iii. 15, which was no doubt fed from that fountain like the present *Siloam*, and watered the royal gardens. (Compare Rob. *Pal.* i. pp. 565 sqq., and *Bibl. Res.* p. 189, and Tobler, *Die Siloah-quelle u. der Oelberg*, pp. 1 sqq.). The two walls, between which Hezekiah placed the reservoir, may very well be the northern wall of Zion and the one which surrounded the lower city (Acra) on the north-west, according to which the words in Isa. xxii. 11 would admirably suit the "pool of Hezekiah." Again, Hezekiah did not wait till the departure of Sennacherib before he built this conduit, which is also mentioned in Wisd. xlviii. 17, as Knobel supposes (on Isa. xxii. 11), but he made it when he first invaded Judah, before the appearance of the Assyrian troops in front of Jerusalem, when he made the defensive preparations noticed at ver. 14, as is evident from 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4, compared with ver. 30, since the stopping up of the fountain outside the city, to withdraw the water from the Assyrians, is expressly mentioned in vers. 3, 4 among the measures of defence; and in the concluding notices concerning Hezekiah in ch. xx. 20, and 2 Chron. xxxii. 30, there is also a brief allusion to this work, without any precise indication of the time when he had executed it.

Rabshakeh tried to shake, availing himself very skilfully, from his heathen point of view, of the reform which Hezekiah had made in the worship, and representing the abolition of the altars on the high places as an infringement upon the reverence that ought to be shown to God. "And if ye say, We trust in Jehovah our God, (I say:) is it not He whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar (in the temple) in Jerusalem?" Instead of **כִּי תֹאמְרוּ**, according to which Rabshakeh turned to the deputies, we have in Isa. vii. 7 **כִּי תֹאמַר**, according to which the words are addressed to Hezekiah, as in ver. 20. **תֹּאמַר** is preferred by Thenius, Knobel, and others, because in what follows Hezekiah is addressed in the third person. But the very circumstance that **תֹּאמַר** is apparently more suitable favours the originality of **כִּי תֹאמְרוּ**, according to which the king is still addressed in the person of his ambassadors, and Rabshakeh only speaks directly to the ambassadors when this argument is answered. The attack upon the confidence which the Judæans placed in their God commences with **הֲלֹא הוּא**. The opinion of Thenius, that the second clause of the verse is a continuation of the words supposed to be spoken by the Judæans who trusted in God, and that the apodosis does not follow till ver. 23, is quite a mistake. The ambassadors of Hezekiah could not regard the high places and idolatrous altars that had been abolished as altars of Jehovah; and the apodosis could not commence with **וְעַתָּה**.—Vers. 23, 24. Still less could Hezekiah rely upon his military resources. **נָא הִתְעַרֵּב נָא**: enter, I pray thee, (into contest) with my lord, and I will give thee 2000 horses, if thou canst set the horsemen upon them. The meaning, of course, is not that Hezekiah could not raise 2000 soldiers in all, but that he could not produce so many men who were able to fight as horsemen. "How then wilt thou turn back a single one of the smallest lieutenants of my lord?" **הֲשִׁיב אַחֲרָי פֶלֶא**, to repulse a person's face, means generally to turn away a person with his petition (1 Kings ii. 16, 17), here to repulse an assailant. **פָּחַח אֶחָד** is one pasha; although **אֶחָד**, which is grammatically subordinate to **פָּחַח**, is in the construct state, that the genitives which follow may be connected (for this subordination of **אֶחָד** see Ewald, § 286, a). **פָּחַח** (see at 1 Kings x. 15), lit. under-vicegerent, i.e. administrator of a province under a satrap, in military states also a subordinate officer. **וְתִבְיָמָה**: and so (with thy military force so small) thou

trustest in Egypt לִרְכֹב וְנִי, so far as war-chariots and horsemen are concerned.—Ver. 25. After Rabshakeh had thus, as he imagined, taken away every ground of confidence from Hezekiah, he added still further, that the Assyrian king himself had also not come without Jehovah, but had been summoned by Him to effect the destruction of Judah. It is possible that some report may have reached his ears of the predictions of the prophets, who had represented the Assyrian invasion as a judgment from the Lord, and these he used for his own purposes. Instead of עַל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה, against this place, i.e. Jerusalem, we have עַל הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת in Isaiah,—a reading which owes its origin simply to the endeavour to bring the two clauses into exact conformity to one another.

Vers. 26-37. It was very conceivable that Rabshakeh's boasting might make an impression upon the people; the ambassadors of Hezekiah therefore interrupted him with the request that he would speak to them in Aramæan, as they understood that language, and not in Jewish, on account of the people who were standing upon the wall. אַרְמֵיטִי was the language spoken in Syria, Babylonia, and probably also in the province of Assyria, and may possibly have been Rabshakeh's mother-tongue, even if the court language of the Assyrian kings was an Aryan dialect. With the close affinity between the Aramæan and the Hebrew, the latter could not be unknown to Rabshakeh, so that he made use of it, just as the Aramæan language was intelligible to the ministers of Hezekiah, whereas the people in Jerusalem understood only יְהוּדִית, Jewish, i.e. the Hebrew language spoken in the kingdom of Judah. It is evident from the last clause of the verse that the negotiations were carried on in the neighbourhood of the city wall of Jerusalem.—Ver. 27. But Rabshakeh rejected this proposal with the scornful remark, that his commission was not to speak to Hezekiah and his ambassadors only, but rather to the people upon the wall. The variation of the preposition עַל and אֶל in עַל אֲדָמָה, to thy lord (Hezekiah), and אֶלִּיךָ, to thee (Eliakim as chief speaker), is avoided in the text of Isaiah. עַל is frequently used for אֶל, in the later usage of the language, in the sense of *to* or *at*. In the words "who sit upon the wall to eat their dung and drink their urine," Rabshakeh points to the horrors which a siege of Jerusalem would entail upon the inhabitants. For חֲרָתָם = חֲרָתָם, *excrementa sua*, and שִׁינֵיהֶם, *urinas suas*, the Masoretes have substituted the euphemisms צֹאֲתָם, going forth,

and מִיַּמֵּי רַגְלֵיהֶם, water of their feet.—Vers. 28 sqq. וַיָּקֻם: not, he stood up, raised himself (Ges.), or came forward (Then.), but he stationed himself, assumed an attitude calculated for effect, and spoke to the people with a loud voice in the Jewish language, telling them to listen to the king of Assyria and not to be led astray by Hezekiah, *i.e.* to be persuaded to defend the city any longer, since neither Hezekiah nor Jehovah could defend them from the might of Sennacherib. אַל־יִשְׂאָ: let not Hezekiah deceive you, *sc.* by pretending to be able to defend or save Jerusalem. In כִּי־יָרָא, “out of his (the Assyrian’s) hand,” the speaker ceases to speak in the name of his king. On the construction of the passive הִנֵּנִי with אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ, see Ewald, § 277, *d*, although in the instance before us he proposes to expunge the אֶת after Isa. xxxvi. 15.—Vers. 31 sqq. “Make peace with me and come out to me (*sc.* out of your walls, *i.e.* surrender to me), and ye shall eat every one his vine, . . . till I come and bring you into a land like your own land . . .” בְּרָכָה is used here to signify peace as the concentration of weal and blessing. The imperative וְאָכַל expresses the consequence of what goes before (*vid.* Ewald, § 347, *b*). To eat his vine and fig-tree and to drink the water of his well is a figure denoting the quiet and undisturbed enjoyment of the fruits of his own possessions (*cf.* 1 Kings v. 5). Even in the event of their yielding, the Assyrian would transport the Jewish people into another land, according to the standing custom of Asiatic conquerors in ancient times (for proofs see Hengstenberg, *De rebus Tyriis*, pp. 51, 52). To make the people contented with this thought, the boaster promised that the king of Assyria would carry them into a land which was quite as fruitful and glorious as the land of Canaan. The description of it as a land with corn and new wine, etc., recalls the picture of the land of Canaan in Deut. viii. 8 and xxxiii. 28. זֵית יִצְהָר is the olive-tree which yields good oil, in distinction from the wild olive-tree. וְיָחִי וְנָ: and ye shall live and not die, *i.e.* no harm shall befall you from me (Thenius). This passage is abridged in Isa. xxxvi. 17.—Vers. 33 sqq. Even Jehovah could not deliver them any more than Hezekiah. As a proof of this, Rabshakeh enumerated a number of cities and lands which the king of Assyria had conquered, without their gods’ being able to offer any resistance to his power. “Where are the gods of Hamath, etc., that they might have delivered Samaria out of my hand?” Instead of כִּי הָיָה we have וְכִי הָיָה,

and that they might have, which loosens the connection somewhat more between this clause and the preceding one, and makes it more independent. "Where are they?" is equivalent to they are gone, have perished (cf. ch. xix. 18); and "that they might have delivered" is equivalent to they have not delivered. The subject to *אֱלֹהֵי הַנְּגִיזָה* is *בִּי הַצִּלִּי*, which includes the God of Samaria. Sennacherib regards himself as being as it were one with his predecessors, as the representative of the might of Assyria, so that he attributes to himself the conquests of cities and lands which his ancestors had made. The cities and lands enumerated in ver. 34 have been mentioned already in ch. xvii. 24 as conquered territories, from which colonists had been transplanted to Samaria, with the exception of *Arpad* and *Hena*. *אַרְפַּד*, which is also mentioned in ch. xix. 13, Isa. x. 9, xxxvi. 19, xxxvii. 13, and Jer. xlix. 23, in connection with *Hamath*, was certainly situated in the neighbourhood of that city, and still exists, so far as the name is concerned, in the large village of *Arfād* (mentioned by Marasid, i. 47), in northern

Syria in the district of *Azáz*, which was seven hours to the north of Haleb, according to Abulf. *Tab. Syr. ed. Köhler*, p. 23, and Niebuhr, *Reise*, ii. p. 414 (see Roediger, *Addenda ad Ges. thes.* p. 112). *הֶנָּה*, *Hena*, which is also combined with *Irvah* in

ch. xix. 13 and Isa. xxxvii. 13, is probably the city of *Ana*,

on the Euphrates, mentioned by Abulf., and *עֲנָה* is most likely the same as *עֲנָה* in ch. xvii. 24. The names *עֲנָה* and *עֲנָה* are omitted from the text of Isaiah in consequence of the abridgment of Rabshakeh's address.—Ver. 35 contains the conclusion drawn from the facts already adduced: "which of all the gods of the lands are they who have delivered their land out of my hand, that Jehovah should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?" i.e. as not one of the gods of the lands named have been able to rescue his land from Assyria, Jehovah also will not be able to defend Jerusalem.—Vers. 36, 37. The people were quite silent at this address ("the people," *הָעָם*, to whom Rabshakeh had wished to address himself); for Hezekiah had forbidden them to make any answer, not only to prevent Rabshakeh from saying anything further, but that the ambassadors of Sennacherib might be left in complete uncertainty as to the impression made by their words. The deputies of Hezekiah returned to the

king with their clothes rent as a sign of grief at the words of the Assyrian, by which not only Hezekiah, but still more Jehovah, had been blasphemed, and reported what they had heard.

CHAP. XIX. JERUSALEM DELIVERED. DESTRUCTION OF THE ASSYRIAN ARMY AND DEATH OF SENNACHERIB. (Compare Isa. xxxvii.)

Vers. 1-4. When Hezekiah had heard from his counsellors the report of Rabshakeh's words, he rent his clothes with horror at his daring mockery of the living God (ver. 4), put on mourning clothes as a sign of the trouble of his soul and went into the temple, and at the same time sent Eliakim and Shebna with the oldest of the priests in mourning costume to the prophet Isaiah, to entreat him to intercede with the Lord in these desperate circumstances.¹ The order of the words: Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, is unusual (cf. ch. xiv. 25, xx. 1; 1 Kings xvi. 7, etc.), and is therefore altered in Isaiah into Isaiah the son of Amoz, the prophet.—Ver. 3. "A day of distress, and of chastisement, and of rejection is this day." חֲדָשׁוֹתָ: the divine chastisement. נִאֲצָה: contemptuous treatment, or rejection of the people on the part of God (compare נָאָץ, Deut. xxxii. 19, Jer. xiv. 21, Lam. ii. 6). "For children have come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." A figure denoting extreme danger, the most desperate circumstances. If the woman in travail has not strength to bring forth the child which has come to the mouth of the womb, both the life of the child and that of the mother are exposed to the greatest danger; and this was the condition of the people here (see the similar figure in Hos. xiii. 13). For לִירָה instead of לִירָה, see Ges. § 69, 2 Anm.—Ver. 4. Perhaps Jehovah thy God will hear the blasphemies of the living God on the part of Rabshakeh. יִשְׁמַע: hear, equivalent to observe, take notice of, and in this case punish. אֱלֹהִים חַי: the living God, in contrast to the gods of the heathen, who are only lifeless idols (cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 36). וְיִהְיֶה is not to be taken in connection with לְחָרָה, as if it stood for לְהוֹכִיחַ, "and to scold with words" (Luth.,

¹ "But the most wise king did not meet his blasphemies with weapons, but with prayer, and tears, and sackcloth, and entreated the prophet Isaiah to be his ambassador."—THEODORET.

Ges., etc.), but is a *perf. rel.* or a progressive perfect (Ewald, § 234, a), and the continuation of וַיִּשְׁפָּט : "and will chastise (punish, *sc.* him) for the words which He has heard." וַיִּשְׁמְרוּ : "therefore lift up prayer (to heaven) for the (still) existing remnant, *sc.* of the people of God;" nearly all Judah having come into the power of Sennacherib since the carrying away of the ten tribes.

Vers. 5-7. Isaiah replied with this comforting promise: Hezekiah was not to be afraid of the blasphemous words of the Assyrian king; the Lord would frighten him with a report, so that he would return to his own land, and there would He cause him to fall by the sword. $\text{וְעַבְדֵי מַלְכֵהְךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ אַשּׁוּרִיָּה$, the servants or young men of the Assyrian king, is a derogatory epithet applied to the officials of Assyria. "Behold, I put a spirit into him, so that he shall hear a report and return into his own land." $\text{וְהָיָה כִּי שָׁמַעְתָּ$ does not refer to the report of the destruction of his army (ver. 35), as Thenius supposes, for Sennacherib did not hear of this through the medium of an army, but was with the army himself at the time when it was smitten by the angel of the Lord; it refers to the report mentioned in ver. 9. For even if he made one last attempt to secure the surrender of Jerusalem immediately upon hearing this report, yet after the failure of this attempt to shake the firmness of Hezekiah his courage must have failed him, and the thought of return must have suggested itself, so that this was only accelerated by the blow which fell upon the army. For, as O. v. Gerlach has correctly observed, "the destruction of the army would hardly have produced any decisive effect without the approach of Tirhakah, since the great power of the Assyrian king, especially in relation to the small kingdom of Judah, was not broken thereby. But at the prayer of the king the Lord added this miracle to the other, which His providence had already brought to pass.—For the fulfilment of the prophecy of Sennacherib's death, see ver. 37.

Vers. 8-13. In the meantime Rabshakeh had returned to his king at *Libnah* (see at ch. viii. 22), to which he had gone from Lachish, probably after having taken that fortress.—Ver. 9. There Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah was advancing to make war against him. *Tirhakah*, $\Theta\alpha\rho\alpha\acute{\kappa}\acute{\alpha}$ (LXX), king of Cush, is the Ταπακός of Manetho, the successor of Sevechus (Shebek II.), the third king of the twenty-fifth (Ethiopian) dynasty, described

by Strabo (xv. 687), who calls him *Τεύρων*, as a great conqueror. His name is spelt *Tāhālqa* or *Tāhargō* upon the monuments, and on the Pylon of the great temple at Medinet-Abu he is represented in the form of a king, cutting down enemies of conquered lands (Egypt, Syria, and *Tepopā*, an unknown land) before the god Ammon (see Brugsch, *hist. d'Egypte*, i. pp. 244, 245).¹—On hearing the report of the advance of Tirhakah, Sennacherib sent ambassadors again to Hezekiah with a letter (ver. 14), in which he summoned him once more to give up his confidence in his God, and his assurance that Jerusalem would not be delivered into the hands of the king of Assyria, since the gods of no other nation had been able to save their lands and cities from the kings of Assyria who had preceded him. The letter contained nothing more, therefore, than a repetition of the arguments already adduced by Rabshakeh (ch. xviii. 19 sqq.), though a larger number of the lands conquered by the Assyrians are given, for the purpose of strengthening the impression intended to be made upon Hezekiah of the irresistible character of the Assyrian arms.—To offer a successful resistance to Tirhakah and overcome him, Sennacherib wanted above all things a firm footing in Judah; and for this the possession of Jerusalem was of the greatest importance, since it would both cover his back and secure his retreat. Fortifications like Lachish and Libnah could be quickly taken by a violent assault. But

¹ According to Jnl. Afric. (in Syncell. i. p. 139, ed. Dind.) he reigned eighteen years, according to Euseb. (in Syncell. p. 140) twenty years. Both statements are incorrect; for, according to an Apis-stele published by Mariette, the birth of an Apis who died in the twentieth year of Psammetichus fell in the twenty-sixth year of Tirhakah, so that the reign of Tirhakah may be supposed to have lasted twenty-eight years (see Brugsch, *l.c.* p. 247). But the chronological conclusions respecting the date of his reign are very uncertain. Whereas M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 72) fixes his expedition against Sennacherib in the thirty-seventh *ær. Nab.*, i.e. 710 B.C., and the commencement of his reign over Egypt in 45 *ær. Nab.*, i.e. 702 B.C., and assumes that he marched against Sennacherib before he was king of Egypt, which is apparently favoured by the epithet king of Cush, not of Egypt; Brugsch (*l.c.* p. 292) has given the year 693 B.C. as the commencement of his reign. It is obvious that this statement is irreconcilable with the O. T. chronology, since the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, in which Sennacherib invaded Judah, corresponds to the year 714 or 713 B.C. These diversities simply confirm our remark (p. 411), that the chronological data as to the kings of Egypt before Psammetichus cannot lay any claim to historical certainty. For an attempt to solve this discrepancy see M. v. Niebuhr, pp. 458 sqq.

it was very different with Jerusalem. Salmanasar had stood before Samaria for three years before he was able to conquer it; and Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem for two years before the city was starved out and it was possible to take it (ch. xxv. 1 sqq.). But as Tirhakah was approaching, Sennacherib had no time now for so tedious a siege. He therefore endeavoured to induce Hezekiah to surrender the city quietly by a boastful description of his own power. Instead of *וַיִּשְׁלַח* (ver. 9), we have in Isaiah *וַיִּשְׁמַע וַיִּשְׁלַח*, "when he heard this he sent," which is probably the more original, and indicates that when Sennacherib received the intelligence he sent at once (Drechsler).—Ver. 10. *אַל תִּשְׁיָאֵךְ*: "let not thy God deceive thee," i.e. do not allow yourself to be deceived by your confidence in your God. *לֹא־אֶמְנָה*, to say, i.e. to think or believe, that Jerusalem will not be given, etc. To shatter this confidence, Sennacherib reminds him of the deeds of the Assyrian kings. *לְהַחֲרִיבֵם*, to ban them, i.e. by smiting them with the ban. The verb *הַחֲרִיב* is chosen with emphasis, to express the unsparing destruction. *וְהִצַּלְתָּ הַנֶּצֶל*: and thou shouldst be saved?—a question implying a strong negative.—Ver. 12. "Have the gods of the nations delivered them?" *אֹתָם* is not a pronoun used in anticipation of the object, which follows in *נִזְוֹן וְנִזְוֹן* (Thenius), but refers to *בְּלִי-הַמְּאֲרָצוֹת* in ver. 11, a specification of which is given in the following enumeration. *Gozan* may be the province of *Gauzanitis* in Mesopotamia, but it may just as well be the country of *Gauzania* on the other side of the Tigris (see at ch. xvii. 6). The combination with *Haran* does not force us to the first assumption, since the list is not a geographical but a historical one.—*Haran* (*Charan*), i.e. the *Carra* of the Greeks and Romans, where Abraham's father Terah died, a place in northern Mesopotamia (see at Gen. xi. 31), is probably not merely the city here, but the country in which the city stood.—*Receph* (*רֶצֶף*), the Arabic *رَصَافَة*, a very widespread name, since Jakut gives nine cities of this name in his Geographical Lexicon, is probably the most celebrated of the cities of that name, the *Rusapha* of Syria, called *Ῥησάφῃ* in Ptol. v. 15, in Palmyrene, on the road from Racca to Emesa, a day's journey from the Euphrates (cf. Ges. *Thes.* p. 1308).—"The sons of *Eden*, which (were) in *Telassar*," were evidently a tribe whose chief settlement was in Telassar. By *עֵדֶן* we might understand the *בֵּית-עֵדֶן* of Amos i. 5, a city in a pleasant

region of Syria, called *Παράδεισος* by Ptol. (v. 15), since there is still a village called *Ehden* in that locality (cf. Burckhardt, *Syr.* p. 66, and v. Schubert, *Reise*, iii. p. 366), if we could only discover *Telassar* in the neighbourhood, and if the village of Ehden could be identified with *Παράδεισος* and the *Eden* of the Bible, as is done even by Gesenius on Burckhardt, p. 492, and *Thea.* p. 195; but this *Ehden* is spelt اهدن in Arabic, and is not to be associated with תל (see Rob. *Bibl. Res.* pp. 586, 587). Moreover the *Thelscar* near Damascus (in the *Itin. Ant.* p. 196, ed. Wess.) is too unlike *Telassar* to come into consideration. There is more to be said in favour of the identification of our תל with the Assyrian *Eden*, which is mentioned in Ezek. xxvii. 23 along with *Haran* and *Calneh* as an important place for trade, although its position cannot be more certainly defined; and neither the comparison with the tract of land called مَعْدَن, *Maadon*, which Assemani (*Biblioth. or.* ii. p. 224) places in Mesopotamia, towards the Tigris, in the present province of Diarbekr (Ges., *Win.*), nor the conjecture of Knobel that the tribe-name *Eden* may very probably have been preserved in the large but very dilapidated village of *Adana* or *Adna*, some distance to the north of Bagdad (Ker Porter, *Journey*, ii. p. 355, and Ritter, *Erdk.* ix. p. 493), can be established as even a probability. תלסר, *Telassar*, is also quite unknown. The name applies very well to *Thelser* on the eastern side of the Tigris (*Tab. Pent.* xi. e), where even the later Targums on Gen. x. 12 have placed it, interpreting Nimrod's *Resen* by תלסר, תלסר, though Knobel opposes this on the ground that a place in Assyria proper is unsuitable in such a passage as this, where the Assyrian feats of war outside Assyria itself are enumerated. Movers (*Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 251) conjectures that the place referred to is *Thelassar* in *Terodon*, a leading emporium for Arabian wares on the Persian Gulf, and supposes that *Terodon* has sprung from *Teledon* with the Persian pronunciation of the תל, which is very frequent in the names of Mesopotamian cities. This conjecture is at any rate a more natural one than that of Knobel on Isa. xxxvii. 12, that the place mentioned in Assemani (*Bib. or.* iii. 2, p. 870), تل بصرمر, *Tel* on the *Szarszar*, to the west of the present Bagdad, is intended.—With regard to the places named in ver. 13, see at ch. xviii. 34.

Vers. 14-19. *Hezekiah's prayer*.—Ver. 14. Hezekiah took the letter, read it, went into the temple and spread it out before Jehovah, to lay open its contents before God. The contents of the letter are given in vers. 10-13 in the form of the message which the ambassadors delivered to Hezekiah from their king, because the ambassadors communicated to Hezekiah by word of mouth the essential contents of the writing which they conveyed, and simply handed him the letter as a confirmation of their words. כְּפָרִים, like *litteræ*, means a letter; hence the singular suffix attached to וַיִּפְרֹשֶׁהוּ, whereas in the case of וַיִּקְרְאוּ, which stands nearer, the suffix follows the number of the noun to which it refers. The spreading out of the letter before God was an embodiment of the wish, which sprang from a child-like and believing trust, that the Lord would notice and punish that defiance of the living God which it contained. What Hezekiah meant by this action he expressed in the following prayer.—Ver. 15. In opposition to the delusion of the Assyrians, he describes Jehovah, the God of Israel, as the only God of all the kingdoms of the earth, since He was the Creator of heaven and earth. יְשֵׁב הַכְרֻבִּים (see at 1 Sam. iv. 4 and Ex. xxv. 22) indicates the covenant-relation into which Jehovah, the almighty Creator and Ruler of the whole world, had entered towards Israel. As the covenant God who was enthroned above the cherubim the Lord was bound to help His people, if they turned to Him with faith in the time of their distress and entreated His assistance; and as the only God of all the world He had the power to help. In Isaiah, עֲבָדוֹת, which is very rare in historical prose, but very common in prophetic addresses, is added to the name יְהוָה, and thus Jehovah at the very outset is addressed as the God of the universe. On the meaning of עֲבָדוֹת, see at 1 Sam. i. 3. On אֲמַתָּה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים, see 2 Sam. vii. 28 and 1 Kings xviii. 39.—Ver. 16. The accumulation of the words, “bow down Thine ear, Jehovah, and hear; open, Jehovah, Thine eyes and see, and hear the words,” etc., indicates the earnestness and importunity of the prayer. The plural עֵינֶיךָ by the side of the singular אָזְנוֹךָ is the correct reading, since the expression “to incline the ear” is constantly met with (Ps. xvii. 6, xxxi. 3, xlv. 11, etc.); and even in the plural, “incline ye your ear” (Ps. lxxviii. 1; Isa. lv. 3), and on the other hand “to open the eyes” (Job xxvii. 19; Prov. xx. 13; Zech. xii. 4; Dan. ix. 18), because a man always opens both eyes

to see anything, whereas he turns one ear to a person speaking. The עֲיָר of Isaiah is also plural, though written defectively, as the Masora has already observed. The suffix in עֲיָר, which is wanting in Isaiah, belongs to אֲשֶׁר, and refers with this to דְּבָרִי in the sense of speech: the speech which Sennacherib had made in his letter.—Vers. 17, 18. After the challenge, to observe the blasphemies of Sennacherib, Hezekiah mentions the fact that the Assyrians have really devastated all lands, and therefore that it is not without ground that they boast of their mighty power; but he finds the explanation of this in the impotence and nothingness of the gods of the heathen. אֱמֻנָם, truly, indeed—the kings of Asshur have devastated the nations and their land. Instead of this we find in Isaiah: “they have devastated all lands and their (own) land”—which is evidently the more difficult and also the more original reading, and has been altered in our account, because the thought that the Assyrians had devastated their own land by making war upon other lands, that is to say, had depopulated it and thereby laid it waste, was not easy to understand. “And have cast their gods into the fire, for they are not gods, but works of human hands, wood and stone, and have thus destroyed them.” Hezekiah does not mention this as a sign of the recklessness of the Assyrians (Knobel), but, because Sennacherib had boasted that the gods of no nation had been able to resist him (vers. 12, 13), to put this fact in the right light, and attach thereto the prayer that Jehovah, by granting deliverance, would make known to all the kingdoms of the earth that He alone was God. Instead of וְיָדַעַת we have in Isaiah וְיָדַעְתָּ, the inf. absol.; in this connection the more difficult and more genuine reading. This also applies to the omission of אֱלֹהִים (ver. 19b) in Isa. xxxvii. 20, since the use of *Jehovah* as a predicate, “that Thou alone art Jehovah,” is very rare, and has therefore been misunderstood even by Gesenius. By the introduction of *Elohim*, the thought “that Thou Jehovah art God alone” is simplified.

Vers. 20–34. *The divine promise.*—Vers. 20, 21. When Hezekiah had prayed, the prophet Isaiah received a divine revelation with regard to the hearing of this prayer, which he sent, i.e. caused to be handed over, to the king. שְׁמַעְתָּ (ver. 21) is omitted in Isaiah, so that אֲשֶׁר הִתְפַּלֵּלְתָּ יְיָ is to be taken in the sense of “with regard to that which thou hast prayed to me,” whilst שְׁמַעְתָּ (I have heard) elucidates the thought and

simplifies the construction. The word of the Lord announced to the king, (1) the shameful retreat of Sennacherib as a just retribution for his mockery of the living God (vers. 21-28; Isa. xxxvii. 22-29); (2) the confirmation of this assurance through the indication of a sign by which Hezekiah was to recognise the deliverance of Jerusalem (vers. 29-31; Isa. xxxvii. 30-32), and through the distinct promise, that the Assyrian would neither come into the city nor besiege it, because the Lord was sheltering it (vers. 32-34; Isa. xxxvii. 33-35). In the first part the words are addressed with poetic vivacity directly to Sennacherib, and scourge his haughty boastings by pointing to the ridicule and scorn which would follow him on his departure from the land.—Ver. 21. “The virgin daughter Zion despises thee, the daughter Jerusalem shakes the head behind thee.” By daughter Zion, daughter Jerusalem, we are not to understand the inhabitants of Zion, or of Jerusalem, as though בַּת stood for בָּנִים or בָּנִי (Ges., Hitzig, and others); but the city itself with its inhabitants is pictorially personified as a daughter and virgin, and the construct state בַּת־צִיּוֹן is to be taken, like נָהָר בָּתֵּר, as in apposition: “daughter Zion,” not daughter of Zion (*vid.* Ges. § 116, 5; Ewald, § 287, e). Even in the case of בַּת־יִשְׂרָאֵל the construct state expresses simply the relation of apposition. Zion is called a “virgin” as being an inviolable city to the Assyrians, *i.e.* one which they cannot conquer. Shaking the head is a gesture denoting derision and pleasure at another’s misfortune (*cf.* Ps. xxii. 8, cix. 25, etc.). “Behind thee,” *i.e.* after thee as thou goest away, is placed first as a pictorial feature for the sake of emphasis.—Vers. 22, 23. This derision falls upon the Assyrian, for having blasphemed the Lord God by his foolish boasting about his irresistible power. “Whom hast thou despised and blasphemed, and against whom hast thou lifted up the voice? and thou liftest up thine eyes against the Holy One of Israel.” Lifting up the voice refers to the tone of threatening assumption, in which Rabshakeh and Sennacherib had spoken. Lifting up the eyes on high, *i.e.* to the heavens, signifies simply looking up to the sky (*cf.* Isa. xl. 26), not “directing proud looks against God” (Ges.). Still less is מָרוֹם to be taken adverbially in the sense of haughtily, as Thenius and Knobel suppose. The bad sense of proud arrogance lies in the words which follow, “against the Holy One of Israel,” or in the case of Isaiah, where אֵל stands for אֱלֹהִים, in the

context, viz. the parallelism of the members. God is called the Holy One of Israel as He who manifests His holiness in and upon Israel. This title of the Deity is one of the peculiarities of Isaiah's range of thought, although it originated with Asaph (Ps. lxxviii. 41; see at Isa. i. 4). This insult to the holy God consisted in the fact that Sennacherib had said through his servants (vers. 23, 24): "With my chariots upon chariots I have ascended the height of the mountains, the uttermost part of Lebanon, so that I felled the tallness of its cedars, the choice of its cypresses, and came to the shelter of its border, to the forest of its orchard. I have dug and drunk strange water, so that I dried up all the rivers of Egypt with the sole of my feet." The words put into the mouth of the Assyrian are expressive of the feeling which underlay all his blasphemies (Drechsler). The two verses are kept quite uniform, the second hemistich in both cases expressing the result of the first, that is to say, what the Assyrian intended still further to perform after having accomplished what is stated in the first hemistich. When he has ascended the heights of Lebanon, he devastates the glorious trees of the mountain. Consequently in ver. 24 the drying up of the Nile of Egypt is to be taken as the result of the digging of wells in the parched desert; in other words, it is to be interpreted as descriptive of the devastation of Egypt, whose whole fertility depended upon its being watered by the Nile and its canals. We cannot therefore take these verses exactly as Drechsler does; that is to say, we cannot assume that the Assyrian is speaking in the first hemistichs of both verses of what he (not necessarily Sennacherib himself, but one of his predecessors) has actually performed. For even if the ascent of the uttermost heights of Lebanon had been performed by one of the kings of Assyria, there is no historical evidence whatever that Sennacherib or one of his predecessors had already forced his way into Egypt. The words are therefore to be understood in a figurative sense, as an individualizing picture of the conquests which the Assyrians had already accomplished, and those which they were still intending to effect; and this assumption does not necessarily exhibit Sennacherib "as a mere braggart, who boastfully heaps up in ridiculous hyperbole an enumeration of the things which he means to perform" (Drechsler). For if the Assyrian had not ascended with the whole multitude of his war-chariots to the loftiest summits of

Lebanon, to fell its cedars and its cypresses, Lebanon had set no bounds to his plans of conquest, so that Sennacherib might very well represent his forcing his way into Canaan as an ascent of the lofty peaks of this mountain range. Lebanon is mentioned, partly as a range of mountains that was quite inaccessible to war-chariots, and partly as the northern defence of the land of Canaan, through the conquest of which one made himself lord of the land. And so far as Lebanon is used synecdochically for the land of which it formed the defence, the hewing down of its cedars and cypresses, those glorious witnesses of the creation of God, denotes the devastation of the whole land, with all its glorious works of nature and of human hands. The chief strength of the early Asiatic conquerors consisted in the multitude of their war-chariots: they are therefore brought into consideration simply as signs of vast military resources; the fact that they could only be used on level ground being therefore disregarded. The *Chethib* רֶכֶב רֶכֶב, "my chariots upon chariots," is used poetically for an innumerable multitude of chariots, as גֹּבַהּ גֹּבַהּ for an innumerable host of locusts (Nah. iii. 17), and is more original than the *Keri* רֶכֶב רֶכֶב, the multitude of my chariots, which simply follows Isaiah. The "height of the mountains" is more precisely defined by the emphatic לְבָנוֹן יֶרֶבֶת, the uttermost sides, i.e. the loftiest heights, of Lebanon, just as יֶרֶבֶת בֹּר in Isa. xiv. 15 and Ezek. xxxii. 23 are the uttermost depths of Sheol. קוֹמַת אֲרָצִי, his tallest cedars. מִבְּחֹר בְּרִשְׁתִּי, his most select or finest cypresses. מֶלֶךְ קֵצָה, for which Isaiah has the more usual קֵצוֹ, "the height of his end," is the loftiest point of Lebanon on which a man can rest, not a lodging built on the highest point of Lebanon (Cler., Vittr., Ros.). יַעַר בְּרִמְלוֹ, the forest of his orchard, i.e. the forest resembling an orchard. The reference is to the celebrated cedar-forest between the loftiest peaks of Lebanon at the village of *Bjerreh* (see at 1 Kings v. 20).—Ver. 24 refers to the intended conquest of Egypt. Just as Lebanon could not stop the expeditions of the Assyrians, or keep them back from the conquest of the land of Canaan, so the desert of *et Tih*, which separated Egypt from Asia, notwithstanding its want of water (cf. Herod. iii. 5; Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 262), was no hindrance to him, which could prevent his forcing his way through it and laying Egypt waste. The digging of water is, of course, not merely "a reopening of the wells that had

been choked with rubbish, and the cisterns that had been covered up before the approaching enemy" (Thenius), but the digging of wells in the waterless desert. מֵיִם יָרִים, strange water, is not merely water belonging to others, but water not belonging to this soil (Drechsler), i.e. water supplied by a region which had none at other times. By the perfects the thing is represented as already done, as exposed to no doubt whatever; we must bear in mind, however, that the desert of et Tih is not expressly named, but the expression is couched in such general terms, that we may also assume that it includes what the Assyrian had really effected in his expeditions through similar regions. The drying up of the rivers with the soles of the feet is a hyperbolical expression denoting the omnipotence with which the Assyrian rules over the earth. Just as he digs water in the desert where no water is to be had, so does he annihilate it where mighty rivers exist.¹ יְאֹרִי are the arms and canals of the *Yeor*, i.e. of the Nile. מְצֹר, a rhetorical epithet for Egypt, used not only here, but also in Isa. xix. 6 and Mic. vii. 12.—Vers. 25 sqq. To this foolish boasting the prophet opposes the divine purpose which had been formed long ago, and according to which the Assyrian, without knowing it or being willing to acknowledge it, had acted simply as the instrument of the Lord, who had given him the power to destroy, but who would soon restrain his ranting against Him, the true God.—Ver. 25. "Hast thou not heard? Long ago have I done this, from the days of olden time have I formed it! Now have I brought it to pass, that fortified cities should be to be destroyed into waste heaps." Ver. 26. "And their inhabitants, short of hand, were dismayed and put to shame; they were herb of the field and green of the turf, grass of the roofs and blighted corn before the stalk." Ver. 27. "And thy sitting and thy going out and thy coming I know, and thy raging against me." Ver. 28. "Because of thy raging against me and thy safety, which rise up into my ears, I put my ring into thy

¹ Compare the similar boasting of Alarich, already quoted by earlier commentators, in Claudian, *de bello Geth.* v. 526 sqq.:

cum cesserit omnis
Obsequiis natura meis? subsidere nostris
Sub pedibus montes, arescere vidimus amnes.

v. 532. *Fregi Alpes, galeis Padum victricibus hausi.*

nose, and my bridle into thy lips, and bring thee back by the way by which thou hast come." The words are still addressed to the Assyrian, of whom the Lord inquires whether he does not know that the destructive deeds performed by him had been determined very long before. "Hast thou not heard?" namely, what follows, what the Lord had long ago made known through His prophets in Judah (cf. Isa. vii. 7-9, xvi. 17-20, viii. 1-4 and 7, etc.). לְמִרְחֹק, from distant time have I done it, etc., refers to the divine ordering and governing of the events of the universe, which God has purposed and established from the very beginning of time. The pronoun אָתָּה, and the suffixes attached to יִצְרֶתִּיָּהּ and הִבִּיאֹתֶיהָ, do not refer with vague generality to the substance of vers. 23 and 24, i.e. to the boastings of the Assyrians quoted there (Drechsler), but to יִתְּהִי לְהָשׁוֹת, i.e. to the conquests and devastations which the Assyrian had really effected. The ׀ before יִצְרֶתִּיָּהּ introduces the apodosis, as is frequently the case after a preceding definition of time (cf. Ges. § 155, a). יִתְּהִי לְהָשׁוֹת, "that it may be to destroy" (לְהָשׁוֹת, a contraction of לְהַשְׁמֹת, Keri and Isaiah, from שָׂאָה; see Ewald, § 73, c, and 245, b), i.e. that it shall be destroyed,—according to a turn which is very common in Isaiah, like הָיָה לְבָעֵר, it is to burn = it shall be burned (cf. Isa. v. 5, vi. 13, xlv. 15, and Ewald, § 237, c). The rendering given by Ges., Knob., Then., and others, "that thou mayest be for destruction," is at variance with this usage.—Ver. 26 is closely connected, so far as the sense is concerned, with the last clause of ver. 25, but in form it is only loosely attached: "and their inhabitants were," instead of "that their inhabitants might be." קִצְרֵי יָד, of short hand, i.e. without power to offer a successful resistance (cf. Num. xi. 23, and Isa. i. 2, lix. 1).—They were herbage of the field, etc., just as perishable as the herbage, grass, etc., which quickly fade away (cf. Ps. xxxvii. 2, xc. 5, 6; Isa. xl. 6). The grass of the roofs fades still more quickly, because it cannot strike deep roots (cf. Ps. cxxix. 6). Blighted corn before the stalk, i.e. corn which is blighted and withered up, before it shoots up into a stalk. In Isaiah we have שְׂרִמָּה instead of שְׂרִפָּה, with a change of the labials, probably for the purpose of preserving an assonance with קָפָה, which must not therefore be altered into שְׂרִמָּה. The thought in the two verses is this: The Assyrian does not owe his victories and conquests to his irresistible might, but purely to the fact that God had long ago resolved to deliver the nations into his hands, so that

it was possible to overcome them without their being able to offer any resistance. This the Assyrian had not perceived, but in his daring pride had exalted himself above the living God. This conduct of his the Lord was well acquainted with, and He would humble him for it. Sitting and going out and coming denote all the actions of a man, like sitting down and rising up in Ps. cxxxix. 2. Instead of rising up, we generally find going out and coming in (cf. Deut. xxviii. 6 and Ps. cxxi. 8). הִתְרַבֵּץ, thy raging, *commotio furibunda, quæ ex ira nascitur superbiæ mixta* (Vitr.). We must repeat עָלַי before שְׂאֲנִי; and עָלַי בְּאָזְנִי is to be taken in a relative sense: on account of thy self-security, which has come to my ears. בְּטַח is the security of the ungodly which springs from the feeling of great superiority in power. The figurative words, "I put my ring into thy nose," are taken from the custom of restraining wild animals, such as lions (Ezek. xix. 4) and other wild beasts (Ezek. xxix. 4 and Isa. xxx. 28), in this manner. For "the bridle in the lips" of ungovernable horses, see Ps. xxxii. 9. To lead a person back by the way by which he had come, i.e. to lead him back disappointed, without having reached the goal that he set before him.

To confirm what he had said, the prophet gave to Hezekiah a sign (vers. 29 sqq.): "Eat this year what groweth in the fallow, and in the second year what groweth wild, and in the third year sow and reap and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof." That the words are not addressed to the king of Assyria as in ver. 28, but to Hezekiah, is evident from their contents. This sudden change in the person addressed may be explained from the fact that from ver. 29 the words contain a perfectly fresh train of thought. For עָלֶיךָ הָאֵשׁ see Ex. iii. 12, 1 Sam. ii. 34 and xiv. 10; also Jer. xlv. 29. In all these passages אֵשׁ, σημεῖον, is not a (supernatural) wonder, a סִימָה as in 1 Kings xiii. 3, but consists simply in the prediction of natural events, which serve as credentials to a prediction, whereas in Isa. vii. 14 and xxxviii. 7 a miracle is given as an אֵשׁ. The inf. abs. אָכַל is not used for the pret. (Ges., Then., and others), but for the imperf. or fut.: "one will eat." הַשָּׁנָה, the (present) year. קִמְצָה signifies the corn which springs up and grows from the grains that have been shaken out the previous year (Lev. xxv. 5, 11). קִמְצָה (in Isa. שְׂחִים) is explained by Abulw. as signifying the corn which springs up again from the roots of what has

been sown. The etymology of the word is uncertain, so that it is impossible to decide which of the two forms is the original one. For the fact itself compare the evidence adduced in the Comm. on Lev. xxv. 7, that in Palestine and other lands two or three harvests can be reaped from one sowing.—The signs mentioned do not enable us to determine with certainty how long the Assyrians were in the land. All that can be clearly gathered from the words, "in this and the following year will they live upon that which has sprung up without any sowing," is that for two years, *i.e.* in two successive autumns, the fields could not be cultivated because the enemy had occupied the land and laid it waste. But whether the occupation lasted two years, or only a year and a little over, depends upon the time of the year at which the Assyrians entered the land. If the invasion of Judah took place in autumn, shortly before the time for sowing, and the miraculous destruction of the Assyrian forces occurred a year after about the same time, the sowing of two successive years would be prevented, and the population of Judah would be compelled to live for two years upon what had sprung up without sowing. Consequently both the prophecy of Isaiah and the fulfilment recorded in vers. 35, 36 would fall in the autumn, when the Assyrians had ruled for a whole year in the land; so that the prophet was able to say: in this year and in the second (*i.e.* the next) will they eat after-growth and wild growth; inasmuch as when he said this, the first year had not quite expired. Even if the overthrow of the Assyrians took place immediately afterwards (*cf.* ver. 35), with the extent to which they had carried out the desolation of the land, many of the inhabitants having been slain or taken prisoners, and many others having been put to flight, it would be utterly impossible in the same year to cultivate the fields and sow them, and the people would be obliged to live in the second or following year upon what had grown wild, until the harvest of the second year, when the land could be properly cultivated, or rather till the third year, when it could be reaped again.¹

The sign is followed in vers. 30, 31 by the distinct promise

¹ There is no necessity, therefore, to explain the sign here given, either by the assumption of a sabbatical year, with or without a year of jubilee following, or by supposing that the Assyrians did not depart immediately after the catastrophe described in ver. 35, but remained till after they had attempted an expedition into Egypt, or indeed by any other artificial hypothesis.

of the deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem, for which Isaiah uses the sign itself as a type. "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah will again strike roots downwards and bear fruit upwards; for from Jerusalem will go forth a remnant, and that which is escaped from Mount Zion; the zeal of Jehovah will do this." יִסְּרֵה שָׁרֵשׁ, to add roots. *i.e.* to strike fresh roots. The meaning is, that Judah will not succumb to this judgment. The remnant of the nation that has escaped from destruction by the Assyrians will once more grow and flourish vigorously; for from Jerusalem will a rescued remnant go forth. בְּלִיטָה denotes those who have escaped destruction by the judgment (cf. Isa. iv. 2, x. 20, etc.). The deliverance was attached to Jerusalem or to Mount Zion, not so much because the power of the Assyrians was to be destroyed before the gates of Jerusalem, as because of the greater importance which Jerusalem and Mount Zion, as the centre of the kingdom of God, the seat of the God-King, possessed in relation to the covenant-nation, so that, according to Isa. ii. 3, it was thence that the Messianic salvation was also to proceed. This deliverance is traced to the zeal of the Lord on behalf of His people and against His foes (see at Ex. xx. 5), like the coming of the Messiah in Isa. ix. 6 to establish an everlasting kingdom of peace and righteousness. The deliverance of Judah out of the power of Asshur was a prelude and type of the deliverance of the people of God by the Messiah out of the power of all that was ungodly. The וְצִבְאוֹתָיו of Isaiah is omitted after יְהוָה, just as in ver. 15; though here it is supplied by the Masora as *Keri*. —In vers. 32–34 Isaiah concludes by announcing that Sennacherib will not come to Jerusalem, nor even shoot at the city and besiege it, but will return disappointed, because the Lord will defend and save the city for the sake of His promise. The result of the whole prophecy is introduced with לָכֵן: therefore, because this is how the matter stands, *viz.* as explained in what precedes. אֶל-מֶלֶךְ, with regard to the king, as in ver. 20. לֹא יִקְרָאָהּ בְּמִגְדָּן, "he will not attack it with a shield," *i.e.* will not advance with shields to make an attack upon it. קָרַם with a double accusative, as in Ps. xxi. 4. It only occurs here in a hostile sense: to come against, as in Ps. xviii. 19, *i.e.* to advance against a city, to storm it. The four clauses of the verse stand in a graduated relation to one another: not to take, not even to shoot at and attack, yea, not even to besiege the city, will he

come. In ver. 33*a* we have ver. 28*b* taken up again, and ver. 32*a* is repeated in ver. 33*b* for the purpose of strengthening the promise. Instead of **בְּיָבוֹא בָּא** we have in Isaiah **בָּא בָּא**: "by which he has come." The perfect is actually more exact, and the imperfect may be explained from the fact that Sennacherib was at that very time advancing against Jerusalem. In ver. 34 we have **לְיְהוָה** instead of the **עַל יְהוָה** of Isaiah; **עַל** is more correct than **לְ**. "For my sake," as Hezekiah had prayed in ver. 19; and "for my servant David's sake," because Jehovah, as the unchangeably true One, must fulfil the promise which He gave to David (see at 1 Kings xi. 13).

Vers. 35-37. *The fulfilment of the divine promise.*—Ver. 35. "It came to pass in that night, that the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the army of the Assyrian 185,000 men; and when they (those that were left, including the king) rose up in the morning, behold there were they all (*i.e.* all who had perished) dead corpses," *i.e.* they had died in their sleep. **מֵתִים** is added to strengthen **בְּנִיִּים**: lifeless corpses. **בְּלֵילָה הַהִיא** is in all probability the night following the day on which Isaiah had foretold to Hezekiah the deliverance of Jerusalem. Where the Assyrian army was posted at the time when this terrible stroke fell upon it is not stated, since the account is restricted to the principal fact. One portion of it was probably still before Jerusalem; the remainder were either in front of Libnah (ver. 8), or marching against Jerusalem. From the fact that Sennacherib's second embassy (vers. 9 sqq.) was not accompanied by a body of troops, it by no means follows that the large army which had come with the first embassy (ch. xviii. 17) had withdrawn again, or had even removed to Libnah on the return of Rabshakeh to his king (ch. xix. 8). The very opposite may be inferred with much greater justice from ch. xix. 32. And the smiting of 185,000 men by an angel of the Lord by no means presupposes that the whole of Sennacherib's army was concentrated at one spot. The blow could certainly fall upon the Assyrians wherever they were standing or were encamped. The "angel of the Lord" is the same angel that smote as **מַכֵּה הָרִאשׁוֹן** the first-born of Egypt (Ex. xii. 23, compared with vers. 12 and 13), and inflicted the pestilence upon Israel after the numbering of the people by David (2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16). The last passage renders the conjecture a very probable one, that the slaying of the Assyrians was also effected by a terrible pestilence. But

the number of the persons slain—185,000 in a single night—so immensely surpasses the effects even of the most terrible plagues, that this fact cannot be interpreted naturally; and the deniers of miracle have therefore felt obliged to do violence to the text, and to pronounce either the statement that it was “the same night” or the number of the slain a mythical exaggeration.¹—Ver. 36. This divine judgment compelled Sennacherib to retreat without delay, and to return to Nineveh, as Isaiah, 28 and 32, had predicted. The heaping up of the verbs: “he decamped, departed, and returned,” expresses the hurry of the march home. וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּנִינְוֵה, “he sate, i.e. remained, in Nineveh,” implies not merely that Sennacherib lived for some time after his return, but also that he did not undertake any fresh expedition against Judah. On *Nineveh* see at Gen. x. 11.—Ver. 37 contains an account of Sennacherib’s death. When he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer slew him, and fled into the land of Ararat, and his son Esarhaddon became king in his stead. With regard to נִסְרוֹךְ, *Nisroch*, all that seems to be firmly established is that he was an eagle-deity, and represented by the eagle- or vulture-headed human figure with wings, which is frequently depicted upon the Assyrian monuments, “not only in colossal proportions upon the walls and watching the portals of the rooms, but also constantly in the groups upon the embroidered robes. When it

¹ The assertion of Thénius, that vers. 35–37 are borrowed from a different source from ch. xviii. 13–19, 34 and xx. 1–19, rests upon purely arbitrary suppositions and groundless assumptions, and is only made in the interest of the mythical interpretation of the miracle. And his conclusion, that “since the catastrophe was evidently (?) occasioned by the sudden breaking out of a pestilence, the scene of it was no doubt the pestilential Egypt,” is just as unfounded,—as if Egypt were the only land in which a pestilence could suddenly have broken out.—The account given by Herodotus (ii. 141), that on the prayer of king *Sethon*, a priest of Vulcan, the deity promised him victory over the great advancing army of Sennacherib, and that during the night mice spread among the enemy (i.e. in the Assyrian camp at Pelusium), and ate up the quivers and bows, and the leather straps of the shields, so that the next morning they were obliged to flee without their weapons, and many were cut down, is simply a legendary imitation of our account, i.e. an Egyptian variation of the defeat of Sennacherib in Judah. The eating up of the Assyrian weapons by mice is merely the explanation given to Herodotus by the Egyptian priests of the hieroglyphical legend on the standing figure of *Sethos* at Memphis, from which we cannot even gather the historical fact that Sennacherib really advanced as far as Pelusium.

is introduced in this way, we see it constantly fighting with other mythical animals, such as human-headed oxen or lions; and in these conflicts it always appears to be victorious," from which we may infer that it was a type of the supreme deity (see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*). The eagle was worshipped as a god by the Arabs (Pococke, *Specim.* pp. 94, 199), was regarded as sacred to *Melkarth* by the Phœnicians (*Nonnus*, *Dionys.* xl. 495, 528), and, according to a statement of Philo, *Bybl.* (in Euseb. *Præpar. evang.* i. 10), that Zoroaster taught that the supreme deity was represented with an eagle's head, it was also a symbol of Ormuzd among the Persians; consequently Movers (*Phôniz.* i. pp. 68, 506, 507) regards *Nisroch* as the supreme deity of the Assyrians. It is not improbable that it was also connected with the constellation of the eagle (see Ideler, *Ursprung der Sternnamen*, p. 416). On the other hand, the current interpretation of the name from נִשְׂר (נִשְׂר, Chald.;

نسر, Arab.), eagle, vulture, with the Persian adjective termination *ok* or *ach*, is very doubtful, not merely on account of the נ in נִשְׂר, but chiefly because this name does not occur in Assyrian, but simply *Asar*, *Assar*, and *Asarak* as the name of a deity which is met with in many Assyrian proper names. The last is also adopted by the LXX., who (*ed. Aldin. Compl.*) have rendered נִשְׂר by Ἀσαράχ in Isaiah, and Ἐσοράχ (*cod. Vatic.*) in 2 Kings, by the side of which the various readings Μεσεράχ in our text (*cod. Vat.*) and Νασαράχ in Isaiah are evidently secondary readings emended from the Hebrew, since Josephus (*Ant.* x. 1, 5) has the form Ἀπαρκής, which is merely somewhat "Græcized." The meaning of these names is still in obscurity, even if there should be some foundation for the assumption that *Assar* belongs to the same root as the name of the people and land, *Asshur*. The connection between the form *Nisroch* and *Asarak* is also still obscure. Compare the collection which J. G. Müller has made of the different conjectures concerning this deity in the *Art. Nisroch* in Herzog's *Cycl.*—*Adrammelech*, according to ch. xvii. 31, was the name of a deity of Sepharvaim, which was here borne by the king's son. שָׂרָאצֶר, *Sharezer*, is said to mean "prince of fire," and was probably also borrowed from a deity. בְּנֵי (Isa.) is wanting in our text, but is supplied by the Masora in the *Keri*. The "land of *Ararat*" was a portion of the high land of Armenia; according to Moses v. Chorene, the central portion of it with

the mountains of the same name (see at Gen. viii. 4). The slaying of Sennacherib is also confirmed by Alex. Polyhistor, or rather Berosus (in Euseb. *Chron. Armen.* i. p. 43), who simply names, however, a son *Arđumusanus* as having committed the murder, and merely mentions a second *Asordanius* as viceroy of Babylon.¹ The identity of the latter with *Esarhaddon* is beyond all doubt. The name ܐܫܪܚܕܢ, *Esar-cha-don*, consisting of two parts with the guttural inserted, the usual termination in Assyrian and Babylonian, *Assar-ach*, is spelt 'Ασσορδάν in the LXX., Σαχερδονός in Tobit—probably formed from 'Ασσερ-χ-δονοσορ by a transposition of the letters,—by Josephus 'Ασσοραρχόδδας, by Berosus (in the *armen. Euseb.*) *Asordanes*, by Abyden. *ibid.* *Azerdis*, in the *Canon Ptol.* 'Ασπαράδωος, and lastly in Ezra iv. 10 mutilated into ܐܫܢܦܐܪ, *Osnappar* (Chald.), and in the LXX. 'Ασσεναφάρ; upon the Assyrian monuments, according to Oppert, *Assur-akh-iddin* (cf. M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* p. 38). The length of his reign is uncertain. The statements of Berosus, that he was first of all viceroy of Babylon, and then for eight years king of Assyria, and that of the *Canon Ptol.*, that he reigned for thirteen years in Babylon, are decidedly incorrect. Brandis (*Rerum Assy. tempora emend.* p. 41) conjectures that he reigned twenty-eight years, but in his work *Ueber den histor. Gewinn*, pp. 73, 74, he suggests seventeen years. M. v. Niebuhr (*ut sup.* p. 77), on the other hand, reckons his reign at twenty-four years.

CHAP. XX. HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY. MERODACH
BALADAN'S EMBASSY. DEATH OF HEZEKIAH.

Vers. 1–11. HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY.—Compare the parallel account in Isa. xxxviii. with Hezekiah's psalm of thanksgiving for his recovery (vers. 9–20 of Isaiah).—Ver. 1. "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death." By the expression "in those days" the illness of Hezekiah is merely assigned in a general manner to the same time as the events previously described. That it did not occur after the departure

¹ With regard to the statement of Abydenus in Euseb. *l. c.* p. 53, that Sennacherib was followed by *Nergilus*, who was slain by his son *Adramelts*, who again was murdered by his brother *Azerdis*, and its connection with Berosus and the biblical account, see M. v. Niebuhr, *Geschichte Assurs*, pp. 361 sqq. *Nergilus* is probably the same person as *Sharezer*, and *Azerdis* as *Esarhaddon*.

of the Assyrians, but at the commencement of the invasion of Sennacherib, *i.e.* in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, is evident from ver. 6, namely, both from the fact that in answer to his prayer fifteen years more of life were promised him, and that he nevertheless reigned only twenty-nine years (ch. xviii. 2), and also from the fact that God promised to deliver him out of the hand of the Assyrians and to defend Jerusalem. The widespread notion that his sickness was an attack of plague, and was connected with the pestilence which had broken out in the Assyrian camp, is thereby deprived of its chief support, apart from the fact that the epithet *רִשְׁעוֹ* (ver. 7), which is applied to the sickness, does not indicate pestilence. Isaiah then called upon him to set his house in order. *צִוּ לְבֵיתְךָ*: set thy house in order, lit. command or order with regard to thy house, not declare thy (last) will to thy family' (Ges., Knob.), for *צִו* is construed with the *accus. pers.* in the sense of commanding anything, whereas here *צִו* is synonymous with *אָמַר* (2 Sam. xvii. 23). "For thou wilt die and not live;" *i.e.* thy sickness is to death, namely, without the miraculous help of God. Sickness to death in the very prime of life (Hezekiah was then in the fortieth year of his age) appeared to the godly men of the Old Testament a sign of divine displeasure. Hezekiah was therefore greatly agitated by this announcement, and sought for consolation and help in prayer. He turned his face to the wall, *sc.* of the room, not of the temple (Chald.). *i.e.* away from those who were standing round, to be able to pray more collectedly.—Ver. 3. In his prayer he appealed to his walking before the Lord in truth and with a thoroughly devoted heart, and to his acting in a manner that was well-pleasing to God, in perfect accordance with the legal standpoint of the Old Testament, which demanded of the godly righteousness of life according to the law. This did not imply by any means a self-righteous trust in his own virtue; for walking before God with a thoroughly devoted heart was impossible without faith. "And Hezekiah wept violently," not merely at the fact that he was to die without having an heir to the throne, since Manasseh was not born till three years afterwards (Joseph., Ephr. Syr., etc.), but also because he was to die in the very midst of his life, since God had promised long life to the righteous.—Vers. 4 sqq. This prayer of the godly king was answered immediately. Isaiah had not gone out of the midst of the city, when the word of

the Lord came to him to return to the king, and tell him that the Lord would cure him in three days and add fifteen years to his life, and that He would also deliver him from the power of the Assyrians and defend Jerusalem. הָעִיר הַתְּיִכָּה, the middle city, i.e. the central portion of the city, namely, the Zion city, in which the royal citadel stood. The *Keri* הָחֵר, the central court, not of the temple, but of the royal citadel, which is adopted in all the ancient versions, is nothing more than an interpretation of the עִיר as denoting the royal castle, after the analogy of ch. x. 25. The distinct assurance added to the promise "I will heal thee," viz. "on the third day thou wilt go into the house of the Lord," was intended as a pledge to the king of the promised cure. The announcement that God would add fifteen years to his life is not put into the prophet's mouth *ex eventu* (Knobel and others); for the opinion that distinct statements as to time are at variance with the nature of prophecy is merely based upon an *a priori* denial of the supernatural character of prophecy. The words, "and I will deliver thee out of the hand of the Assyrians," imply most distinctly that the Assyrian had only occupied the land and threatened Jerusalem, and had not yet withdrawn. The explanation given by Vitringa and others, that the words contain simply a promise of deliverance out of the hand of the oppressor for the next fifteen years, puts a meaning into them which they do not contain, as is clearly shown by Isa. xxxvii. 20, where this thought is expressed in a totally different manner. תְּנֹתִי עַל־הָעִיר וְנִ: as in ch. xix. 34, where the prophet repeated this divine promise in consequence of the attempt of Sennacherib to get Jerusalem into his power.—Ver. 7. Isaiah ordered a lump of figs to be laid upon the boil, and Hezekiah recovered (וַיֵּחַ: he revived again). It is of course assumed as self-evident, that Isaiah returned to the king in consequence of a divine revelation, and communicated to him the word of the Lord which he had received.¹ רֶבֶבֶת הַתְּאִנִּים is a mass consisting of compressed figs,

¹ The account is still more abridged in the text of Isaiah. In ver. 4 the precise time of the prayer is omitted; in ver. 5 the words, "behold, I will cure thee, on the third day thou shalt go into the house of the Lord;" and in ver. 6 the words, "for mine own sake and my servant David's sake." The four verses 8-11, which treat of the miraculous signs, are also very much contracted in Isaiah (vers. 7 and 8); and vers. 7 and 8 of our text are only given at the close of Hezekiah's psalm of praise in that of Isaiah (vers. 21 and 22).

which the ancients were in the habit of applying, according to many testimonies (see Celsii *Hierob.* ii. p. 373), in the case of plague-boils and abscesses of other kinds, because the fig *διαφορεῖ σκληρίας* (Dioscor.) and *ulcera aperit* (Plin.), and which is still used for softening ulcers. *רִיחַ*, an abscess, is never used in connection with plague or plague-boils, but only to denote the abscesses caused by leprosy (Job ii. 7, 8), and other abscesses of an inflammatory kind (Ex. ix. 9 sqq.). In the case of Hezekiah it is probably a carbuncle that is intended.

After the allusion to the cure and recovery of Hezekiah, we have an account in vers. 8 sqq. of the sign by which Isaiah confirmed the promise given to the king of the prolongation of his life. In the order of time the contents of ver. 7 follow ver. 11, since the prophet in all probability first of all disclosed the divine promise to the king, and then gave him the sign, and after that appointed the remedy and had it applied. At the same time, it is also quite possible that he first of all directed the lump of figs to be laid upon the boil, and then made known to him the divine promise, and guaranteed it by the sign. In this case *רִיחַ* merely anticipates the order of events. The sign which Isaiah gave to the king, at his request, consisted in the miraculous movement of the shadow backward upon the sundial of Ahaz—Ver. 9. *וְהַיָּלִל הָלַךְ*: “the shadow is gone ten degrees, if it should go back ten degrees?” The rendering, *visne umbram solarii decem gradibus progredi an . . . regredi*, which Maurer still gives after the Vulgate, *vis an ut ascendat . . . an ut revertatur*, cannot be grammatically reconciled with the perfect *הָלַךְ*, and is merely a conjecture founded upon the answer of Hezekiah.¹ According to this answer, “it is easy for the shadow to decline (*i.e.* to go farther down) ten degrees; no (*sc.* that shall not be a sign to me), but if the shadow turn ten degrees backward,” Isaiah seems to have given the king a choice as to the sign, namely, whether the shadow should go ten degrees forward or backward. But this does not necessarily follow from the words quoted. Hezekiah may have understood the prophet’s words *וְהַיָּלִל הָלַךְ* hypothetically: “has the shadow gone (advanced) ten degrees, whether it should,” etc.; and may have

¹ Hitzig and Knobel would therefore read *הָלַךְ*, though without furnishing any proofs that the inf. abs. is used for the future in the first clause of a double question, especially if the *ו* interrog. is wanting, and there is no special emphasis upon the verbal idea.

replied, the advance of the shadow would not be a sure sign to him, but only its going back.—Ver. 11. Isaiah then prayed to the Lord, and the Lord “turned back the shadow (caused it to go back) upon the sun-dial, where it had gone down, on the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward.” וַיָּשֹׁבֶה אֶת-הַצֵּל cannot be understood, as it has been by the LXX., Joseph., Syr., as referring to a flight of steps at the palace of Ahaz, which was so arranged that the shadow of an object standing near indicated the hours, but is no doubt a gnomon, a sun-dial which Ahaz may have received from Babylonia, where sun-dials were discovered (Herod. ii. 109). Nothing further can be inferred from the words with regard to its construction, since the ancients had different kinds of sun-dials (cf. Martini *Abhandlung von den Sonnenuhren der Alten*, Lpz. 1777). The word וַיָּשֹׁבֶה, steps in the literal sense, is transferred to the *scala*, which the shadow had to traverse both up and down upon the disk of the sun-dial, and is used both to denote the separate degrees of this *scala*, and also for the sum-total of these *scala*, i.e. for the sun-dial itself, without there being any necessity to assume that it was an obelisk-like pillar erected upon an elevated place with steps running round it (Knobel), or a long portable scale of twice ten steps with a gnomon (Gumpach, *Alttestl. Studien*, pp. 181 sqq.). All that follows from the descent of the shadow is that the dial of the gnomon was placed in a vertical direction; and the fact that the shadow went ten degrees down or backward, simply presupposes that the gnomon had at least twenty degrees, and therefore that the degrees indicated smaller portions of time than hours. If, then, it is stated in ver. 8b of Isaiah that the sun went back ten degrees, whereas the going back of the shadow had been previously mentioned in agreement with our text, it is self-evident that the sun stands for the shining of the sun which was visible upon the dial-plate, and which made the shadow recede. We are not, of course, to suppose that the sun in the sky and the shadow on the sun-dial went back at the same time, as Knobel assumes. So far as the miracle is concerned, the words of the text do not require that we should assume that the sun receded, or the rotation of the earth was reversed, as Eph. Syr. and others supposed, but simply affirm that there was a miraculous movement backward of the shadow upon the dial, which might be accounted for from a miraculous refraction of the rays of the sun, effected by God at the

prophet's prayer, of which slight analoga are met with in the ordinary course of nature.¹ This miraculous sign was selected as a significant one in itself, to confirm the promise of a fresh extension of life which had been given to Hezekiah by the grace of God in opposition to the natural course of things. The retrograde movement of the shadow upon the sun-dial indicated that Hezekiah's life, which had already arrived at its close by natural means, was to be put back by a miracle of divine omnipotence, so that it might continue for another series of years.

Vers. 12-19. *The Babylonian embassy, and Hezekiah's imprudence* (cf. Isa. xxxix.).—Ver. 12. "At that time Berodach Baladan, king of Babel, sent a letter and a present to Hezekiah, because he had heard that Hezekiah was sick" By *בָּעֵת הַהִיא* the arrival of these ambassadors is merely assigned in the most general manner to the period following Hezekiah's recovery. But from the object of their mission, it is evident that they did not arrive in Jerusalem till after the overthrow and departure of Sennacherib, and therefore at least half a year after Hezekiah's recovery. The ostensible reason given is, that Berodach Baladan had heard of Hezekiah's illness, and therefore sent to congratulate him on his recovery; but in 2 Chron. xxxii. 31 the further reason is mentioned, that he wished to inquire concerning the miracle upon the sun-dial. But, as Josephus has shown, the true object, no doubt, was to make sure of Hezekiah's friendship in anticipation of his intended revolt from the Assyrian rule. *Berodach Baladan*, for *Merodach Baladan* (Isa.), with the labial changed, is the same person as the *Marodach Baladan* who reigned in Babylon for six months, according to Alex. Polyhistor, or rather Berosus (Euseb. *Chron. armen.* i. pp. 42, 43), and was slain by *Elibus*, and also the same as the *Mardokempad* who reigned, according to the *Can. Ptol.*, from 26 to 38 *ær. Nab.*, i.e. from 721 to 709 B.C. The first part of the name, *מֶרְדַּךְ*, occurs in Jer. l. 2 in connection with *Bel* as the name of a Babylonian idol; and the whole name is found on a cylinder

¹ As, for example, the phenomenon quoted by several commentators, which was observed at Metz in Lothringen in the year 1703 by the prior of the convent there, P. Romuald, and other persons, viz. that the shadow of a sun-dial went back an hour and a half.—The natural explanation of the miracle which is given by Thenius, who attributes it to an eclipse of the sun, needs no refutation.—For the different opinions of the earlier theologians, see Carpzov, *Apparat. crit.* p. 351 sqq.

(in the British Museum) which contains the first expeditions of Sennacherib against Babylon and Media, and upon the inscriptions at Khorsabad spelt either *Merodak-pal-dsana* (according to Brandis, *Ueber der Gewinn*, pp. 44 and 53) or *Marduk bal iddin* (according to Oppert).¹ Instead of בִּי שָׁמַעַתָּה we have הִשְׁמַעְתָּה in Isaiah, which is not so clear, though it is probably more original; whereas the clause in Isaiah, בִּי הָלָה וְחָזַק, "that he had been sick and had become strengthened, i.e. well again," is simply an elucidation of the בִּי הָלָה וְחָזַק of our text, in which the recovery is implied in the pluperfect "had been sick."—In ver. 13 הִשְׁמַעְתָּה is apparently a copyist's error for הִשְׁמַעְתָּה of Isaiah, which many of the codd. and ancient versions have even in our text. At the same time, the construction of שָׁמַעַתָּה with עַל is also found in ch. xxii. 13.—עַל־הֵם, concerning them, i.e. the ambassadors who had brought the letter and the present. In his delight at the honour paid to him by this embassy, Hezekiah showed the ambassadors all his treasure-house, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the costly oil, and all his arsenal, etc. The literal meaning of בֵּית נָחַל is probably spice-house (Aquila, Symm., Vulg.), נָחַל being a contraction of נִחְלִיחַ in Gen. xxxvii. 25, whereas the derivation suggested from the Arabic

كَيْت, *farsit, implevit locum*, is much more wide of the mark.

The house received its name from the spices for the storing of which it was really intended, although it was also used for the storing of silver and gold. שֶׁמֶן הַזַּיִת is not fine olive oil, but, according to the Rabbins and Movers (*Phöniz.* iii. p. 227), the valuable balsam oil which was obtained in the royal gardens; for olive oil, which was obtained in all Judæa, was not stored in the treasure-chambers along with gold, silver, and perfumes, but in special storehouses (1 Chron. xxvii. 28). בְּכָל־מְמַשְׁכָּלֵי, in all his dominion, i.e. in all the district which he was able to govern or control.—The existence of such treasures, of which, according to ver. 17, the ancestors of Hezekiah had collected a very large store, at so short a period after the departure of the Assyrians, is not at variance with ch. xviii. 15, 16, according

¹ Compare M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* p. 40; and with regard to the chronological differences, on account of which many have called in question the identity of Merodach Baladan either with the *Marudach-Baladan* of Berosus or with the *Mardokempad* of the *Can. Ptol.*, see the discussion of this point at pp. 75 sqq.

to which Hezekiah had sent to Sennacherib all the silver in his treasuries, and even the gold plate upon the temple doors. For, in the first place, it is not stated that there was much silver and gold in the treasure-house, but the silver and gold are simply mentioned along with the spices ; and, secondly, Hezekiah may have kept back from Sennacherib many a valuable piece of silver or gold, and have taken off the gold plate from the temple doors, to show the ambassadors of Sennacherib, who came to receive the money demanded as compensation, that he was not in a condition to give anything more. Moreover a great deal may have flowed into the treasuries since the payment of that tribute, partly from the presents which Hezekiah received from many quarters after the overthrow of Sennacherib (2 Chron. xxxii. 23), and partly from the booty that had been collected in the camp of the Assyrians after their hurried departure. And again, the treasures which the ancestors of Hezekiah had collected (ver. 17) may not have consisted of gold and silver exactly, but of different jewels and objects of art, which could not be applied to the payment of the tribute demanded by Sennacherib. And, lastly, " we must not overlook the fact, that it answered the purpose of the reporter to crowd together as much as possible, in order to show how anxious Hezekiah was to bring out and exhibit everything whatever that could contribute to the folly" (Drechsler). Hezekiah evidently wanted to show all his glory, because the arrival of the Babylonian ambassadors had flattered his vanity. — Vers. 14 sqq. Isaiah therefore announced to him the word of the Lord, that all his treasures would one day be carried to Babel, and some even of his sons would serve as chamberlains in the palace of the king of Babel. The sin of vanity was to be punished by the carrying away of that of which his heart was proud. Isaiah did not go to Hezekiah by his own impulse, but by the direction of God. His inquiries : " What have these men said, and whence do they come to thee ?" were simply intended to lead the king to give expression to the thoughts of his heart. In the answer, " From a distant land have they come, from Babel," his vanity at the great honour that had been paid him comes clearly to light.—Ver. 18. The words, " of thy sons, which shall proceed from thee, which thou shalt beget," do not necessarily refer to actual sons, but only to *lineal* descendants. The *Chethib* חֶתִּיב, " will one take," is to be preferred to the חֶתֶּיב of Isaiah and the

Keri, as being the more difficult reading. כְּרִיָּים, chamberlains, courtiers, not necessarily eunuchs, as in 1 Sam. viii. 15, etc.—For the fulfilment of this threat see Dan. i. 2 sqq.—Ver. 19. The first part of Hezekiah's reply, "Good is the word of Jehovah, which thou hast spoken," is an expression of submission to the will of the Lord, like Eli's answer in 1 Sam. iii. 18 (cf. 1 Kings ii. 38, 42);¹ the second part, which the repetition of וְאִמֶּר shows to have been spoken after a pause, and which was not addressed directly to Isaiah, "Is it not so (i.e. is it not purely goodness), if there are to be peace and truth in my days (during my life)?" is a candid acknowledgment of the grace and truth of the Lord.² הֲלוֹא is used, as is frequently the case, in the sense of a lively affirmation. Instead of הֲלוֹא אִם we have in Isaiah כִּי, "for there will be peace and truth," by which this clause is attached more clearly to the first declaration as a reason for it: the word of the Lord is good, for the Lord proves His goodness and truth in the fact, that He will not inflict the merited punishment in my lifetime. "Peace and truth" are connected as in Jer. xxxiii. 6. אִמֶּר does not mean continuance (Ges.), security (Knobel), but *fides*, faithfulness,—not human faithfulness, however, which preserves peace, and observes a tacit treaty (Hitzig), but the faithfulness of God, which preserves the promised grace to the humble.

Vers. 20 and 21. Close of Hezekiah's reign.—On the basin (בְּרִיָּה) and the aqueduct constructed by him, see at ch. xviii. 17.

CHAP. XXI. REIGNS OF MANASSEH AND AMON.

Vers. 1–18. REIGN OF MANASSEH (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1–20).—Ver. 1. Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, so that he was not born till after Hezekiah's dangerous illness (ch. xx. 1 sqq.).—Vers. 2 sqq. Having begun to reign at this early age, he did not choose his father's ways, but set up the idolatry of his father Ahab again, since the godless party in the

¹ "He calls that *good* in which it is right to acquiesce, as having proceeded from Him who does nothing but what is not only most just, but tempered with the greatest goodness, even when He inflicts punishment."—CLERICUS.

² "He praises the moderation of the divine decree, because when God, in accordance with His justice, might have brought this calamity upon him in his own person, for His mercy's sake He was willing to spare him and to put off the evil to a future day."—VITRINGA.

nation, at whose head chiefs, priests, and (false) prophets stood, and who would not hearken to the law of the Lord, and in the time of Hezekiah had sought help against Assyria not from Jehovah, but from the Egyptians (Isa. xxviii. 7, 14 sqq., xxx. 9 sqq.), had obtained control of the young and inexperienced king, and had persuaded him to introduce idolatry again. On ver. 2 cf. ch. viii. 18 and xvi. 3.—Ver. 3. *הִשָּׁב יִבְנֶה*, “he built again” the high places, which Hezekiah had destroyed (ch. xviii. 4), erected altars for Baal and an Asherah, like Ahab of Israel (1 Kings xvi. 32, 33). *הַאֲשֵׁרָה* is the image of Asherah mentioned in ver. 7, whereas in the Chronicles the thought is generalized by the plurals *לְאֲשֵׁרִים* and *הַאֲשֵׁרֹת*. To these two kinds of idolatry, the idolatrous *bamoth* and the (true) Baal- and Asherah-worship, Manasseh added as a third kind the worship of all the host of heaven, which had not occurred among the Israelites before the Assyrian era, and was probably of Assyrian or Chaldæan origin. This worship differed from the Syrophœnician star-worship, in which sun and moon were worshipped under the names of Baal and Astarte as the bearers of the male and female powers of nature, and was pure star-worship, based upon the idea of the unchangeableness of the stars in contradistinction to the perishableness of everything earthly, according to which the stars were worshipped not merely as the originators of all rise and decay in nature, but also as the leaders and regulators of sublunary things (see Movers, *Phœniz.* i. pp. 65 and 161). This star-worship was a later development of the primary star-worship of Ssabism, in which the stars were worshipped without any image, in the open air or upon the housetops, by simple contemplation, the oldest and comparatively the purest form of the deification of nature, to which the earlier Arabians and the worshippers of the sun among the Ssabians (Zabians) were addicted (cf. Delitzsch on Job xxxi. 26, 27), and which is mentioned and forbidden in Deut. iv. 19 and xvii. 3. In this later form the sun had sacred chariots and horses as among the Persians (ch. xxiii. 11), and incense was offered to the stars, with the face turned towards the east, upon altars which were built either upon housetops, as in the case of the Nabatæans (Strabo, xvi. 784), or within the limits of the temple in the two courts (cf. Ezek. viii. 16, also ch. xxi. 5, xxiii. 12, and 2 Chron. xxxiii. 5, Jer. xix. 13, Zeph. i. 5). This burning of incense took place not merely to the sun and moon, but also to the signs of the zodiac and to all the

host of heaven, *i.e.* to all the stars (ch. xxiii. 5); by which we are no doubt to understand that the sun, moon, planets and other stars, were worshipped in conjunction with the zodiac, and with this were connected astrology, augury, and the casting of nativities, as in the case of the later so-called Chaldeans.¹ This star-worship is more minutely described in vers. 4 and 5. The two verses are closely connected. The *וַיִּבְרָא מִזְבֵּחַ* of ver. 4 is resumed in *וַיִּבְרָא מִזְבֵּחַ* in ver. 5, and the *בְּבֵית* of ver. 4 is more minutely defined in the *בְּבֵית הַחֲצֹרֹת* of ver. 5. "In the two courts:" not merely in the outer court, but even in the court of the priests, which was set apart for the worship of Jehovah.—Ver. 6. He also offered his son in sacrifice to Moloch, like Ahaz (ch. xvi. 3), in the valley of Benhinnom (Chron. cf. ch. xxiii. 10), and practised soothsaying and witchcraft of every kind. On *וַיַּעַשׂ עֲלֵיהֶם* see Deut. xviii. 10 and Lev. xix. 26. *וַיַּעַשׂ אֹזֶן*, he made, *i.e.* appointed, put into office, a "necromancer and wise people" (cf. Lev. xix. 31 and Deut. xviii. 11).—Ver. 7. Yea, he even placed the image of Asherah in the temple, *i.e.* in the Holy Place. In the description of his idolatry, which advances *gradatim*, this is introduced as the very worst crime. According to the express declaration of the Lord to David (2 Sam. vii. 13) and Solomon (1 Kings ix. 3 compared with ch. viii. 16), the temple was to serve as the dwelling-place of His name.—Ver. 8. The word of the Lord, "I will no more make the foot of Israel to move out of the land which I gave to their fathers," refers to the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 10: "I will appoint my people a place, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and be stirred up no more," which had been fulfilled by the building of the temple as the seat of the name of the Lord, in the manner indicated in pp. 85 sqq. The lasting fulfilment of this promise, however, was made to rest upon the condition of Israel's faithful adherence to the commandments of God (cf. 1 Kings ix. 6 sqq.).—Ver. 9. This condition was not observed

¹ Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 65) correctly observes, that "in all the books of the Old Testament which are written before the Assyrian period there is no trace of any (?) *star-worship*; not that the Phœnician (Canaanitish) gods had not also a sidereal significance, but because this element was only a subordinate one, and the expressions, sun, moon, and stars, and all the host of heaven, which are not met with before, become for the first time common now,"—although his proofs of the difference between the Assyrian star-worship and the Phœnician and Babylonian image-worship stand greatly in need of critical sifting.

by the Israelites; Manasseh seduced them, so that they did more evil than the Canaanites, whom Jehovah had destroyed before them.—Vers. 10-15. The Lord therefore announced through the prophets, to the rebellious and idolatrous nation, the destruction of Jerusalem and the deliverance of Judah into the hands of its enemies; but, as is added in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10, they paid no heed to them. The prophets who foretold this terrible judgment are not named. According to 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, their utterances were entered in the annals of the kings. Habakkuk was probably one of them, since he (Hab. i. 5) predicted the Chaldean judgment as a fact which excited astonishment and appeared incredible. The *Amorites* are mentioned in ver. 11 *instar omnium* as the supporters of the Canaanitish ungodliness, as in 1 Kings xxi. 26, etc.—The phrase, “that whosoever heareth it, both his ears may tingle,” denotes such a judgment as has never been heard of before, and excites alarm and horror (cf. 1 Sam. iii. 11 and Jer. xix. 3). The *Keri* כִּרְיָה is a correction, to bring the *pronom. suff.* into conformity with the noun כִּרְיָה so far as the gender is concerned, whereas in the *Chethib* כִּרְיָהּ the masculine suffix is used in the place of the feminine, as is frequently the case.—Ver. 13. “I stretch over Jerusalem the measure of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab.” The measure (מִזְרָה) and the plummet (מִשְׁכָּל, lit. a level) were applied to what was being built (Zech. i. 16), and also to what was being made level with the ground, i.e. completely thrown down (Amos vii. 7). From this sprang the figurative expressions, measure of desolation and plummet of devastation (Isa. xxxiv. 11).—The measure of Samaria therefore denotes the measure which was applied to the destruction of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab denotes the extermination of the royal house of Ahab. The meaning is: I shall destroy Jerusalem as I have destroyed Samaria, and exterminate its inhabitants like the house of Ahab. In the second hemistich the same thing is expressed, if possible, still more strongly: “I wipe away Jerusalem as one wipes the dish, and (having) wiped (it), turns it upon its upper side (פָּנָיו).” The wiping of a dish that has been used, and the turning over of the dish wiped, so as not to leave a single drop in it, are a figurative representation of the complete destruction of Jerusalem and the utter extermination of its inhabitants.—Ver. 14. With the destruction of Jerusalem the Lord forsakes the people of His possession, and gives it up to its enemies for a prey and spoil.

שְׁאֵרִית יְהוּדָה: Judah is called the remnant of the people of God's inheritance with a reference to the rejection and leading away of the ten tribes, which have already taken place. On יְהוּדָה see Isa. xlii. 22, Jer. xxx. 16.

To this announcement of the judgment there is appended in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 sqq. the statement, that Jehovah caused Manasseh the king to be taken prisoner by the generals of the king of Assyria and led away to Babylon in chains; and that when he humbled himself before God there, and made supplication to Him, He brought him back to Jerusalem and placed him upon his throne again; whereupon Manasseh fortified the walls of Jerusalem still further, placed garrisons in the fortified cities, removed the idol from the temple, abolished from the city the idolatrous altars erected in Jerusalem and upon the temple-mountain, restored the altar of Jehovah, and commanded the people to offer sacrifice upon it.—This incident is omitted in our book, because the conversion of Manasseh was not followed by any lasting results so far as the kingdom was concerned; the abolition of outward idolatry in Jerusalem did not lead to the conversion of the people, and after the death of Manasseh even the idolatrous abominations that had been abolished were restored by Amon.¹—Ver. 16. Manasseh also sinned grievously by shedding innocent blood till Jerusalem was quite filled with it. מִן הַיָּמִין, from one edge to the other, see at ch. x. 21. This statement has been paraphrased by Josephus thus (*Ant.* x. 3, 1): Manasseh slew πάντας ὁμῶς τοὺς δικαίους τοὺς ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις, and did not spare even the prophets, with the additional clause, which exaggerates the thing: καὶ τούτων δέ τινες καθ' ἡμέραν ἀπέσφαξε, ὥστε αἵματι ρεῖσθαι τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα.²—Vers. 17, 18. Manasseh was buried “in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza.” “His house” cannot be the royal palace built by Solomon, because the garden is also called the garden of Uzza,

¹ The historical truth of these accounts, which Rosenmüller, Winer, and Hitzig called in question after the example of Gramberg, has been defended by Ewald, Bertheau, and even by Thénius; and the latest attack which has been made upon it by Graf in the *theol. Studien u. Krit.* 1859, iii., has been met by E. Gerlach in the same magazine of 1861. For further remarks see the Commentary on the Chronicles.

² The widespread Jewish and Christian legend, that Manasseh put to death the prophet Isaiah, and indeed had him sawn in sunder, to which there is an allusion in Heb. xi. 37, also belongs here. (See Delitzsch, *Comm. on Isaiah*, p. 5.)

evidently from the name of its former possessor. "His house" must therefore have been a summer palace belonging to Manasseh, the situation of which, however, it is impossible to determine more precisely. The arguments adduced by Thenius in support of the view that it was situated upon Ophel, opposite to Zion, are perfectly untenable. Robinson (*Pal.* i. p. 394) conjectures that the garden of Uzza was upon Zion. The name עֲזָא (עֲזָיָה) occurs again in 2 Sam. vi. 8, 1 Chron. viii. 7, Ezra ii. 49, and Neh. vii. 51.

Vers. 19-26. REIGN OF AMON (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 21-25).—Amon reigned only two years, and that in the spirit of his father, that is to say, worshipping all his idols. The city of Jotbah, from which his mother sprang, was, according to Jerome (in the *Onom.* s. v. Jethaba), *urbs antiqua Judææ*; but it is not further known.—Vers. 23, 24. His servants conspired against him and slew him in his palace; whereupon the people of the land, i.e. the population of Judah (עַם הַיְּהוּדָה = עַם יְהוּדָה, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1), put the conspirators to death and made Josiah the son of Amon king, when he was only eight years old.—Ver. 26. Amon was buried "in his grave in the garden of Uzza," i.e. in the grave which he had had made in the garden of Uzza by the side of his father's grave. He had probably resided in this palace of his father. יָקַבְר, one buried him.

CHAP. XXII. 1-XXIII. 30. REIGN OF KING JOSIAH.

After a brief account of the length and spirit of the reign of the pious Josiah (vers. 1 and 2), we have a closely connected narrative, in ver. 3-xxiii. 24, of what he did for the restoration of the true worship of Jehovah and the extermination of idolatry; and the whole of the reform effected by him is placed in the eighteenth year of his reign, because it was in this year that the book of the law was discovered, through which the reformation of worship was carried to completion. It is evident that it was the historian's intention to combine together everything that Josiah did to this end, so as to form one grand picture, from the circumstance that he has not merely placed the chronological datum, "it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah," at the beginning, but has repeated it at the close (ch. xxiii. 23). If we run over the

several facts which are brought before us in this section,—the repairing of the temple (ch. xxii. 3–7); the discovery of the book of the law; the reading of the book to the king; the inquiry made of the prophetess Huldah, and her prophecy (vers. 8–20); the reading of the law to the assembled people in the temple, with the renewal of the covenant (ch. xxiii. 1–3); the eradication of idolatry not only from Jerusalem and Judah, but from Bethel also, and all the cities of Samaria (vers. 4–20); and, lastly, the passover (vers. 21–23),—there is hardly any need to remark, that all this cannot have taken place in the one eighteenth year of his reign, even if, with Usher (*Annales ad a.m.* 3381), we were to place the solemn passover at the close of the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, which is hardly suitable, and by no means follows from the circumstance that the chronological datum, "in the eighteenth year," stands at the commencement of the complete account of the reform of worship introduced by that king. For we may clearly infer that the several details of this account are not arranged chronologically, but according to the subject-matter, and that the historian has embraced the efforts of Josiah to restore the legal worship of Jehovah, which spread over several years, under the one point of view of a discovery of the law, and therefore within the eighteenth year of his reign, from the fact that he introduces the account of the repairing of the temple (ch. xxii. 3–7) in a period by itself, and makes it subordinate to the account of the discovery of the book of the law, and indeed only mentions it in a general manner, because it led to the finding of the book of the law. It is true that the other facts are attached to one another in the narrative by *Vav consec.*; but, on a closer inspection of the several details, there cannot be any doubt whatever that the intention is not to arrange them in their chronological order. The repairing of the temple must have commenced before the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, inasmuch as in that year, in which the incident occurred which led to the discovery of the book of the law (ch. xxii. 3–7), not only were the builders occupied with the repairs of the temple, but money had been brought by all the people to the house of God to carry on this work, and had been collected by the Levites who kept the door. Moreover, from the very nature of the case, we cannot conceive of the restoration of the temple, that had fallen to decay, without the removal of the idolatrous

abominations found in the temple. And the assumption is an equally inconceivable one, that all the people entered into covenant with the Lord (ch. xxiii. 3), before any commencement had been made towards the abolition of the prevailing idolatry, or that the pious king had the book of the law read in the temple and entered into covenant with the Lord, so long as the Ashera was standing in the temple and the idolatrous altars erected by Manasseh in the courts, together with the horses and chariots dedicated to the sun. If the conclusion of a covenant in consequence of the public reading of the book of the law was to be an act in accordance with the law, the public memorials of idolatry must be destroyed at all events in the neighbourhood of the temple. And is it likely that the king, who had been so deeply moved by the curses of the law, would have undertaken so solemn a transaction in sight of the idolatrous altars and other abominations of idolatry in the house of Jehovah, and not rather have seen that this would be only a daring insult to Jehovah? These reasons are quite sufficient to prove that the extermination of idolatry had commenced before the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, and had simply been carried out with greater zeal throughout the whole kingdom after the discovery of the book of the law.

This view of our account is simply confirmed by a comparison with the parallel history in 2 Chron. xxxiv. and xxxv. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3 sqq., Josiah began to seek the God of his father David in the eighth year of his reign, when he was still a youth, that is to say, not more than sixteen years old, and in the twelfth year of his reign began to purify Judah and Jerusalem from idolatry; and, according to vers. 8 sqq., in the eighteenth year of his reign, at the purification of the land and temple, and the renovation of the temple, the book of the law was found by the high priest, and handed over to the king and read before him (vers. 8-28), after which the renewal of the covenant took place, and all the abominations of idolatry that still remained in the land were swept away (vers. 29-33), and, lastly, a solemn passover was celebrated, of which we have an elaborate account in ch. xxxv. 1-19. Consequently the account given in the Chronicles is, on the whole, arranged with greater chronological precision, although even there, after the commencement of the extermination of idolatry has been mentioned, we have a brief and comprehensive statement of all

that Josiah did to accomplish that result ; so that after the renewal of the covenant (ch. xxxiv. 33) we have nothing more than a passing allusion, by way of summary, to the complete abolition of the abominations of idolatry throughout the whole land.

Vers. 1 and 2. *Length and spirit of Josiah's reign.*—Josiah (for the name, see at 1 Kings xiii. 2), like Hezekiah, trode once more in the footsteps of his pious forefather David, adhering with the greatest constancy to the law of the Lord. He reigned thirty-one years. As a child he had probably received a pious training from his mother ; and when he had ascended the throne, after the early death of his godless father, he was under the guidance of pious men who were faithfully devoted to the law of the Lord, and who turned his heart to the God of their fathers, as was the case with Joash in ch. xii. 3, although there is no allusion to guardianship. His mother *Jedidah*, the daughter of Adaiah, was of *Bosath*, a city in the plain of Judah, of which nothing further is known (see at Josh. xv. 39). The description of his character, " he turned not aside to the right hand and to the left," *sc.* from that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, is based upon Deut. v. 29, xvii. 11, 20, and xxviii. 14, and expresses an unwavering adherence to the law of the Lord.

Vers. 3–8. *Repairing of the temple, and discovery of the book of the law* (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8–18).—When Josiah sent Shaphan the secretary of state (שַׁפָּן, see at 2 Sam. viii. 17) into the temple, in the eighteenth year of his reign, with instructions to Hilkiah the high priest to pay to the builders the money which had been collected from the people for repairing the temple by the Levites who kept the door, Hilkiah said to Shaphan, " I have found the book of the law." Vers. 3–8 form a long period. The apodosis to וַיְהִי יוֹם, " it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah—the king had sent Shaphan," etc., does not follow till ver. 8 : " that Hilkiah said," etc. The principal fact which the historian wished to relate, was the discovery of the book of the law ; and the repairing of the temple is simply mentioned because it was when Shaphan was sent to Hilkiah about the payment of the money to the builders that the high priest informed the king's secretary of state of the discovery of the book of the law in the temple, and handed it over to him to take to the king. שָׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ, in ver. 3, forms the commencement

to the minor clauses inserted within the principal clause, and subordinate to it: "the king had sent Shaphan," etc. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8, the king had deputed not only Shaphan the state-secretary, but also Maaseiah the governor of the city and Joach the chancellor, because the repairing of the temple was not a private affair of the king and the high priest, but concerned the city generally, and indeed the whole kingdom. In vers. 4, 5 there follows the charge given by the king to Shaphan: "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may make up the money, . . . and hand it over to the workmen appointed over the house of Jehovah," etc. **יָתַם**, from **תָּמַם**, *Hiphil*, signifies to finish or set right, *i.e.* not pay out (Ges., Dietr.), but make it up for the purpose of paying out, namely, collect it from the door-keepers, count it, and bind it up in bags (see ch. xii. 11). **יָתַם** is therefore quite appropriate here, and there is no alteration of the text required. The door-keepers had probably put the money in a chest placed at the entrance, as was the case at the repairing of the temple in the time of Joash (ch. xii. 10). In ver. 5 the *Keri* **יָתַתּוּ** is a bad alteration of the *Chethib* **יָתַתּוּ**, "and give (it) into the hand," which is perfectly correct. **עַלֵּי הַמְּלָאכָה** might denote both the masters and the workmen (builders), and is therefore defined more precisely first of all by **הַמְּסַקְרִים בְּבֵית י'**, "who had the oversight at the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the masters or inspectors of the building, and secondly by **אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית י'**, who were (occupied) at the house of Jehovah, whilst in the Chronicles it is explained by **אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂים ב' י'**. The *Keri* **בֵּית י'** is an alteration after ver. 9, whereas the combination **מְסַקְרִים בְּבֵית י'** is justified by the construction of **הַמְּסַקֵּר** *c. acc. pers.* and **ב' rei** in Jer. xl. 5. The masters are the subject to **יָתַתּוּ**; they were to pay the money as it was wanted, either to the workmen, or for the purchase of materials for repairing the dilapidations, as is more precisely defined in ver. 6. Compare ch. xii. 12, 13; and for ver. 7 compare ch. xii. 16. The names of the masters or inspectors are given in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12.—The execution of the king's command is not specially mentioned, that the parenthesis may not be spun out any further.—Ver. 8. Hilkiah the high priest (cf. 1 Chron. v. 39) said, "I have found the book of the law in the house of Jehovah." **סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה**, *the book of the law* (not a law-book or a roll of laws), cannot mean anything else, either grammatically or historically, than the Mosaic book of the law (the Pentateuch), which is so designated, as is generally admitted,

in the Chronicles, and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.¹ The finding of the book of the law in the temple presupposes that the copy deposited there had come to light. But it by no means follows from this, that before its discovery there were no copies in the hands of the priests and prophets. The book of the law that was found was simply the temple copy,² deposited, according to Deut. xxxi. 26, by the side of the ark of the covenant, which had been lost under the idolatrous kings Manasseh and Amon, and came to light again now that the temple was being repaired. We cannot learn, either from the account before us, or from the words of the Chronicles (ch. xxxiv. 14), "when they were taking out the money brought into the house of Jehovah, Hilkiah found the book of the law of the Lord," in what part of the temple it had hitherto lain; and this is of no importance so far as the principal object of the history is concerned. Even the words of the Chronicles simply point out the occasion on which the book was discovered, and do not affirm that it had

¹ Thenius has correctly observed, that "the expression shows very clearly, that the allusion is to something already known, not to anything that had come to light for the first time;" but he is greatly mistaken when, notwithstanding this, he supposes that what we are to understand by this is merely a collection of the commandments and ordinances of Moses, which had been worked up in the Pentateuch, and more especially in Deuteronomy. For there is not the smallest proof whatever that any such collection of commandments and ordinances of Moses, or, as Bertheau supposes, the collection of Mosaic law contained in the three middle books of the Pentateuch, or Deuteronomy ch. i.-xxviii. (according to Vaihinger, Reuss, and others), was ever called ספר התורה, or that any such portions had had an independent existence, and had been deposited in the temple. These hypotheses are simply bound up with the attacks made upon the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and ought to be given up, since De Wette, the great leader of the attack upon the genuineness of the Pentateuch, in § 162a of the later editions of his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, admits that the account before us contains the first certain trace of the existence of our present Pentateuch. The only loophole left to modern criticism, therefore, is that Hilkiah forged the book of the law discovered by him under the name of Moses,—a conclusion which can only be arrived at by distorting the words of the text in the most arbitrary manner, turning "find" into "forge," but which is obliged either to ignore or forcibly to set aside all the historical evidence of the previous existence of the whole of the Pentateuch, including Deuteronomy.

² Whether the original written by Moses' own hand, as Grotius inferred from the *בִּיַּד מֹשֶׁה* of the Chronicles, or a later copy of this, is a very superfluous question; for, as Hävernick says, "even in the latter case it was to be regarded just in the same light as the autograph, having just the same claims, since the temple repaired by Josiah was the temple of Solomon still."

been lying in one of the treasure-chambers of the temple, as Josephus says. The expression *וַיִּקְרָאָהּ* does not imply that Shaphan read the whole book through immediately.

Vers. 9-14. *The reading of the book of the law to the king, and the inquiry made of the prophetess Huldah concerning it.*—Vers. 9, 10. When Shaphan informed the king of the execution of his command, he also told him that Hilkiyah had given him a book, and read it to the king. *וַיִּשֶׁבֶט דָּבָר*, to bring an answer, to give a report as to a commission that has been received. *וַיִּפְתְּחוּ*, they poured out the money, i.e. out of the chest in which it was collected, into bags. *וַיִּקְרָאָהּ*, “he read it to the king,” is simplified in the Chronicles (ver. 18) by *וַיִּקְרָא בּוֹ*, “he read therein.” That *וַיִּקְרָאָהּ* does not signify that the whole was read, is evident from a comparison of ch. xxiii. 2, where the reading of the whole is expressed by *כָּל־דִּבְרֵי ס’*. Which passages or sections Shaphan read by himself (ver. 8), and which he read to the king, it is impossible to determine exactly. To the king he most likely read, among other things, the threats and curses of the law against those who transgressed it (Deut. xxviii.), and possibly also Lev. xxvi., because the reading made such an impression upon him, that in his anguish of soul he rent his clothes. Nor is it possible to decide anything with certainty, as to whether the king had hitherto been altogether unacquainted with the book of the law, and had merely a traditional knowledge of the law itself, or whether he had already had a copy of the law, but had not yet read it through, or had not read it with proper attention, which accounted for the passages that were read to him now making so deep and alarming an impression upon him. It is a well-known experience, that even books which have been read may, under peculiar circumstances, produce an impression such as has not been made before. But in all probability Josiah had not had in his possession any copy of the law, or even read it till now; although the thorough acquaintance with the law, which all the prophets display, places the existence of the Pentateuch in prophetic circles beyond the reach of doubt.—Ver. 11. In his alarm at the words of the book of the law that had been read to him, Josiah rent his clothes, and sent a deputation to the prophetess Huldah, to make inquiry of Jehovah through her concerning the things which he had heard from the law. The deputation consisted of the high priest Hilkiyah, Ahikam the supporter of Jeremiah (Jer. xxvi. 24) and the father of

Gedaliah the governor (ch. xxv. 22 ; Jer. xxxix. 14, etc.), Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the state-secretary (ver. 3), and Asahiah the servant (*i.e.* an officer) of the king.—Ver. 13. From the commission, “Inquire ye of Jehovah for me and for the people and for all Judah (*i.e.* the whole kingdom) concerning the words of this book of the law that has been found, for great is the wrath of the Lord which has been kindled against us, because our fathers have not heard . . .,” we may infer that the curses of the law upon the despisers of the commandments of God in Lev. xxvi., Deut. xxviii., and other passages, had been read to the king. “וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת־יְהוָה” means to inquire the will of the Lord, what He has determined concerning the king, his people, and the kingdom. “שָׁמַע עַל” signifies here to hearken to anything, to observe it, for which “עַל” is used elsewhere. “כָּתַב עַל”, to prescribe for performance. “עָלֵינוּ”, “prescribed for us,” is quite appropriate, since the law was not only given to the fathers to obey, but also to the existing generation,—a fact which Thenius has overlooked with his conjecture “עָלֵי”. To render the king’s alarm and his fear of severe judgments from God intelligible, there is no need for the far-fetched and extremely precarious hypothesis, that just at that time the Scythians had invaded and devastated the land.—Ver. 14. Nothing further is known of the prophetess *Huldah* than what is mentioned here. All that we can infer from the fact that the king sent to her is, that she was highly distinguished on account of her prophetic gifts, and that none of the prophets of renown, such as Jeremiah and Zephaniah, were at that time in Jerusalem. Her father *Shallum* was *keeper of the clothes*, *i.e.* superintendent over either the priests’ dresses that were kept in the temple (according to the Rabbins and Wits. *de proph.* in his *Miscell. ss.* i. p. 356, ed. 3), or the king’s wardrobe. The names of his ancestors הַרְחִים and הַקָּנָה are written הַקָּנָה and הַרְחִים in the Chronicles. *Huldah* lived at Jerusalem כְּפִשְׁתָּה, “in the second part” or district of the city, *i.e.* in the lower city, upon the hill *Ἀκρᾱ* (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 391), which is called הַכְּפִשְׁתָּה in Zeph. i. 10, and הַעִיר כְּפִשְׁתָּה in Neh. xi. 9, and ἀλλῇ πόλιν in Joseph. *Ant.* xv. 11, 5.

Vers. 15–20. *The reply of Huldah the prophetess.*—*Huldah* confirmed the fear expressed by Josiah, that the wrath of the Lord was kindled against Jerusalem and its inhabitants on account of their idolatry, and proclaimed first of all (vers. 16, 17), that the Lord would bring upon Jerusalem and its inhabitants

all the punishments with which the rebellious and idolaters are threatened in the book of the law; and secondly (vers. 18-20), to the king himself, that on account of his sincere repentance and humiliation in the sight of God, he would not live to see the predicted calamities, but would be gathered to his fathers in peace. The first part of her announcement applies "to the man who has sent you to me" (ver. 15), the second "to the king of Judah, who has sent to inquire of the Lord" (ver. 18). "The man" who had sent to her was indeed also the king; but Huldah intentionally made use of the general expression "the man," etc., to indicate that the word announced to him applied not merely to the king, but to every one who would hearken to the word, whereas the second portion of her reply had reference to the king alone. הַמִּקְוִים הָיָה, in vers. 16, 19, and 20, is Jerusalem as the capital of the kingdom. In ver. 16, בְּלִדְבָרִי, וְעַתָּה is an explanatory apposition to וְעַתָּה. Ver. 17. "With all the work of their hands," i.e. with the idols which they have made for themselves (cf. 1 Kings xvi. 7). The last clause in ver. 18, "the words which thou hast heard," is not to be connected with the preceding one, "thus saith the Lord," and עַל or לְ to be supplied; but it belongs to the following sentence, and is placed at the head absolutely: as for the words, which thou hast heard—because thy heart has become soft, i.e. in despair at the punishment with which the sinners are threatened (cf. Deut. xx. 3; Isa. vii. 4), and thou hast humbled thyself, when thou didst hear, etc.; therefore, behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, etc. לְהָיִיתָ לְשָׂפָה, "that they (the city and inhabitants) may become a desolation and curse." These words, which are often used by the prophets, but which are not found connected like this except in Jer. xlv. 22, rest upon Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii., and show that these passages had been read to the king out of the book of the law.—Ver. 20. To gather to his fathers means merely to let him die, and is generally applied to a peaceful death upon a sick-bed, like the synonymous phrase, to lie with one's fathers; but it is also applied to a violent death by being slain in battle (1 Kings xxii. 40 and 34), so that there is no difficulty in reconciling this comforting assurance with the slaying of Josiah in battle (ch. xxiii. 29). בְּשָׁלוֹם, in peace, i.e. without living to witness the devastation of Jerusalem, as is evident from the words, "thine eyes will not see," etc.

Ch. xxiii. 1-30. Instead of resting content with the fact that he was promised deliverance from the approaching judgment, Josiah did everything that was in his power to lead the whole nation to true conversion to the Lord, and thereby avert as far as possible the threatened curse of rejection, since the Lord in His word had promised forgiveness and mercy to the penitent. He therefore gathered together the elders of the nation, and went with them, with the priests and prophets and the assembled people, into the temple, and there had the book of the law read to those who were assembled, and concluded a covenant with the Lord, into which the people also entered. After this he had all the remnants of idolatry eradicated, not only in Jerusalem and Judah, but also in Bethel and the other cities of Samaria, and directed the people to strengthen themselves in their covenant fidelity towards the Lord by the celebration of a solemn passover.—Vers. 1-3. *Reading of the law in the temple, and renewal of the covenant* (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 29-32). Beside the priests, Josiah also gathered together the prophets, including perhaps Jeremiah and Zedekiah, that he might carry out the solemn conclusion of the covenant with their co-operation, and, as is evident from Jer. i.-xi., that they might then undertake the task, by their impressive preaching in Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, of making the people conscious of the earnestness of the covenant duties which they had so recently undertaken (see Oehler in Herzog's *Cycl.*). Instead of the prophets, the Levites are mentioned in the Chronicles, probably only because the Levites are mentioned along with the priests in other cases of a similar kind. **וַיִּקְרָא**, he read, *i.e.* had it read; for the duty of reading the law in the temple devolved upon the priests as the keepers of the law (Deut. xxxi. 9 sqq.).—Ver. 3. The king stood **עַל הָעַמּוּד**, as in ch. xi. 14. For **וַיִּקְרָא** see ch. xi. 17. **וַיִּבְרַח**, *i.e.* he bound himself solemnly to walk after the Lord, that is to say, in his walk to follow the Lord and keep His commandments (see at 1 Kings ii. 3).—**וַיָּבִיאוּ . . . וַיָּקִימוּ**, all the people entered into the covenant (Luther and others); not *perstitit*, stood firm, continued in the covenant (Maurer, Ges.), which would be at variance with Jer. xi. 9, 10, xxv. 3 sqq., and other utterances of the prophets.

Vers. 4-20. *The eradication of idolatry*.—According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3-7, this had already begun, and was simply continued and carried to completion after the renewal of the

covenant. — Vers. 4-14. *In Jerusalem and Judah.* Ver. 4. The king commanded the high priest and the other priests, and the Levites who kept the door, to remove from the temple everything that had been made for Baal and Asherah, and to burn it in the valley of Kidron. כֹּהֲנֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּה, *sacerdotes secundi ordinis* (Vulg., Luth., etc.), are the common priests as distinguished from הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל, the high priest. The Rabbins are wrong in their explanation *vicarii summi sacerdotis*, according to which Thenius would alter the text and read כֹּהֲנֵי for כֹּהֲנֵי. שְׁמֵרֵי הַמִּצֵּד, the keepers of the threshold, are the Levites whose duty it was to watch the temple, as in ch. xxii. 4 (cf. 1 Chron. xxiii. 5). כְּלֵי-הַבְּעֻלִּים (*alles Zeug*, Luth.), i.e. all the apparatus, consisting of altars, idols, and other things, that had been provided for the worship of Baal and Astarte. Josiah had these things burned, according to the law in Deut. vii. 25, and that outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron valley. The שְׂדֵמוֹת קִדְרוֹן (fields of Kidron) are probably to be sought for to the north-east of Jerusalem, where the Kidron valley is broader than between the city and the Mount of Olives, and spreads out into a basin of considerable size, which is now cultivated and contains plantations of olive and other fruit-trees (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 405). "And he had their dust carried to Bethel," i.e. the ashes of the wooden objects which were burned, and the dust of those of stone and metal which were ground to powder, to defile the idolatrous place of worship at Bethel as the chief seat of idolatry and false worship.—Ver. 5. "He abolished the high priests." כֹּהֲנֵי are also mentioned in Hos. x. 5 and Zeph. i. 4: they were not idolatrous priests or prophets of Baal, but priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to offer incense upon the altars of the high places; for they are distinguished from the idolatrous priests, or those who burnt incense to Baal, the sun, etc. In Hos. x. 5 the priests appointed in connection with the golden calf at Bethel are called כֹּהֲנֵי; and in Zeph. i. 4 the כֹּהֲנֵי are not exclusively idolatrous priests, but such as did service sometimes for Jehovah, who had been degraded into a Baal, and sometimes to actual idols. Now as כֹּהֲנֵי who burnt incense upon high places are also mentioned in ver. 8, we must understand by the כֹּהֲנֵי non-Levitical priests, and by the כֹּהֲנֵי in ver. 8 Levitical priests who were devoted to the worship on the high places. The primary signification of כֹּהֵן is disputed. In Syriac the word signifies the priest, in Hebrew spurious priests, probably from

קָטַר in the sense of to bring together, or complete, as the performers of sacrifice, like ἑρδων, the sacrificer (Dietr.); whereas the connection suggested by Hitzig (on Zeph.) with سَفَر, to be

unbelieving, in the opposite sense of the religious, is very far-fetched, and does not answer either to the Hebrew or the Syriac use of the word.¹ The singular קָטַר is striking, inasmuch as if the imperf. c. Vav rel. were a continuation of קָטַר, we should expect the plural, "and who had burnt incense," as it is given in the Chaldee. The LXX., Vulg., and Syr. have rendered קָטַר, from which קָטַר has probably arisen by a mistake in copying. In the following clause, "and those who had burnt incense to Baal, to the sun and to the moon," etc., Baal is mentioned as the deity worshipped in the sun, the moon, and the stars (see at ch. xxi. 3). כְּלִלֹת, synonymous with כְּלִלֹת in Job xxxviii. 32, does not mean the twenty-eight *naxatra*, or Indian stations of the moon,² but the twelve signs or constellations of the zodiac, which were regarded by the Arabs as *menâzil*, i.e. station-houses, in which the sun took up its abode in succession when describing the circuit of the year (cf. Ges. Thes. p. 869, and Delitzsch on Job xxxviii. 32).—Ver. 6. The image of Asherah (הָאֲשֵׁרָה = 'פֶּסֶל הָאֲשֵׁרָה', ch. xxi. 3, 7), which Manasseh placed in the temple and then removed after his return from Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 15), but which Amon had replaced, Josiah ordered to be burned and ground to powder in the valley of Kidron, and the dust to be thrown upon the graves of the common people. יָדָה, from פָּדָה, to make fine, to crush, refers to the metal covering of the image (see at Ex. xxxii. 10). Asa had already had an idol burned in the Kidron valley (1 Kings xv. 13), and Hezekiah had ordered the idolatrous abominations to be taken out of the city and carried thither (2 Chron. xxix. 16); so that the valley had already been defiled. There was a burial-place there for בְּנֵי הָעָם, i.e. the common people (cf. Jer. xxvi. 23), who had no graves of their own, just as at the present day the burial-ground

¹ In any case the derivation from כָּמַר, to be black (Ges. Thes. p. 693), and the explanation given by Fürst from *vi occultandi magicasque, h. e. arcanas et reconditas artes exercendi*, and others given in Iken's *Dissertat. theol. philol.* i. diss. 12, are quite untenable.

² According to A. Weber, *Die vedischen Nachrichten von den naxatra*, in the *Abhandlungen der Berl. Acad. d. Wiss.* 1860 and 1861. Compare, on the other hand, Steinschneider, *Hebr. Bibliographie*, 1861, No. 22, pp. 93, 94; his article in the *Deutsch. morgld. Zeitschrift*, 1864, p. 118 sqq.

of the Jews there lies to the north of *Kefr Silwân*. Josiah ordered the ashes to be cast upon these graves, probably in order to defile them as the graves of idolaters.—Ver. 7. **בָּתֵּי הַקִּדְשִׁים**, the houses (places of abode) of the paramours (for **הַקִּדְשִׁים** see at 1 Kings xiv. 24), were probably only tents or huts, which were erected in the court of the temple for the paramours to dwell in, and in which there were also women who wove tent-temples (**בָּתֵּי**) for Asherah (see at ch. xvii. 30).¹—Ver. 8. All the (Levitical) priests he sent for from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem, and defiled the altars of the high places, upon which they had offered incense, from Geba to Beersheba, *i.e.* throughout the whole kingdom. *Geba*, the present *Jeba*, about three hours to the north of Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 24), was the northern frontier of the kingdom of Judah, and *Beersheba* (*Bir-seba*: see the Comm. on Gen. xxi. 31) the southern frontier of Canaan. It is evident from ver. 9 that **כֹּהֲנִים** are Levitical priests. He ordered them to come to Jerusalem, that they might not carry on illegal worship any longer in the cities of Judah. He then commanded that the unlawful high places should be defiled throughout the whole land, for the purpose of suppressing this worship altogether. He also destroyed “the altars of the high places at the gates, (both that) which was at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, (and also that) which was at the left of every one (entering) by the city gate.” The two clauses beginning with **וְאֵשֶׁר** contain a more precise description of **בְּמוֹת הַשְּׁעָרִים**. The gate of Joshua the governor of the city is not mentioned anywhere else, but it was probably near to his home, *i.e.* near the citadel of the city; but whether it was the future gate of *Gennath*, as Thenius supposes, or some other, it is impossible to determine. This also applies to the opinion that **שַׁעַר הַצִּיר** is the valley gate or Joppa gate (Thenius) as being the gate of greatest traffic; for the traffic through the northern or Ephraim gate was certainly not less. **עַל-שְׂמאלוֹ**, at the left of every one, *sc.* going into the city.—Ver. 9.

¹ On this worship Movers has the following among other remarks (*Phön.* i. p. 686): “The mutilated Gallus (**קִרְשֵׁ**) fancies that he is a woman: *negant se viros esse . . . mulieres se volunt credi* (Firmic.). He lives in close intimacy with the women, and they again are drawn towards the Galli by peculiar affection.” He also expresses a conjecture “that the women of Jerusalem gave themselves up in honour of the goddess in the tents of the Galli which were pitched in the temple circle, on which account the **כָּלֵב מִחִיר** went to the temple treasury.”

"Only the priests of the high places did not sacrifice, . . . but ate unleavened bread in the midst of their brethren." The מִן is connected with ver. 8: Josiah did not allow the priests, whom he had brought out of the cities of Judah to Jerusalem, to offer sacrifice upon the altar of Jehovah in the temple, i.e. to perform the sacrificial service of the law, though he did allow them "to eat that which was unleavened," i.e. to eat of the sacred altar-gifts intended for the priests (Lev. vi. 9, 10 and 22); only they were not allowed to consume this at a holy place, but simply in the midst of their brethren, i.e. at home in the family. They were thus placed on a par with priests who were rendered incapable of service on account of a bodily defect (Lev. xxi. 17-22).—Ver. 10. He also defiled the place of sacrifice in the valley of Benhinnom, for the purpose of exterminating the worship of Moloch. Moloch's place of sacrifice is called מִן־הַמִּן , as an object of abhorrence, or one to be spat at (מִן : Job xvii. 6), from מִן , to spit, or spit out (cf. Roediger in *Gea. thes.* p. 1497, where the other explanations are exploded).¹ On the valley *Bne* or *Ben-Hinnom*, at the south side of Mount Zion, see at Josh. xv. 8.—Ver. 11. He cleared away the horses dedicated to the sun, and burned up the chariots of the sun. As the horses were only cleared away (מִן־הַמִּן), whereas the chariots were burned, we have not to think of images of horses (Selden, *de Diis Syr.* ii. 8), but of living horses, which were given to the sun, i.e. kept for the worship of the sun. Horses were regarded as sacred to the sun by many nations, viz. the Armenians, Persians, Massagetæ, Ethiopians, and Greeks, and were sacrificed to it (for proofs see Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. lib. ii. c. 10); and there is no doubt that the Israelites received this worship first of all from Upper Asia, along with the actual sun-worship, possibly through the Assyrians. "The kings of Judah" are Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon. These horses were hardly kept to be offered to the sun in sacrifice (Bochart and others), but, as we must infer from the "chariots of the sun," were used for processions in connection with the worship of the sun, probably, according to the unanimous opinion of the Rabbins, to

¹ Jerome (on Jer. vii. 31) says: *THOPHET, quæ est in valle filiorum Enom, illum locum significat, qui Siloë fontibus irrigatur et est amœnus atque nemorosus, hodieque hortorum præbet delicias.* From the name *Gehinnom* the Rabbins formed the name *Ghenna*, *Gehenna* (Matt. v. 22, 29, etc.), with special reference to the children burnt here to Moloch, to signify hell and hell-fire.

drive and meet the rising sun. The definition "מבוא בית י" *from the coming into the house of Jehovah*," i.e. near the entrance into the temple, is dependent upon נָתַנוּ, "they had given (placed) the horses of the sun near the temple entrance," אֶל-הַצֵּלָה, "in the cell of Nethanmelech." אֶל does not mean *at* the cell, i.e. in the stable by the cell (Thenius), because the ellipsis is too harsh, and the cells built in the court of the temple were intended not merely as dwelling-places for the priests and persons engaged in the service, but also as a *depôt* for the provisions and vessels belonging to the temple (Neh. x. 38 sqq.; 1 Chron. ix. 26). One of these *depôts* was arranged and used as a stable for the sacred horses. This cell, which derived its name from Nethanmelech, a chamberlain (סָרִיס), of whom nothing further is known, possibly the builder or founder of it, was בְּפִרְיִים, in the *Pharvars*. פִּרְיִים, the plural of פֶּרֶר, is no doubt identical with פֶּרֶר in 1 Chron. xxvi. 18. This was the name given to a building at the western or hinder side of the outer temple-court by the gate *Shalleket* at the ascending road, i.e. the road which led up from the city standing in the west into the court of the temple (1 Chron. xxvi. 16 and 18). The meaning of the word פֶּרֶר is uncertain. Gesenius (*thes.* p. 1123) explains it by *porticus*,

after the Persian *فرور*, summer-house, an open kiosk. Böttcher

(*Proben*, p. 347), on the other hand, supposes it to be "a separate spot resembling a suburb," because in the Talmud פֶּרֶר signifies *suburbia, loca urbi vicina*.—Ver. 12. The altars built upon the roof of the *aliyah* of Ahaz were dedicated to the host of heaven (Zeph. i. 5; Jer. xix. 13, xxxii. 29), and certainly built by Ahaz; and inasmuch as Hezekiah had undoubtedly removed them when he reformed the worship, they had been restored by Manasseh and Amon, so that by "the kings of Judah" we are to understand these three kings as in ver. 11. We are unable to determine where the עֲלִיָּה, the upper chamber, of Ahaz really was. But since the things spoken of both before and afterwards are the objects of idolatry found in the temple, this *aliyah* was probably also an upper room of one of the buildings in the court of the temple (Thenius), possibly at the gate, which Ahaz had built when he removed the outer entrance of the king into the temple (ch. xvi. 18), since, according to Jer. xxxv. 4, the buildings at the gate had upper stories. The altars built by Manasseh in the two courts of the temple (see ch. xxi. 5) Josiah destroyed,

וַיִּרְץ, "and crushed them to powder from thence," and cast their dust into the Kidron valley. וַיִּרְץ, not from רץ, to run, but from רץ, to pound or crush to pieces. The alteration proposed by Thenius into וַיִּרְץ, he caused to run and threw = he had them removed with all speed, is not only arbitrary, but unsuitable, because it is impossible to see why Josiah should merely have hurried the clearing away of the dust of these altars, whereas רץ, to pound or grind to powder, was not superfluous after נָחַץ, to destroy, but really necessary, if the dust was to be thrown into the Kidron. וַיִּרְץ is substantially equivalent to וַיִּרְץ in ver. 6.—Vers. 13, 14. The places of sacrifice built by Solomon upon the southern height of the Mount of Olives (see at 1 Kings xi. 7) Josiah defiled, reducing to ruins the monuments, cutting down the Asherah idols, and filling their places with human bones, which polluted a place, according to Num. xix. 16. Ver. 14 gives a more precise definition of מִצְבֵּה in ver. 13 in the form of a simple addition (with *Vav cop.*). הַר הַמִּשְׁחָה, mountain of destruction (not *unctionis* = רִפְשָׁה, Rashi and Cler.), is the southern peak of the Mount of Olives, called in the tradition of the Church *mons offensionis* or *scandali* (see at 1 Kings xi. 7). For מִצְבֹּת and אֲשֵׁרִים see at 1 Kings xiv. 23. מִקּוֹמָם are the places where the *Mazzeboth* and *Asherim* stood by the altars that were dedicated to Baal and Astarte, so that by defiling them the altar-places were also defiled.

Vers. 15–20. *Extermination of idolatry in Bethel and the cities of Samaria.*—In order to suppress idolatry as far as possible, Josiah did not rest satisfied with the extermination of it in his own kingdom Judah, but also destroyed the temples of the high places and altars and idols in the land of the former kingdom of the ten tribes, slew all the priests of the high places that were there, and burned their bones upon the high places destroyed, in order to defile the ground. The warrant for this is not to be found, as Hess supposes, in the fact that Josiah, as vassal of the king of Assyria, had a certain limited power over these districts, and may have looked upon them as being in a certain sense his own territory, a power which the Assyrians may have allowed him the more readily, because they were sure of his fidelity in relation to Egypt. For we cannot infer that Josiah was a vassal of the Assyrians from the imprisonment and release of Manasseh by the king of Assyria, nor is there any historical evidence whatever to prove it. The only reason that

can have induced Josiah to do this, must have been that after the dissolution of the kingdom of the ten tribes he regarded himself as the king of the whole of the covenant-nation, and availed himself of the approaching or existing dissolution of the Assyrian empire to secure the friendship of the Israelites who were left behind in the kingdom of the ten tribes, to reconcile them to his government, and to win them over to his attempt to reform; and there is no necessity whatever to assume, as Thenius does, that he asked permission to do so of the newly arisen ruler Nabopolassar. For against this assumption may be adduced not only the improbability that Nabopolassar would give him any such permission, but still more the circumstance that at a still earlier period, even before Nabopolassar became king of Babylon, Josiah had had taxes collected of the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel for the repairing of the temple (2 Chron. xxxiv. 9), from which we may see that the Israelites who were left behind in the land were favourably disposed towards his reforms, and were inclined to attach themselves in religious matters to Judah (just as, indeed, even the Samaritans were willing after the captivity to take part in the building of the temple, Ezra iv. 2 sqq.), which the Assyrians at that time were no longer in a condition to prevent.—Ver. 15. “Also the altar at Bethel, the high place which Jeroboam had made—this altar also and the high place he destroyed.” It is grammatically impossible to take הַבִּזְיָה as an accusative of place (Thenius); it is in apposition to הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, serving to define it more precisely: the altar at Bethel, namely the high place; for which we have afterwards the altar and the high place. By the appositional הַבִּזְיָה the altar at Bethel is described as an illegal place of worship. “He burned the בִּזְיָה,” i.e. the buildings of this sanctuary, ground to powder everything that was made of stone or metal, i.e. both the altar and the idol there. This is implied in what follows: “and burned Asherah,” i.e. a wooden idol of Astarte found there, according to which there would no doubt be also an idol of Baal, a מִצְבֵּה of stone. The golden calf, which had formerly been set up at Bethel, may, as Hos. x. 5, 6 seems to imply, have been removed by the Assyrians, and, after the settlement of heathen colonists in the land, have been supplanted by idols of Baal and Astarte (cf. ch. xvii. 29).—Vers. 16 sqq. In order to desecrate this idolatrous site for all time, Josiah had human bones taken out of the graves that were to be found upon

the mountain, and burned upon the altar, whereby the prophecy uttered in the reign of Jeroboam by the prophet who came out of Judah concerning this idolatrous place of worship was fulfilled; but he spared the tomb of that prophet himself (cf. 1 Kings xiii. 26-32). The mountain upon which Josiah saw the graves was a mountain at Bethel, which was visible from the *bamah* destroyed. זֵיִן, a sepulchral monument, probably a stone erected upon the grave. וַיִּצְלָחוּ: "so they rescued (from burning) his bones (the bones of the prophet who had come from Judah), together with the bones of the prophet who had come from Samaria," i.e. of the old prophet who sprang from the kingdom of the ten tribes and had come to Bethel (1 Kings xiii. 11). בָּא מִצִּמְרֵן in antithesis to בָּא מִיְהוּדָה בָּא denotes simply descent from the land of Samaria.¹—Vers. 19, 20. All the houses of the high places that were in the (other) cities of Samaria Josiah also destroyed in the same way as that at Bethel, and offered up the priests of the high places upon the altars, i.e. slew them upon the altars on which they had offered sacrifice, and burned men's bones upon them (the altars) to defile them. The severity of the procedure towards these priests of the high places, as contrasted with the manner in which the priests of the high places in Judah were treated (vers. 8 and 9), may be explained partly from the fact that the Israelitish priests of the high places were not Levitical priests, but chiefly from the fact that they were really idolatrous priests.

Vers. 21-23. *The passover* is very briefly noticed in our account, and is described as such an one as had not taken place since the days of the judges. Ver. 21 simply mentions the appointment of this festival on the part of the king, and the execution of the king's command has to be supplied. Ver. 22 contains a remark concerning the character of the passover. In 2 Chron. xxxv. 1-19 we have a very elaborate description of it. What distinguished this passover above every other was, (1) that "all the nation," not merely Judah and Benjamin, but

¹ Vers. 16-18 are neither an interpolation of the editor, i.e. of the author of our books of Kings (Staehelin), nor an interpolation from a supplement to the account in 1 Kings xiii. 1-32 (Thenius). The correspondence between the זֵיִן in ver. 15 and the זֵיִן in ver. 18 does not require this assumption; and the pretended discrepancy, that after Josiah had already reduced the altar to ruins (ver. 15) he could not possibly defile it by burning human bones upon it (ver. 16), is removed by the very natural solution, that זֵיִן in ver. 16 does not mean the altar itself, but the site of the altar that had been destroyed.

also the remnant of the ten tribes, took part in it, or, as it is expressed in 2 Chron. xxxv. 18, "all Judah and Israel;" (2) that it was kept in strict accordance with the precepts of the Mosaic book of the law, whereas in the passover instituted by Hezekiah there were necessarily many points of deviation from the precepts of the law, more especially in the fact that the feast had to be transferred from the first month, which was the legal time, to the second month, because the priests had not yet purified themselves in sufficient numbers and the people had not yet gathered together at Jerusalem, and also that even then a number of the people had inevitably been allowed to eat the passover without the previous purification required by the law (2 Chron. xxx. 2, 3, 17-20). This is implied in the words, "for there was not holden such a passover since the days of the judges and all the kings of Israel and Judah." That this remark does not preclude the holding of earlier passovers, as Thenius follows De Wette in supposing, without taking any notice of the refutations of this opinion, was correctly maintained by the earlier commentators. Thus Clericus observes: "I should have supposed that what the sacred writer meant to say was, that during the times of the kings no passover had ever been kept *so strictly by every one, according to all the Mosaic laws*. Before this, even under the pious kings, they seem to have followed custom rather than the very words of the law; and since this was the case, many things were necessarily changed and neglected." Instead of "since the days of the judges who judged Israel," we find in 2 Chron. xxxv. 18, "since the days of Samuel the prophet," who is well known to have closed the period of the judges.

Vers. 24-30. *Conclusion of Josiah's reign*.—Ver. 24. As Josiah had the passover kept in perfect accordance with the precepts of the law, so did he also exterminate the necromancers, the teraphim and all the abominations of idolatry, throughout all Judah and Jerusalem, to set up the words of the law in the book of the law that had been found, i.e. to carry them out and bring them into force. For *הַמְּנִינִים* and *הַמְּנִינִים* see at ch. xxi. 6. *הַמְּנִינִים*, penates, domestic gods, which were worshipped as the authors of earthly prosperity and as oracular deities (see at Gen. xxi. 19). *הַמְּנִינִים* and *הַמְּנִינִים*, connected together, as in Deut. xix. 16, as a contemptuous description of idols in general.—In ver. 25 the account of the efforts made by Josiah to restore the true worship of Jehovah closes with a general verdict concerning his

true piety. See the remarks on this point at ch. xviii. 5. He turned to Jehovah with all his heart, etc. : there is an evident allusion here to Deut. vi. 5. Compare with this the sentence of the prophet Jeremiah concerning his reign (Jer. xxii. 15, 16).—Ver. 26. Nevertheless the Lord turned not from the great fierceness of His wrath, wherewith He had burned against Judah on account of all the provocations “with which Manasseh had provoked Him.” With this sentence, in which **אֲשֶׁר עָבַד אֱלֹהִים** forms an unmistakeable word-play upon **אֲשֶׁר עָבַד אֱלֹהִים**, the historian introduces the account not merely of the end of Josiah’s reign, but also of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah. Manasseh is mentioned here and at ch. xxiv. 3 and Jer. xv. 4 as the person who, by his idolatry and his unrighteousness, with which he provoked God to anger, had brought upon Judah and Jerusalem the unavoidable judgment of rejection. It is true that Josiah had exterminated outward and gross idolatry throughout the land by his sincere conversion to the Lord, and by his zeal for the restoration of the lawful worship of Jehovah, and had persuaded the people to enter into covenant with its God once more ; but a thorough conversion of the people to the Lord he had not been able to effect. For, as Clericus has correctly observed, “although the king was most religious, and the people obeyed him through fear, yet for all that the mind of the people was not changed, as is evident enough from the reproaches of Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and other prophets, who prophesied about that time and a little after.” With regard to this point compare especially the first ten chapters of Jeremiah, which contain a *resumé* of his labours in the reign of Josiah, and bear witness to the deep inward apostasy of the people from the Lord, not only before and during Josiah’s reform of worship, but also afterwards. As the Holy One of Israel, therefore, God could not forgive any more, but was obliged to bring upon the people and kingdom, after the death of Josiah, the judgment already foretold to Manasseh himself (ch. xxi. 12 sq.).—Ver. 27. The Lord said : I will also put away Judah (in the same manner as Israel : cf. ch. xvii. 20, 23) from my face, etc. **וְאֶמְצָר** expresses the divine decree, which was announced to the people by the prophets, especially Jeremiah and Zephaniah.—Vers. 29 and 30 : compare 2 Chron. xxxv. 20–24. The predicted catastrophe was brought to pass by the expedition of Necho the king of Egypt against Assyria. “In his days (*i.e.* towards the end

of Josiah's reign) Pharaoh *Necho* the king of Egypt went up against the king of Asshur to the river Euphrates." *Necho* (נֶחֱזִי or נֶחֱזִי, 2 Chron. xxxv. 20, Jer. xlv. 2 ; called *Νεχάω* by Josephus, Manetho in Jul. Afric., and Euseb., after the LXX. ; and *Νεκῶς* by Herod. ii. 158, 159, iv. 42, and Diod. Sic. i. 33 ; according to Brugsch, *hist. d'Ég.* i. p. 252, *Nekāou*) was, according to Man., the sixth king of the twenty-sixth (Saitic) dynasty, the second Pharaoh of that name, the son of Psammetichus I. and grandson of Necho I. ; and, according to Herodotus, he was celebrated for a canal which he proposed to have cut in order to connect the Nile with the Red Sea, as well as for the circumnavigation of Africa (compare Brugsch, *l.c.*, according to whom he reigned from 611 to 595 B.C.). Whether "the king of Asshur" against whom Necho marched was the last ruler of the Assyrian empire, *Asardanpal* (*Sardanapal*), *Saracus* according to the monuments (see Brandis, *Ueber den Gewinn*, p. 55 ; M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 110 sqq. and 192), or the existing ruler of the Assyrian empire which had already fallen, Nabopolassar the king of Babylon, who put an end to the Assyrian monarchy in alliance with the Medes by the conquest and destruction of Nineveh, and founded the Chaldæan or Babylonian empire, it is impossible to determine, because the year in which Nineveh was taken cannot be exactly decided, and all that is certain is that Nineveh had fallen before the battle of Carchemish in the year 606 B.C. Compare M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 109 sqq. and 203, 204.—King Josiah went against the Egyptian, and "he (Necho) slew him at Megiddo when he saw him," *i.e.* caught sight of him. This extremely brief notice of the death of Josiah is explained thus in the Chronicles : that Necho sent ambassadors to Josiah, when he was taking the field against him, with an appeal that he would not fight against him, because his only intention was to make war upon Asshur, but that Josiah did not allow himself to be diverted from his purpose, and fought a battle with Necho in the valley of Megiddo, in which he was mortally wounded by the archers. What induced Josiah to oppose with force of arms the advance of the Egyptian to the Euphrates, notwithstanding the assurance of Necho that he had no wish to fight against Judah, is neither to be sought for in the fact that Josiah was dependent upon Babylon, which is at variance with history, nor in the fact that the kingdom of Judah had taken possession of all the territory of

the ancient inheritance of Israel, and Josiah was endeavouring to restore all the ancient glory of the house of David over the surrounding nations (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 707), but solely in Josiah's conviction that Judah could not remain neutral in the war which had broken out between Egypt and Babylon, and in the hope that by attacking Necho, and frustrating his expedition to the Euphrates, he might be able to avert great distress from his own land and kingdom.¹

This battle is also mentioned by Herodotus (ii. 159); but he calls the place where it was fought *Μάγδαλον*, i.e. neither *Migdal*, which was twelve Roman miles to the south of Pelusium (Forbiger, *Hdb. d. alten Geogr.* ii. p. 695), nor the perfectly apocryphal *Magdala* or *Migdal Zebaiiah* mentioned by the Talmudists (Reland, *Pal.* p. 898, 899), as Movers supposes. We might rather think with Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 708) of the present *Mejdel*, to the south-east of Acca, at a northern source of the Kishon, and regard this as the place where the Egyptian camp was pitched, whereas Israel stood to the east of it, at the place still called *Rummane*, at *Hadad-Rimmon* in the valley of Megiddo, as Ewald assumes (*Gesch.* iii. p. 708). But even this combination is overthrown by the fact that *Rummane*, which lies to the east of *el Mejdel* at the distance of a mile and three-quarters (geogr.), on the southern edge of the plain of Buttauf, cannot possibly be the *Hadad-Rimmon* mentioned in Zech. xii. 11, where king Josiah died after he had been wounded in the battle. For since *Megiddo* is identical with the Roman *Legio*, the present *Lejun*, as Robinson has proved (see at Josh. xii. 21), and as is generally admitted even by C. v. Raumer (*Pal.* p. 447, note, ed. 4), *Hadad-Rimmon* must be the same as the village of *Rümmuni* (*Rummane*), which is three-quarters of an hour to the

¹ M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 364) also calls Josiah's enterprise "a perfectly correct policy. Nineveh was falling (if not already fallen), and the Syrian princes, both those who had remained independent, like Josiah, and also the vassals of Asshur, might hope that, after the fall of Nineveh, they would succeed in releasing Syria from every foreign yoke. How well-founded this hope was, is evident from the strenuous exertions which Nabukdrussur was afterwards obliged to make, in order to effect the complete subjugation of Syria. It was therefore necessary to hinder at any price the settlement of the Egyptians now. Even though Necho assured Josiah that he was not marching against him (2 Chron. xxxv. 21), Josiah knew that if once the Egyptians were lords of Coele-Syria, his independence would be gone."

south of Lejun, where the Scottish missionaries in the year 1839 found many ancient wells and other traces of Israelitish times (V. de Velde, *R.* i. p. 267; *Memoir*, pp. 333, 334). But this Rummane is four geographical miles distant from *el Mejdol*, and Megiddo three and a half, so that the battle fought at Megiddo cannot take its name from *el Mejdol*, which is more than three miles off. The *Magdolon* of Herodotus can only arise from some confusion between it and *Megiddo*, which was a very easy thing with the Greek pronunciation *Μαγεδδών*, without there being any necessity to assume that Herodotus was thinking of the Egyptian *Migdol*, which is called *Magdolo* in the *Itin. Ant.* p. 171 (cf. Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschriften altägypt. Denkmäler*, i. pp. 261, 262). If, then, Josiah went to Megiddo in the plain of Esdrelom to meet the king of Egypt, and fell in with him there, there can be no doubt that Necho came by sea to Palestine and landed at Acco, as des Vignoles (*Chronol.* ii. p. 427) assumed.¹ For if the Egyptian army had marched by land through the plain of Philistia, Josiah would certainly have gone thither to meet it, and not have allowed it to advance into the plain of Megiddo without fighting a battle.—Ver. 30. The brief statement, “his servants carried him dead from Megiddo and brought him to Jerusalem,” is given with more minuteness in the Chronicles: his servants took him, the severely wounded king, by his own

¹ This is favoured by the account in Herodotus (ii. 159), that Necho built ships: *τριήρεις αἱ μὲν ἐπὶ τῇ βορρῇ θαλάσῃ . . . αἱ δὲ ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίῃ κόλπῳ* (*triremes in septentrionale et australe mare mittendas.* Bähr)—*καὶ ταυτῶν τε ἰχρᾶτο ἐν τῇ θύοντι καὶ Σύροισι πεζῇ ὁ Νεκὼς συμβαλὼν ἐν Μαγδόλῳ ἐνίκησε*; from which we may infer that Necho carried his troops by sea to Palestine, and then fought the battle on the land. M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 365) also finds it very improbable that Necho used his fleet in this war; but he does not think it very credible “that he embarked his whole army, instead of marching them by the land route so often taken by the Egyptian army, the key of which, viz. the land of the Philistines, was at least partially subject to him,” because the *ἐλκεαδεις* (ships of burden) required for the transport of a large army were hardly to be obtained in sufficient numbers in Egypt. But this difficulty, which rests upon mere conjecture, is neutralized by the fact, which M. Duncker (*Gesch.* i. p. 618) also adduces in support of the voyage by sea, namely, that the decisive battle with the Jews was fought to the north-west of Jerusalem, and when the Jews were defeated, the way to Jerusalem stood open for their retreat. Movers (*Phöniz.* ii. 1, p. 420), who also imagines that Necho advanced with a large land-army towards the frontier of Palestine, has therefore transferred the battle to Magdolo on the Egyptian frontier; but he does this by means of the most arbitrary interpretation of the account given by Herodotus.

command, from his chariot to his second chariot, and drove him to Jerusalem, and he died and was buried, etc. Where he died the Chronicles do not affirm; the occurrence of *הָיָה* after the words "they brought him to Jerusalem," does not prove that he did not die till he reached Jerusalem. If we compare Zech. xii. 11, where the prophet draws a parallel between the lamentation at the death of the Messiah and the lamentation of Hadad-Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo, as the deepest lamentation of the people in the olden time, with the account given in 2 Chron. xxxv. 25 of the lamentation of the whole nation at the death of Josiah, there can hardly be any doubt that Josiah died on the way to Jerusalem at Hadad-Rimmon, the present Rumané, to the south of Lejun (see above), and was taken to Jerusalem dead.—He was followed on the throne by his younger son Jehoahaz, whom the people (*עַם הָאָרֶץ*), as in ch. xxi. 24) anointed king, passing over the elder, Eliakim, probably because they regarded him as the more able man.

CHAP. XXIII. 31–XXIV. 17. REIGNS OF THE KINGS JEHOAHAZ,
JEHOIAKIM, AND JEHOIACHIN.

Vers. 31–35. REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1–4).—*Jehoahaz*, called significantly by Jeremiah (xxii. 11) *Shallum*, i.e. "to whom it is requited," reigned only three months, and did evil in the eyes of the Lord as all his fathers had done. The people (or the popular party), who had preferred him to his elder brother, had apparently set great hopes upon him, as we may judge from Jer. xxii. 10–12, and seem to have expected that his strength and energy would serve to avert the danger which threatened the kingdom on the part of Necho. Ezekiel (ch. xix. 3) compares him to a young lion which learned to catch the prey and devoured men, but, as soon as the nations heard of him, was taken in their pit and led by nose-rings to Egypt, and thus attributes to him the character of a tyrant disposed to acts of violence; and Josephus accordingly (*Ant.* x. 5, 2) describes him as *ἀσεβὴς καὶ μαρὸς τὸν τρόπον*.—Ver. 33. "Pharaoh Necho put him in fetters (*וַיִּבְדְּלוּ*) at Riblah in the land of Hamath, when he had become king at Jerusalem." In 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3 we have, instead of this, "the king of Egypt deposed him (*וַיִּסְרֶהוּ*) at Jerusalem." The Masoretes have substituted as *Keri* *וַיִּסְרֶהוּ*, "away from being king," or "that he might be no

longer king," in the place of מלך, and Thenius and Bertheau prefer the former, because the LXX. have τοῦ μὴ βασιλεύειν not in our text only, but in the Chronicles also; but they ought not to have appealed to the Chronicles, inasmuch as the LXX. have not rendered the Hebrew text there, but have simply repeated the words from the text of the book of Kings. The *Keri* is nothing more than an emendation explaining the sense, which the LXX. have also followed. The two texts are not contradictory, but simply complete each other: for, as Clericus has correctly observed, "Jehoahaz would of course be removed from Jerusalem before he was cast into chains; and there was nothing to prevent his being dethroned at Jerusalem before he was taken to Riblah." We are not told in what way Necho succeeded in getting Jehoahaz into his power, so as to put him in chains at Riblah. The assumption of J. D. Michaelis and others, that his elder brother Eliakim, being dissatisfied with the choice of Jehoahaz as king, had recourse to Necho at Riblah, in the hope of getting possession of his father's kingdom through his instrumentality, is precluded by the fact that Jehoahaz would certainly not have been so foolish as to appear before the enemy of his country at a mere summons from Pharaoh, who was at Riblah, and allow him to depose him, when he was perfectly safe in Jerusalem, where the will of the people had raised him to the throne. If Necho wanted to interfere with the internal affairs of the kingdom of Judah, it would never have done for him to proceed beyond Palestine to Syria after the victory at Megiddo, without having first deposed Jehoahaz, who had been raised to the throne at Jerusalem without any regard to his will. The course of events was therefore probably the following: After the victory at Megiddo, Necho intended to continue his march to the Euphrates; but on hearing that Jehoahaz had ascended the throne, and possibly also in consequence of complaints which Eliakim had made to him on that account, he ordered a division of his army to march against Jerusalem, and while the main army was marching slowly to Riblah, he had Jerusalem taken, king Jehoahaz dethroned, the land laid under tribute, Eliakim appointed king as his vassal, and the deposed Jehoahaz brought to his headquarters at Riblah, then put into chains and transported to Egypt; so that the statement in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3, "he deposed him at Jerusalem," is to be taken quite literally, even if Necho did not come to Jerusalem *in propria persona*, but simply effected

this through the medium of one of his generals.¹ *Riblah* has been preserved in the miserable village of *Rible*, from ten to twelve hours to the S.S.W. of Hums (Emesa) by the river el Ahisy (Orontes), in a large fruitful plain of the northern portion of the Bekaa, which was very well adapted to serve as the camping ground of Necho's army as well as of that of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. xxv. 6, 20, 21), not only because it furnished the most abundant supply of food and fodder, but also on account of its situation on the great caravan-road from Palestine by Damascus, Emesa, and Hamath to Thapsacus and Carchemish on the Euphrates (cf. Rob. *Bibl. Res.* pp. 542–546 and 641).—In the payment imposed upon the land by Necho, one talent of gold (c. 25,000 thalers: £3750) does not seem to bear any correct proportion to 100 talents of silver (c. 250,000 thalers, or £37,500), and consequently the LXX. have 100 talents of gold, the Syr. and Arab. 10 talents; and Thenius supposes this to have been the original reading, and explains the reading in the text from the dropping out of a ' (= 10), though without reflecting that as a rule the number 10 would require the plural כַּכְרִים.—Ver. 34. From the words “Necho made Eliakim the son

¹ Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 720) also observes, that “Necho himself may have been in Jerusalem at the time for the purpose of installing his vassal:” this, he says, “is indicated by the brief words in 2 Kings xxiii. 33, 34, and nothing can be found to say against it in other historical sources;” though he assumes that Jehoahaz had allowed himself to be enticed by Necho to go to Riblah into the Egyptian camp, where he was craftily put into chains, and soon carried off as a prisoner to Egypt.—We should have a confirmation of the taking of Jerusalem by Necho in the account given by Herodotus (ii. 159): *μετὰ δὲ τῆς μάχης* (i.e. after the battle at Megiddo) *Κάδουτιν πόλιν τῆς Συρίας ἰούσαν μεγάλην εἶλε*, if any evidence could be brought to establish the opinion that by *Κάδουτις* we are to understand Jerusalem. But although what Herodotus says (iii. 5) concerning *Κάδουτις* does not apply to any other city of Palestine so well as to Jerusalem, the use of the name *Κάδουτις* for Jerusalem has not yet been sufficiently explained, since it cannot come from קִדְדִישׁ, the holy city, because the *q* of this word does not pass into *h* in any Semitic dialect, and the explanation recently attempted by Böttcher (*N. ex. Krit. Aehrenlese*, ii. pp. 119 sqq.) from the Aramæan קִדְדִישׁ, the renewed city (new-town), is based upon many very questionable conjectures. At the same time so much is certain, that the view which Hitzig has revived (*de Cadyti urbe Herod.* Gott. 1829, p. 11, and *Urgeschichte der Philister*, pp. 96 sqq.), and which is now the prevalent one, viz. that *Κάδουτις* is Gaza, is exposed to some well-founded objections, even after what Stark (*Gaza*, pp. 218 sqq.) has adduced in its favour. The description which Herodotus gives (iii. 5) of the land-road to Egypt: *ἀπὸ Φοινίκης μέχρι οὐρῶν τῶν Κάδουτιος πόλεως, ἥ ἐστὶ Σύρων τῶν Παλαιστινίων καλεσμένων*

of Josiah king *in the place of his father Josiah*," it follows that the king of Egypt did not acknowledge the reign of Jehoahaz, because he had been installed by the people without his consent. "And changed his name into Jehoiakim." The alteration of the name was a sign of dependence. In ancient times princes were accustomed to give new names to the persons whom they took into their service, and masters to give new names to their slaves (cf. Gen. xli. 45, Ezra v. 14, Dan. i. 7, and Hävernick on the last passage).—But while these names were generally borrowed from heathen deities, Eliakim, and at a later period Mattaniah (xxiv. 17), received genuine Israelitish names, *Jehoiakim*, i.e. "Jehovah will set up," and *Zidkiyahu*, i.e. "righteousness of Jehovah;" from which we may infer that Necho and Nebuchadnezzar did not treat the vassal kings installed by them exactly as their slaves, but allowed them to choose the new names for themselves, and simply confirmed them as a sign of their supremacy. *Eliakim* altered his name into *Jehoiakim*, i.e. *El* (God) into *Jehovah*, to set the allusion to the establishment of the kingdom, which is implied in the name, in a still more definite relation to Jehovah the covenant God, who had promised to establish the seed of David (2 Sam. vii. 14), possibly with an

ἀπὸ δὲ Καδύτιος, ἐούσης πόλις (ὡς ἰμοὶ δοκίμῃ) Σαρδίων οὐ πολλῶ ἑλάσσονος, ἀπὸ ταύτης τὰ ἐμπόρια τὰ ἐπὶ θαλάσσης μέχρι 'Ιερουσολύμων πόλιν ἐστὶ τοῦ 'Αραβίου does not apply to Gaza, because there were no commercial towns on the sea-coast between the district of Gaza and the town of *Yenysus* (the present *Khan Yūnas*); but between the district of Jerusalem and the town of *Yenysus* there were the Philistian cities Ashkelon and Gaza, which Herodotus might call τὰ ἐμπόρια τοῦ 'Αραβίου, whereas the comparison made between the size of Kadytis and that of Sardes points rather to Jerusalem than to Gaza. Still less can the *datum* in Jer. xlvii. 1, "before Pharaoh smote Gaza," be adduced in support of Gaza. If we bear in mind that Jeremiah's prophecy (ch. xlvii.) was not uttered before the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, and therefore that Pharaoh had not smitten Gaza at that time, supposing that this Pharaoh was really Necho, it cannot have been till after his defeat at Carchemish that Necho took Gaza on his return home. Ewald, Hitzig, and Graf assume that this was the case; but, as M. v. Niehuhr has correctly observed, it has "every military probability" against it, and even the incredibility that "a routed Oriental army in its retreat, which it evidently accomplished in one continuous march, notwithstanding the fact that on its line of march there were the strongest positions, on the Orontes, Lebanon, etc., at which it might have halted, should have taken the city upon its flight." And, lastly, the name *Κάδυτις* does not answer to the name *Gaza*, even though the latter was spelt *Gazatu* in early Egyptian (Brugsch, *Geograph.* *Inscr.* ii. p. 32), since the *v* (*y*) of the second syllable still remains unexplained.

intentional opposition to the humiliation with which the royal house of David was threatened by Jeremiah and other prophets.—"But Jehoahaz he had taken (לָקַח, like לָקַח in ch. xxiv. 12), and he came to Egypt and died there"—when, we are not told.—In ver. 35, even before the account of Jehoiakim's reign, we have fuller particulars respecting the payment of the tribute which Necho imposed upon the land (ver. 33), because it was the condition on which he was appointed king.—"The gold and silver Jehoiakim gave to Pharaoh; yet (אֲשֶׁר = but in order to raise it) he valued (הִעָרִיף as in Lev. xxvii. 8) the land, to give the money according to Pharaoh's command; of every one according to his valuation, he exacted the silver and gold of the population of the land, to give it to Pharaoh Necho." נָתַן, to exact tribute, is construed with a double accusative, and אֶשֶׁר placed first for the sake of emphasis, as an explanatory apposition to הָאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת.

Ver. 36—ch. xxiv. 7. REIGN OF JEHOIAKIM (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5–8).—Jehoiakim reigned eleven years in the spirit of his ungodly forefathers (compare ver. 37 with ver. 32). Jeremiah represents him (ch. xxii. 13 sqq.) as a bad prince, who enriched himself by the unjust oppression of his people, "whose eyes and heart were directed upon nothing but upon gain, and upon innocent blood to shed it, and upon oppression and violence to do them" (compare ch. xxiv. 4 and Jer. xxvi. 22, 23). Josephus therefore describes him as τῆν φύσιν ἄδικος καὶ κακοῦργος, καὶ μῆτε πρὸς Θεὸν ὁσιος, μῆτε πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἐπιεικής (*Ant. x. 5, 2*). The town of *Rumah*, from which his mother sprang, is not mentioned anywhere else, but it has been supposed to be identical with *Aruma* in the neighbourhood of Shechem (*Judg. ix. 41*).

Ch. xxiv. ver. 1. "In his days Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babel, came up; and Jehoiakim became subject to him three years, then he revolted from him again." נְבֻכַדְנֶצַּר, *Nebuchadnezzar*, or נְבוּכַדְרֶצַּר, *Nebuchadrezzar* (*Jer. xxi. 2, 7, xxii. 25, etc.*), *Ναβουχδονόσορ* (LXX), *Ναβουχδονόσορος* (Beros. in *Jos. c. Ap. i. 20, 21*), *Ναβοκοδόσορος* (Strabo, xv. 1, 6), upon the Persian arrow-headed inscriptions at Bisutun *Nabhukudracara* (according to Oppert, composed of the name of God, *Nabhu* (Nebo), the Arabic *kadr*, power, and *zar* or *sar*, prince), and in still other forms (for the different forms of the name see *M. v.*

Niebuhr's *Gesch.* pp. 41, 42). He was the son of Nabopolassar, the founder of the Chaldaean monarchy, and reigned, according to Berosus (*Jos. l.c.*), Alex. Polyh. (*Eusebii Chron. arm.* i. pp. 44, 45), and the *Canon* of Ptol., forty-three years, from 605 to 562 B.C. With regard to his first campaign against Jerusalem, it is stated in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, that "against him (Jehoiakim) came up Nebuchadnezzar, and bound him with brass chains, to carry him (לְהוֹלִיכֵהוּ) to Babylon;" and in Dan. i. 1, 2, that "in the year three of the reign of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem and besieged it; and the Lord gave Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, into his hand, and a portion of the holy vessels, and he brought them (the vessels) into the land of Shinar, into the house of his god," etc. Bertheau (*on Chr.*) admits that all three passages relate to Nebuchadnezzar's first expedition against Jehoiakim and the first taking of Jerusalem by the king of Babylon, and rejects the alteration of לְהוֹלִיכֵהוּ, "to lead him to Babylon" (*Chr.*), into ἀπήγαγεν αὐτόν (LXX.), for which Thenius decides in his prejudice in favour of the LXX. He has also correctly observed, that the chronicler intentionally selected the infinitive with ל, because he did not intend to speak of the actual transportation of Jehoiakim to Babylon. The words of our text, "Jehoiakim became servant (עֶבֶד) to him," i.e. subject to him, simply affirm that he became tributary, not that he was led away. And in the book of Daniel also there is nothing about the leading away of Jehoiakim to Babylon. Whilst, therefore, the three accounts agree in the main with one another, and supply one another's deficiencies, so that we learn that Jehoiakim was taken prisoner at the capture of Jerusalem and put in chains to be led away, but that, inasmuch as he submitted to Nebuchadnezzar and vowed fidelity, he was not taken away, but left upon the throne as vassal of the king of Babylon; the statement in the book of Daniel concerning the time when this event occurred, which is neither contained in our account nor in the Chronicles, presents a difficulty when compared with Jer. xxv. and xlvi. 2, and different attempts, some of them very constrained, have been made to remove it. According to Jer. xlvi. 2, Nebuchadnezzar smote Necho the king of Egypt at Carchemish, on the Euphrates, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. This year is not only called the first year of Nebuchadnezzar in Jer. xxv. 1, but is represented by the prophet as the turning-point of the kingdom of Judah by the announce-

ment that the Lord would bring His servant Nebuchadnezzar upon Judah and its inhabitants, and also upon all the nations dwelling round about, that he would devastate Judah, and that these nations would serve the king of Babylon seventy years (Jer. xxv. 9-11). Consequently not only the defeat of Necho at Carchemish, but also the coming of Nebuchadnezzar to Judah, fell in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and not in the third. To remove this discrepancy, some have proposed that the time mentioned, "in the fourth year of Jehoiakim" (Jer. xlvi. 2), should be understood as relating, not to the year of the battle at Carchemish, but to the time of the prophecy of Jeremiah against Egypt contained in ch. xlvi., and that Jer. xxv. should also be explained as follows, that in this chapter the prophet is not announcing the first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, but is proclaiming a year after this the destruction of Jerusalem and the devastation of the whole land, or a total judgment upon Jerusalem and the rest of the nations mentioned there (M. v. Nieb. *Gesch.* pp. 86, 87, 371). But this explanation is founded upon the erroneous assumption, that Jer. xlvi. 3-12 does not contain a prediction of the catastrophe awaiting Egypt, but a picture of what has already taken place there; and it is only in a very forced manner that it can be brought into harmony with the contents of Jer. xxv.¹ We must rather take "the year three of the reign of Jehoiakim" (Dan. i. 1) as the extreme *terminus a quo* of Nebuchadnezzar's coming, i.e. must understand the statement thus: that in the year referred to Nebuchadnezzar commenced the expedition against Judah, and smote Necho at Carchemish at the commencement of the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xlvi. 2), and then, following up this victory, took Jerusalem in the same year, and made Jehoiakim tributary, and at the same time carried off to Babylon a portion of the sacred vessels, and some young men of royal blood as hostages, one of whom was Daniel (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2 sqq.). The fast mentioned in Jer. xxxvi. 9, which took place in the fifth year

¹ Still less tenable is the view of Hofmann, renewed by Zündel (*Krit. Unterss. üb. d. Abfassungszeit des B. Daniel*, p. 25), that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim, and that it was not till the following, or fourth year, that he defeated the Egyptian army at Carchemish, because so long as Pharaoh Necho stood with his army by or in Carchemish, on the Euphrates, Nebuchadnezzar could not possibly attempt to pass it so as to effect a march upon Jerusalem.

of Jehoiakim, cannot be adduced in disproof of this; for extraordinary fast-days were not only appointed for the purpose of averting great threatening dangers, but also after severe calamities which had fallen upon the land or people, to expiate His wrath by humiliation before God, and to invoke the divine compassion to remove the judgment that had fallen upon them. The objection, that the godless king would hardly have thought of renewing the remembrance of a divine judgment by a day of repentance and prayer, but would rather have desired to avoid everything that could make the people despair, falls to the ground, with the erroneous assumption upon which it is founded, that by the fast-day Jehoiakim simply intended to renew the remembrance of the judgment which had burst upon Jerusalem, whereas he rather desired by outward humiliation before God to secure the help of God to enable him to throw off the Chaldaean yoke, and arouse in the people a religious enthusiasm for war against their oppressors.—Further information concerning this first expedition of Nebuchadnezzar is supplied by the account of Berosus, which Josephus (*Ant.* x. 11, and *c. Ap.* i. 19) has preserved from the third book of his Chaldaean history, namely, that when Nabopolassar received intelligence of the revolt of the satrap whom he had placed over Egypt, Coele-Syria, and Phœnicia, because he was no longer able on account of age to bear the hardships of war, he placed a portion of his army in the hands of his youthful son Nebuchadnezzar and sent him against the satrap. Nebuchadnezzar defeated him in battle, and established his power over that country again. In the meantime Nabopolassar fell sick and died in Babylon; and as soon as the tidings reached Nebuchadnezzar, he hastened through the desert to Babylon with a small number of attendants, and directed his army to follow slowly after regulating the affairs of Egypt and the rest of the country, and to bring with it the prisoners *from the Jews*, Syrians, Phœnicians, and Egyptian tribes, and with the heavily-armed troops. So much, at any rate, is evident from this account, after deducting the motive assigned for the war, which is given from a Chaldaean point of view, and may be taken as a historical fact, that even before his father's death Nebuchadnezzar had not only smitten the Egyptians, but had also conquered Judah and penetrated to the borders of Egypt. And there is no discrepancy between the statement of Berosus, that Nebuchadnezzar was not yet king, and the fact

that in the biblical books he is called king proleptically, because he marched against Judah with kingly authority.

Vers. 2-7. To punish Jehoiakim's rebellion, Jehovah sent hosts of Chaldæans, Aramæans, Moabites, and Ammonites against him and against Judah to destroy it (יְהוֹאָכִים). Nebuchadnezzar was probably too much occupied with other matters relating to his kingdom, during the earliest years of his reign after his father's death, to be able to proceed at once against Jehoiakim and punish him for his revolt.¹ He may also have thought it a matter of too little importance for him to go himself, as there was not much reason to be afraid of Egypt since its first defeat (cf. M. v. Niebuhr, p. 375). He therefore merely sent such troops against him as were in the neighbourhood of Judah at the time. The tribes mentioned along with the Chaldæans were probably all subject to Nebuchadnezzar, so that they attacked Judah at his command in combination with the Chaldæan tribes left upon the frontier. How much they effected is not distinctly stated; but it is evident that they were not able to take Jerusalem, from the fact that after the death of Jehoiakim his son was able to ascend the throne (ver. 6).—The sending of these troops is ascribed to Jehovah, who, as the supreme controller of the fate of the covenant-nation, punished Jehoiakim for his rebellion. For, after the Lord had given Judah into the hands of the Chaldæans as a punishment for its apostasy from Him, all revolt from them was rebellion against the Lord. "According to the word of Jehovah, which He spake by His servants the prophets," viz. Isaiah, Micah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and others.—Vers. 3, 4. "אֵלֶּיךָ יְהוָה : "only according to the mouth (command) of Jehovah did this take place against Judah," i.e. for no other reason than because the Lord had determined to put away Judah from before His face because of Manasseh's sins (cf. ch. xxi. 12-16, and xxiii. 27). "And Jehovah would not

¹ Compare the remarks of M. v. Niebuhr on this point (*Gesch.* pp. 208, 209) and his summary at p. 209: "Nebuchadnezzar had enough to do in Babylon and the eastern half of his kingdom, to complete the organization of the new kingdom, to make the military roads to the western half of the kingdom along the narrow valley of the Euphrates and through the desert, and also to fortify them and provide them with watering stations and every other requisite, to repair the damages of the Scythian hordes and the long contest with Nineveh, to restore the shattered authority, and to bring Arabs and mountain-tribes to order. All this was more important than a somewhat more rapid termination of the Egyptian war and the pacification of Syria."

forgive," even if the greatest intercessors, Moses and Samuel, had come before Him (Jer. xv. 1 sqq.), because the measure of the sins was full, so that God was obliged to punish according to His holy righteousness. We must repeat נָפַק מִן הַמֶּלֶךְ from the preceding words before נָפַק מִן הַמֶּלֶךְ.—Ver. 6. "Jehoiakim lay down to (fell asleep with) his fathers, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his stead." That this statement is not in contradiction to the prophecies of Jer. xxii. 19: "Jehoiakim shall be buried like an ass, carried away and cast out far away from the gates of Jerusalem," and xxxvi. 30: "no son of his shall sit upon the throne of David, and his body shall lie exposed to the heat by day and to the cold by night," is now generally admitted, as it has already been by J. D. Michaelis and Winer. But the solution proposed by Michaelis, Winer, and M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 376) is not sufficient, namely, that at the conquest of Jerusalem, which took place three months after the death of Jehoiakim, his bones were taken out of the grave, either by the victors out of revenge for his rebellion, or by the fury of the people, and cast out before the city gate; for Jeremiah expressly predicts that he shall have no funeral and no burial whatever. We must therefore assume that he was slain in a battle fought with the troops sent against him, and was not buried at all; an assumption which is not at variance with the words, "he laid himself down to his fathers," since this formula does not necessarily indicate a peaceful death by sickness, but is also applied to king Ahab, who was slain in battle (1 Kings xxii. 40, cf. 2 Kings xxii. 20).¹—And even though his son Jehoiachin ascended the throne after his father's death and maintained his position for three months against the Chaldeans, until at length he fell into their hands and was carried away alive to Babylon, the prophet might very truly describe this short reign as not sitting upon the throne of David (cf. Graf on Jer. xxii. 19).—To the death of Jehoiakim there is appended the notice in ver. 7, that the king of Egypt did not go out of his own land any more, because the king of Babylon had taken away everything that had belonged to the king of Egypt,

¹ The supposition of Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 793), that Jehoiakim was enticed out of the capital by a stratagem of the enemy, and taken prisoner, and because he made a furious resistance was hurried off in a scuffle and mercilessly slaughtered, is at variance with the fact that, according to ver. 10, it was not till after his death that the army of the enemy advanced to the front of Jerusalem and commenced the siege.

from the brook of Egypt to the river Euphrates. The purpose of this notice is to indicate, on the one hand, what attitude Necho, whose march to the Euphrates was previously mentioned, had assumed on the conquest of Judah by the Chaldeans, and on the other hand, that under these circumstances a successful resistance to the Chaldeans on the part of Judah was not for a moment to be thought of.

Vers. 8–17 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9 and 10). Jehoiachin, יְהוֹיָכִן or יְחִיָּזָן (Ezek. i. 2), i.e. he whom Jehovah fortifies, called יְחִיָּזָן in 1 Chron. iii. 16, 17, and Jer. xxvii. 20, xxviii. 4, etc., and יְחִיָּזָן in Jer. xxii. 24, 28, xxxvii. 1, probably according to the popular twisting and contraction of the name Jehoiachin, was eighteen years old when he ascended the throne (the eight years of the Chronicles are a slip of the pen), and reigned three months, or, according to the more precise statement of the Chronicles, three months and ten days, in the spirit of his father. Ezekiel (xix. 5–7) describes him not only as a young lion, who learned to prey and devoured men, like Jehoahaz, but also affirms of him that he knew their (the deceased men's) widows, i.e. ravished them, and destroyed their cities,—that is to say, he did not confine his deeds of violence to individuals, but extended them to all that was left behind by those whom he had murdered, viz. to their families and possessions; and nothing is affirmed in Jer. xxii. 24 and 28 respecting his character at variance with this. His mother *Nehushta* was a daughter of Elnathan, a ruler of the people, or prince, from Jerusalem (Jer. xxvi. 22, xxxvi. 12, 25).—Ver. 10. “At that time,” i.e. when Jehoiachin had come to the throne, or, according to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10, “at the turn of the year,” i.e. in the spring (see at 1 Kings xx. 22), the servants (generals) of Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. The *Keri* עָלִי is substantially correct, but is an unnecessary alteration of the *Chethib* עָלָה, since the verb when it precedes the subject is not unfrequently used in the singular, though before a plural subject (cf. Ewald, § 316, a). The עָבְדֵי נֶבֶךְדַּנְצַר are different from the נִדְבָרִים of ver. 2. As the troops sent against Jehoia-kim had not been able to conquer Judah, especially Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar sent his generals with an army against Jerusalem, to besiege the city and take it.—Ver. 11. During the siege he came himself to punish Jehoia-kim's revolt in the person of his successor.—Ver. 12. Then Jehoiachin went out to the king of Babylon to yield himself up

to him, because he perceived the impossibility of holding the city any longer against the besiegers, and probably hoped to secure the favour of Nebuchadnezzar, and perhaps to retain the throne as his vassal by a voluntary submission. Nebuchadnezzar, however, did not show favour any more, as he had done to Jehoiakim at the first taking of Jerusalem, but treated Jehoiachin as a rebel, made him prisoner, and led him away to Babylon, along with his mother, his wives (ver. 15), his princes and his chamberlains, as Jeremiah had prophesied (ch. xxii. 24 sqq.), in the eighth year of his (Nebuchadnezzar's) reign. The reference to the king's mother in vers. 12 and 15 is not to be explained on the ground that she still acted as guardian over the king, who was not yet of age (J. D. Mich.), but from the influential position which she occupied in the kingdom as מְלִיצָה (Jer. xxix. 2: see at 1 Kings xiv. 21). The eighth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar is reckoned from the time when his father had transferred to him the chief command over the army to make war upon Necho, according to which his *first* year coincides with the *fourth* year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xxv. 1). As Nebuchadnezzar acted as king, so far as the Jews were concerned, from that time forward, although he conducted the war by command of his father, this is always reckoned as the point of time at which his reign commenced, both in our books and also in Jeremiah (cf. ch. xxv. 8; Jer. xxxii. 1). According to this calculation, his reign lasted forty-four years, viz. the eight years of Jehoiakim and the thirty-six years of Jehoiachin's imprisonment, as is evident from ch. xxv. 27.—Ver. 13. Nebuchadnezzar thereupon, that is to say, when he had forced his way into the city, plundered the treasures of the temple and palace, and broke the gold off the vessels which Solomon had made in the temple of Jehovah. קָצַץ, to cut off, break off, as in ch. xvi. 17, i.e. to bear off the gold plates. Nebuchadnezzar had already taken a portion of the golden vessels of the temple away with him at the first taking of Jerusalem in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and had placed them in the temple of his god at Babylon (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2). They were no doubt the smaller vessels of solid gold,—basins, scoops, goblets, knives, tongs, etc.,—which Cyrus delivered up again to the Jews on their return to their native land (Ezra i. 7 sqq.). This time he took the gold off the larger vessels, which were simply plated with that metal, such as the altar of burnt-offering, the table of shew-bread

and ark of the covenant, and carried it away as booty, so that on the third conquest of Jerusalem, in the time of Zedekiah, beside a few gold and silver basins and scoops (ch. xxv. 15) there were only the large brazen vessels of the court remaining (ch. xxv. 13-17; Jer. xxvii. 18 sqq.). The words, "as Jehovah had spoken," refer to ch. xx. 17 and Isa. xxxix. 6, and to the sayings of other prophets, such as Jer. xv. 13, xvii. 3, etc.—Vers. 14-16. Beside these treasures, he carried away captive to Babylon the cream of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, not only the most affluent, but, as is evident from Jer. xxiv., the best portion in a moral respect. In ver. 14 the number of those who were carried off is simply given in a general form, according to its sum-total, as 10,000; and then in vers. 15 and 16 the details are more minutely specified. "All Jerusalem" is the whole of the population of Jerusalem, which is first of all divided into two leading classes, and then more precisely defined by the clause, "nothing was left except the common people," and reduced to the cream of the citizens. The king, queen-mother, and king's wives being passed over and mentioned for the first time in the special list in ver. 15, there are noticed here **בְּלִיָּהוּם** and **בְּלִי גִבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִּל**, who form the first of the leading classes. By the **שָׂרִים** are meant, according to ver. 15, the **כְּרִיִּים**, chamberlains, i.e. the officials of the king's court in general, and by **אֲנֵלֵי הָאָרֶץ** ("the mighty of the land") all the heads of the tribes and families of the nation that were found in Jerusalem; and under the last the priests and prophets, who were also carried away, according to Jer. xxix. 1, with Ezekiel among them (Ezek. i. 1), are included as the spiritual heads of the people. The **גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִּל** are called **אֲנֵשֵׁי הַחַיִּל** in ver. 16; their number was 7000. The persons intended are not warriors, but men of property, as in ch. xv. 20. The second class of those who were carried away consisted of **כָּל־הַחֹרֵט**, all the workers in stone, metal, and wood, that is to say, masons, smiths, and carpenters; and **הַכֹּסְמֵי**, the locksmiths, including probably not actual locksmiths only, but makers of weapons also. There is no need for any serious refutation of the marvellous explanation given of **כֹּסְמֵי** by Hitzig (on Jer. xxiv. 1), who derives it from **כֶּסֶם** and **גֵּר**, and supposes it to be an epithet applied to the remnant of the Canaanites, who had been made into tributary labourers, although it has been adopted by Thenius and Graf, who make them into artisans of the foreign socagers. **דָּלֵת הָאָרֶץ = דָּלֵת עַם־הָאָרֶץ** (ch. xxv. 12), the poor people

of the land, *i.e.* the lower portion of the population of Jerusalem, from whom Nebuchadnezzar did not fear any rebellion, because they possessed nothing (Jer. xxxix. 10), *i.e.* neither property (money nor other possessions), nor strength and ability to organize a revolt. The antithesis to these is formed by the *בְּזוֹרִים עַל־מִלְחָמָה*, the strong or powerful men, who were in a condition to originate and carry on a war; for this category includes all who were carried away, not merely the thousand workmen, but also the seven thousand *אֲנָשֵׁי הַחֵל*, and the king's officers and the chiefs of the nation, whose number amounted to two thousand, since the total number of the exiles was ten thousand. There is no special allusion to warriors or military, because in the struggle for the rescue of the capital and the kingdom from destruction every man who could bear arms performed military service, so that the distinction between warriors and non-warriors was swept away, and the actual warriors are swallowed up in the ten thousand. *Babel* is the country of Babylonia, or rather the Babylonian empire.—Ver. 17. Over the lower classes of the people who had been left behind Nebuchadnezzar placed the paternal uncle of the king, who had been led away, *viz.* Mattaniah, and made him king under the name of Zedekiah. He was the youngest son of Josiah (Jer. i. 3, xxxvii. 1); was only ten years old when his father died, and twenty-one years old when he ascended the throne; and as the uncle of Jehoiachin, who being only a youth of eighteen could not have a son capable of reigning, had the first claim to the throne. Instead of *יָדוּ*, his uncle, we have in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10 *אָחִיו*, his brother, *i.e.* his nearest relation. On the change in the name see at ch. xxiii. 34. The name *צִדְקִיָּהוּ*, *i.e.* he who has Jehovah's righteousness, was probably chosen by Mattaniah in the hope that through him or in his reign the Lord would create the righteousness promised to His people.

CHAP. XXIV. 18-XXV. 30. REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH, DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH, AND FATE OF THE PEOPLE LEFT BEHIND, AND OF KING JEHOIACHIN.¹

Vers. 18-20. *Length and spirit of Zedekiah's reign* (cf. Jer. lii. 1-3, and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11-13).—Zedekiah's mother Ha-

¹ To this section the historical appendix to the book of Jeremiah (Jer. lii.) furnishes a parallel, which agrees with it for the most part word for word,

mital, daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah, was also the mother of Jehoahaz (ch. xxiii. 31); consequently he was his own brother and the half-brother of Jehoiakim, whose mother was named Zebidah (ch. xxiii. 36). His reign lasted eleven years, and in its attitude towards the Lord exactly resembled that of his brother Jehoiakim, except that Zedekiah does not appear to have possessed so much energy for that which was evil. According to Jer. xxxviii. 5 and 24 sqq., he was weak in character, and completely governed by the great men of his kingdom, having no power or courage whatever to offer resistance. But, like them, he did not hearken to the words of the Lord through Jeremiah (Jer. xxxvii. 2), or, as it is expressed in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12, "he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spake to him out of the mouth of the Lord."—Ver. 20. "For because of the wrath of the Lord it happened concerning Judah and Jerusalem." The subject to הָיָה is to be taken from what precedes, viz. Zedekiah's doing evil, or that such a God-resisting man as Zedekiah became king. "Not that it was of God that Zedekiah was wicked, but that Zedekiah, a man (if we believe Brentius, *in loc.*) simple, dependent upon counsellors, yet at the same time despising the word of God and impenitent (2 Chron. xxxvi. 12, 13), became king, so as to be the cause of Jerusalem's destruction" (Seb. Schm.). On 'וְיָרַח הַשָּׁלִיחַ cf. ver. 3, and ch. xvii. 18, 23. "And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babel," who, according to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13, had made him swear by God, to whom he was bound

omitting only the short account of the murder of Gedaliah and of the flight of the people to Egypt (vers. 22-26), and adding instead a computation of the number of the people who were led away to Babel by Nebuchadnezzar (vers. 28-30). Apart from the less important variations, which have arisen in part simply from copyists' errors, we have in Jer. lii. 18, and especially in vers. 21 and 22, by no means unimportant notices concerning the vessels of the temple, especially concerning the ornaments of the brazen pillars, which do not occur anywhere in our books. It is evident from this that our text was not derived from Jer. lii. (Hävernicks), and that Jer. lii. was not borrowed from our books of Kings and appended to the book of Jeremiah's prophecies (Ros., Maur., Ew., Graf). On the contrary, the two accounts are simply brief extracts from one common and more elaborate history of the later times of the kingdom of Judah, possibly composed by Jeremiah or Baruch, analogous to the two extracts from the history of Hezekiah in 2 Kings xviii.-xx. and Isa. xxxvi.-xxxix.—More minute accounts of this space of time are given in the historical portions of the prophecies of Jeremiah (ch. xxxix.-xlv.), which form an explanatory commentary to the section before us.

by oath to render fealty. This breach of covenant and frivolous violation of his oath Ezekiel also condemns in sharp words (Ezek. xvii. 13 sqq.), as a grievous sin against the Lord. Zedekiah also appears from the very first to have had no intention of keeping the oath of fealty which he took to the king of Babel with very great uprightness. For only a short time after he was installed as king he despatched an embassy to Babel (Jer. xxix. 3), which, judging from the contents of the letter to the exiles that Jeremiah gave to the ambassadors to take with them, can hardly have been sent with any other object than to obtain from the king of Babel the return of those who had been carried away. Then in the fourth year of his reign he himself made a journey to Babel (Jer. xli. 59), evidently to investigate the circumstances upon the spot, and to ensure the king of Babel of his fidelity. And in the fifth month of the same year, probably after his return from Babel, ambassadors of the Moabites, Ammonites, Tyrians, and Sidonians came to Jerusalem to make an alliance with him for throwing off the Chaldæan yoke (Jer. xxvii. 3). Zedekiah also had recourse to Egypt, where the enterprising Pharaoh *Hophra* (*Apries*) had ascended the throne; and then, in spite of the warnings of Jeremiah, trusting to the help of Egypt, revolted from the king of Babel, probably at a time when Nebuchadnezzar (according to the combinations of M. v. Nieb., which are open to question however) was engaged in a war with Media.

Ch. xxv. 1-7. *Siege and conquest of Jerusalem; Zedekiah taken prisoner and led away to Babel* (cf. Jer. lii. 4-11 and xxxix. 1-7).—Ver. 1. In the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar marched with all his forces against Jerusalem and commenced the siege (cf. Jer. xxxix. 1), after he had taken all the rest of the fortified cities of the land, with the exception of Lachish and Azekah, which were besieged at the same time as Jerusalem (Jer. xxxiv. 7). On the very same day the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem was revealed to the prophet Ezekiel in his exile (Ezek. xxiv. 1). "And they built against it (the city) siege-towers round about." פִּתְּוֵי, which only occurs here and in Jeremiah (lii. 4) and Ezekiel (iv. 2, xvii. 17, xxi. 27, xxvi. 8), does not mean either a line of circumvallation (J. D. Mich., Hitzig), or the outermost enclosure constructed of palisades (Thenius, whose assertion that פִּתְּוֵי is always mentioned as the

first work of the besiegers is refuted by Ezek. xvii. 17 and xxi. 27), but a *watch*, and that in a collective sense: watch-towers or siege-towers (cf. Ges. *thes.* p. 330, and Hävernicks on Ezek. iv. 2).—Ver. 2. “And the city was besieged till the eleventh year of king Zedekiah,” in which the northern wall of the city was broken through on the ninth day of the fourth month (ver. 3). That Jerusalem could sustain a siege of this duration, namely eighteen months, shows what the strength of the fortifications must have been. Moreover the siege was interrupted for a short time, when the approach of the Egyptian king Hophra compelled the Chaldeans to march to meet him and drive him back, which they appear to have succeeded in doing without a battle (cf. Jer. xxxvii. 5 sqq., Ezek. xvii. 7).—Vers. 3, 4. Trusting partly to the help of the Egyptians and partly to the strength of Jerusalem, Zedekiah paid no attention to the repeated entreaties of Jeremiah, that he would save himself with his capital and people from the destruction which was otherwise inevitable, by submitting to the Chaldeans (cf. Jer. xxi. 37 and 38), but allowed things to reach their worst, until the famine became so intense, that inhuman horrors were perpetrated (cf. Lam. ii. 20, 21, iv. 9, 10), and eventually a breach was made in the city wall on the ninth day of the fourth month. The statement of the month is omitted in our text, where the words בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָרְבִּיעִי (Jer. lli. 6, cf. xxxix. 2) have fallen out before בְּחֹשֶׁקָה (ver. 3, commencement) through the oversight of a copyist. The overwhelming extent of the famine is mentioned, not “because the people were thereby rendered quite unfit to offer any further resistance” (Seb. Schm.), but as a proof of the truth of the prophetic announcements (Lev. xxvi. 29; Deut. xxviii. 53–57; Jer. xv. 2, xxvii. 13; Ezek. iv. 16, 17). עַם הָאָרֶץ are the common people in Jerusalem, or the citizens of the capital. From the more minute account of the entrance of the enemy into the city in Jer. xxxix. 3–5 we learn that the Chaldeans made a breach in the northern or outer wall of the lower city, i.e. the second wall, built by Hezekiah and Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxii. 5, xxxiii. 14), and forced their way into the lower city (רַבְּמִשְׁנָה, xxii. 14), so that their generals took their stand at the gate of the centre, which was in the wall that separated the lower city from the upper city upon Zion, and formed the passage from the one to the other. When Zedekiah saw them here, he fled by night with the soldiers out of the city, through the gate

between the two walls at or above the king's garden, on the road to the plain of the Jordan, while the Chaldeans were round about the city. In ver. 4 a faulty text has come down to us. In the clause **וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה** the verb **יָבִדּוּ** is omitted, if not even more, namely **וַיֵּצְאוּ מִן הָעִיר**, "fled and went out of the city." And if we compare Jer. xxxix. 4, it is evident that before **וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה** still more has dropped out, not merely **וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה**, which must have stood in the text, since according to ver. 5 the king was among the fugitives; but most probably the whole clause **וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה** since the words **וַיֵּצְאוּ מִן הָעִיר** have no real connection with what precedes, and cannot form a circumstantial clause so far as the sense is concerned. The "gate between the two walls, which (was) at or over (עַל) the king's garden," was a gate at the mouth of the Tyropœon, that is to say, at the south-eastern corner of the city of Zion; for, according to Neh. iii. 15, the king's garden was at the pool of Siloah, i.e. at the mouth of the Tyropœon (see Rob. *Pal.* ii. 142). By this defile, therefore, the approach to the city was barred by a double wall, the inner one running from Zion to the Ophel, whilst the outer one, at some distance off, connected the Zion wall with the outer surrounding wall of the Ophel, and most probably enclosed the king's garden. The subject to **וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה**, which has dropped out before **וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה** is the lowland valley on both sides of the Jordan (see at Deut. i. 1).—Ver. 5. As the Chaldeans were encamped around the city, the flight was immediately discovered. The Chaldean army pursued him, and overtook him in the steppes of Jericho, whilst his own army was dispersed, all of which Ezekiel had foreseen in the Spirit (Ezek. xii. 3 sqq.). **וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה** are that portion of the plain of the Jordan which formed the country round Jericho (see at Josh. iv. 13).—Ver. 6. Zedekiah having been seized by the Chaldeans, was taken to the king of Babel in the Chaldean headquarters at Riblah (see at ch. xxiii. 33), and was there put upon his trial. According to ver. 1, Nebuchadnezzar had commenced the siege of Jerusalem in person; but afterwards, possibly not till after the Egyptians who came to relieve the besieged city had been repulsed, he transferred the continuance of the siege, which was a prolonged one, to his generals, and retired to Riblah, to conduct the operations of the whole campaign from thence. **וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה** to conduct judicial proceedings with any one, i.e. to hear and judge him. For this

Jeremiah constantly uses the plural **יְהוָה**, not only in ch. lii. 9 and xxxix. 5, but also in ch. i. 16 and iv. 12.—Ver. 7. The punishment pronounced upon Zedekiah was the merited reward of the breach of his oath, and his hardening himself against the counsel of the Lord which was announced to him by Jeremiah during the siege, that he should save not only his own life, but also Jerusalem from destruction, by a voluntary submission to the Chaldeans, whereas by obstinate resistance he would bring an ignominious destruction upon himself, his family, the city, and the whole people (Jer. xxxviii. 17 sqq., xxxii. 5, xxxiv. 3 sqq.). His sons, who, though not mentioned in ver. 4, had fled with him and had been taken, and (according to Jer. lii. 10 and xxxix. 6) all the nobles (princes) of Judah, *sc.* those who had fled with the king, were slain before his eyes. He himself was then blinded, and led away to Babel, chained with double chains of brass, and kept a prisoner there till his death (Jer. lii. 11); so that, as Ezekiel (xii. 13) had prophesied, he came to Babel, but did not see the land, and died there. Blinding by pricking out the eyes was a common punishment for princes among the Babylonians and Persians (cf. Herod. vii. 18, and Brisson, *de regio Pers. princip.* p. 589). **יְהוָה**, double brazen chains, are brazen fetters for the hands and feet. Samson was treated in the same manner by the Philistines (Judg. xvi. 21).

Vers. 8–21. *Destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The people carried away to Babel* (cf. Jer. lii. 12–27, and xxxix. 8–10).—In this section we have first a general account of the destruction of the temple and city (vers. 8–10), and of the carrying away of the people (vers. 11 and 12), and then a more particular description of what was done with the metal vessels of the temple (vers. 13–17), and how the spiritual and secular leaders of the people who had been taken prisoners were treated (vers. 18–21).—Vers. 8–10. The destruction of Jerusalem, by the burning of the temple, of the king's palace, and of all the larger buildings, and by throwing down the walls, was effected by Nebuzaradan, the chief of the body-guard of Nebuchadnezzar, on the seventh day of the fifth month in the nineteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Instead of the *seventh* day we have the *tenth* in Jer. lii. 12. This difference might be reconciled, as proposed by earlier commentators, on the assumption that the burning of the city lasted several days, commencing on the seventh and ending on the tenth. But since there are

similar differences met with afterwards (vers. 17 and 19) in the statement of numbers, which can only be accounted for from the substitution of similar numeral letters, we must assume that there is a change of this kind here. Which of the two dates is the correct one it is impossible to determine. The circumstance that the later Jews kept the ninth as a fast-day cannot be regarded as decisive evidence in favour of the date given in Jeremiah, as Thenius supposes; for in Zech. vii. 3 and viii. 19 the fasting of the fifth month is mentioned, but no day is given; and though in the Talmudic times the ninth day of the month began to be kept as a fast-day, this was not merely in remembrance of the Chaldaean destruction of Jerusalem, but of the Roman also, and of three other calamities which had befallen the nation (see the statement of the Gemara on this subject in Lightfoot, *Opp.* ii. p. 139, ed. Leusden, and in Köhler on Zech. vii. 3), from which we see that the Gemarists in the most unhistorical manner grouped together different calamitous events in one single day. The nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar corresponds to the eleventh of Zedekiah (see at ch. xxiv. 12). Nebuzaradan is not mentioned in Jer. xxxix. 3 among the Chaldaean generals who forced their way into the city, so that he must have been ordered to Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar after the taking of the city and the condemnation of Zedekiah, to carry out the destruction of the city, the carrying away of the people, and the appointment of a deputy-governor over those who were left behind in the land. This explains in a very simple manner how a month could intervene between their forcing their way into the city, at all events into the lower city, and the burning of it to the ground, without there being any necessity to assume, with Thenius, that the city of Zion held out for a month, which is by no means probable, for the simple reason that the fighting men had fled with Zedekiah and had been scattered in their flight. שַׂר הַמַּבְּחָיִם = רִב־מַבְּחָיִם in Gen. xxxvii. 36, xxxix. 1, was with the Babylonians, as with the Egyptians, the chief of the king's body-guard, whose duty it was to execute the sentences of death (see at Gen. xxxvii. 36). שַׂר הַמַּבְּחָיִם answers to the הַכְּרִיתִי of the Israelites (2 Sam. viii. 18, etc.). In Jer. lii. 12 we have עָמַד לְפָנַי מִלְּךָ instead of עָבַד מִלְּךָ, without the אֲשֶׁר, which is rarely omitted in prose, and בִּירוּשָׁלַם instead of בִּירוּשָׁלַם: he came into Jerusalem, not he forced a way into the real Jerusalem (Thenius). The meaning is not altered

by these two variations.—Ver. 9. By the words, “every great house,” **אֵת כָּל־בְּתֵי יְר'** is more minutely defined: not all the houses to the very last, but simply all the large houses he burned to the very last, together with the temple and the royal palaces. The victors used one portion of the dwelling-houses for their stay in Jerusalem. He then had all the walls of the city destroyed. In Jeremiah **לֹא** is omitted before **הוֹכַח**, as not being required for the sense; and also the **אֵת** before **רַב סִבְחִים**, which is indispensable to the sense, and has fallen out through a copyist's oversight.—Vers. 11, 12. The rest of the people he led away, both those who had been left behind in the city and the deserters who had gone over to the Chaldeans, and the remnant of the multitude. **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן**, for which we have **יֵתֶר הָאָמוֹן** in Jer. lii. 15, has been interpreted in various ways. As **אָמוֹן** signifies an artist or artificer in Prov. viii. 30, and **יֵתֶר הָעָם** has just preceded it, we might be disposed to give the preference to the reading **הָאָמוֹן**, as Hitzig and Graf have done, and understand by it the remnant of the artisans, who were called **הַחֲרָשׁ הַמְּסִנֵּי** in ch. xxiv. 14, 16. But this view is precluded by Jer. xxxix. 9, where we find **הָעָם** **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן** instead of **יֵתֶר הָאָמוֹן** or **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן**. These words cannot be set aside by the arbitrary assumption that they crept into the text through a copyist's error; for the assertion that they contain a purposeless repetition is a piece of dogmatical criticism, inasmuch as there is a distinction drawn in Jer. xxxix. 9 between **יֵתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים בְּעִיר** and **יֵתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים בְּעִיר**. Consequently **הָאָמוֹן** is simply another form for **הָהָמוֹן** (ה and א being interchanged) in the sense of a mass of people, and we have simply the choice left between two interpretations. Either **יֵתֶר הָעָם** **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן** means the fighting people left in the city, as distinguished from the deserters who had fled to the Chaldeans, and **הָאָמוֹן** = **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן** in Jer. lii. 15, or **יֵתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים** in Jer. xxxix. 9, the rest of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; or **יֵתֶר הָעָם** **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן** is the people left in Jerusalem (warriors and non-warriors), and **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן** the rest of the population of the land outside Jerusalem. The latter is probably the preferable view, not only because full justice is thereby done to **בְּעִיר** in the first clause, but also because it is evident from the exception mentioned in ver. 12 that the deportation was not confined to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but extended to the population of the whole land. The “poor people,” whom he allowed to remain in the land as vine-dressers and husbandmen, were the common

people, or people without property, not merely in Jerusalem, but throughout the whole land. יָלַת עַם־הָאָרֶץ = יָלַת הָאָרֶץ (ch. xxiv. 14). Instead of מִדִּלָּת we have in Jeremiah מִדִּלּוֹת: the plural used in an abstract sense, "the poverty," i.e. the lower people, "the poor who had nothing" (Jer. xxxix. 10). Instead of the *Chethib* לִנְבִּים from נִב, *secuit, aravit*, the *Keri* has לִנְבִּים from נִב, in the same sense, after Jer. lii. 16.—Vers. 13-17. The brazen vessels of the temple were broken in pieces, and the brass, and smaller vessels of brass, silver, and gold, were carried away. Compare Jer. lii. 17-23, where several other points are mentioned that have been passed over in the account before us. The pillars of brass (see 1 Kings vii. 15 sqq.), the stands (see 1 Kings vii. 27 sqq.), and the brazen sea (1 Kings vii. 23 sqq.), were broken in pieces, because it would have been difficult to carry these colossal things away without breaking them up. On the smaller vessels used in the worship (ver. 14) see 1 Kings vii. 40. In Jer. lii. 18 הַמְּזֻקָּת are also mentioned. Ver. 15 is abridged still more in contrast with Jer. lii. 19, and only הַמְּזֻקָּת and הַמְּזֻקָּת are mentioned, whereas in Jeremiah six different things are enumerated beside the candlesticks. אֲשֶׁר אָסַף . . . זָהָב, "what was of gold, gold, what was of silver, silver, the captain of the guard took away," is a comprehensive description of the objects carried away. To this there is appended a remark in ver. 16 concerning the quantity of the brass of the large vessels, which was so great that it could not be weighed; and in ver. 17 a supplementary notice respecting the artistic work of the two pillars of brass. הַמְּעֻבְּדִים וְהַמְּעֻבְּדִים is placed at the head absolutely: as for the pillars, etc., the brass of all these vessels was not to be weighed. In Jer. lii. 20, along with the brazen sea, the twelve brazen oxen under it are mentioned; and in the description of the pillars of brass (vers. 21 sqq.) there are several points alluded to which are omitted in our books, not only here, but also in 1 Kings vii. 16 sqq. For the fact itself see the explanation given at pp. 97-103. The omission of the twelve oxen in so condensed an account as that contained in our text does not warrant the inference that these words in Jeremiah are a spurious addition made by a later copyist, since the assumption that Ahaz sent the brazen oxen to king Tiglath-pileser cannot be proved from ch. xvi. 17 (see p. 407). Instead of שֵׁשֶׁל we must read חֲמִשָּׁה אַמּוֹת, *five cubits*, according to Jer. lii. 22 and 1 Kings vii. 16. The עַל־הַשֹּׁבָכָה at the end of the verse is

very striking, since it stands quite alone, and when connected with 'נְכֹאֲלָהּ וְנָ' does not appear to yield any appropriate sense, as the second pillar was like the first not merely with regard to the trellis-work, but in its form and size throughout. At the same time, it is possible that the historian intended to give especial prominence to the similarity of the two pillars with reference to this one point alone.—Vers. 18–21 (cf. Jer. lii. 24–27). The principal officers of the temple and city, and sixty men of the population of the land, who were taken at the destruction of Jerusalem, Nebuzaradan sent to his king at Riblah, where they were put to death. *Seraiah*, the high priest, is the grandfather or great-grandfather of Ezra the scribe (Ezra vii. 1; 1 Chron. v. 40). *Zephaniah*, a priest of the second rank (זְפַנְיָהוּ; in Jer. זְפַנְיָהוּ הַכֹּהֵן: see at ch. xxiii. 4), is probably the same person as the son of Maaseiah, who took a prominent place among the priests, according to Jer. xxi. 1, xxix. 25 sqq., and xxxvii. 3. The “three keepers of the threshold” are probably the three superintendents of the Levites, whose duty it was to keep guard over the temple, and therefore were among the principal officers of the sanctuary.—Ver. 19. From the city, i.e. from the civil authorities of the city, Nebuzaradan took a king's chamberlain (סָרִיס), who was commander of the men of war. Instead of אֲשֶׁר הָיָה מְקִידָה we find in Jer. lii. 25 אֲשֶׁר הָיָה מְקִידָה, who had been commander, with an allusion to the fact that his official function had terminated when the city was conquered. “And five (according to Jeremiah seven) men of those who saw the king's face,” i.e. who belonged to the king's immediate circle, *de intimis consiliariis regis*, and “the scribe of the commander-in-chief, who raised the people of the land for military service,” or who enrolled them. Although הַפֶּסֶר has the article, which is omitted in Jeremiah, the following words שֵׁר הַצָּבָא are governed by it, or connected with it in the construct state (Ewald, § 290, d). שֵׁר הַצָּבָא is the commander-in-chief of the whole of the military forces, and הַמְצַבֵּא וְנָ' a more precise definition of הַפֶּסֶר, and not of שֵׁר הַצָּבָא, which needed no such definition. “And sixty men of the land-population who were found in the city.” They were probably some of the prominent men of the rural districts, or they may have taken a leading part in the defence of the city, and therefore were executed in Riblah, and not merely deported with the rest of the people.—The account of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah closes with יָנַל יְהוֹדָה

in ver. 21, "thus was Judah carried away out of its own land;" and in vers. 22-26 there follows merely a brief notice of those who had been left behind in the land, in the place of which we find in Jer. lli. 28-40 a detailed account of the number of those who were carried away.

Vers. 22-26. *Installation of Gedaliah the governor. His assassination, and the flight of the people to Egypt.*—Much fuller accounts have been handed down to us in Jer. xl-xliv. of the events which are but briefly indicated here.—Vers. 22, 23. Over the remnant of the people left in the land Nebuchadnezzar placed Gedaliah as governor of the land, who took up his abode in Mizpah. *Gedaliah*, the son of Ahikam, who had interested himself on behalf of the prophet Jeremiah and saved his life (Jer. xxvi. 24), and the grandson of Shaphan, a man of whom nothing more is known (see at ch. xxii. 12), had his home in Jerusalem, and, as we may infer from his attitude towards Jeremiah, had probably secured the confidence of the Chaldeans at the siege and conquest of Jerusalem by his upright conduct, and by what he did to induce the people to submit to the judgment inflicted by God; so that Nebuchadnezzar entrusted him with the oversight of those who were left behind in the land—men, women, children, poor people, and even a few princesses and court-officials, whom they had not thought it necessary or worth while to carry away (Jer. xl. 7, xli. 10, 16), *i.e.* he made him governor of the conquered land. Mizpah is the present *Nebi Samwil*, two hours to the north-west of Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 26).—On hearing of Gedaliah's appointment as governor, there came to him "all the captains of the several divisions of the army and their men," *i.e.* those portions of the army which had been scattered at the flight of the king (ver. 5), and which had escaped from the Chaldeans, and, as it is expressed in Jer. xl. 7, had dispersed themselves "in the field," *i.e.* about the land. Instead of וְכָל־הַצְבָּאָה we have in Jer. xl. 7 the clearer expression וְכָל־הַיָּדָיִם, "and their men," whilst וְכָל־הַיָּדָיִם in our text receives its more precise definition from the previous word וְכָל־הַיָּדָיִם. Of the military commanders the following are mentioned by name: Ishmael, etc. (the י before יִשְׁמָאֵל is explic., "and indeed Ishmael"). Ishmael, son of Mattaniah and grandson of Elishama, probably of the king's secretary mentioned in Jer. xxxvi. 12 and 20, of royal blood. Nothing further is known about the other names. We simply learn from Jer. xl. 13 sqq. that Johanan had warned Gedaliah

against the treachery of Ishmael, and that when Gedaliah was slain by Ishmael, having disregarded the warning, he put himself at the head of the people and marched with them to Egypt, notwithstanding the dissuasions of Jeremiah (Jer. xli. 15 sqq.). Instead of "Johanan the son of Kareah," we have in Jer. xl 8 "Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah;" but it is uncertain whether יְהוֹנָתָן has crept into the text of Jeremiah from the previous יְהוֹנָתָן merely through a mistake, and this mistake has brought with it the alteration of כָּנַי into כָּנַי (Ewald), or whether יְהוֹנָתָן has dropped out of our text through an oversight, and this omission has occasioned the alteration of כָּנַי into כָּן (Thenius, Graf, etc.). The former supposition is favoured by the circumstance that in Jer. xl 13, xli 11, 16, Johanan the son of Kareah alone is mentioned. In Jer. xl 8 יִבְנֵי עֹשִׁי (Chethib עֵשִׂי) stands before יְהוֹנָתָן, according to which it was not Seraiah who sprang from Netophah, but Ophai whose sons were military commanders. He was called *Netophathite* because he sprang from *Netopha* in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem (Neh. vii 26; Ezra ii 22), the identity of which with *Beit Nettif* is by no means probable (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 28). The name יְהוֹנָתָן is written יְהוֹנָתָן in Jeremiah; he was the son of the *Maachathite*, i.e. his father sprang from the Syrian district of *Maacah* in the neighbourhood of the Hermon (see at Deut. iii. 14).—Ver. 24. As these men were afraid of the vengeance of the Chaldeans because they had fought against them, Gedaliah assured them on oath that they had nothing to fear from them if they would dwell peaceably in the land, be submissive to the king of Babel, and cultivate the land (cf. Jer. xl 9 and 10). "Servants of the Chaldees" are Chaldean officials who were subordinate to the governor Gedaliah.—Ver. 25. In the seventh month, i.e. hardly two months after the destruction of Jerusalem, came Ishmael with ten men to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and murdered him together with the Jews and Chaldeans, whom he had with him as soldiers to do his bidding and for his protection. This occurred, according to Jer. xli 1 sqq., when Gedaliah had received them hospitably and had invited them to eat with him. Ishmael was instigated to commit this murder by the Ammonitish king Baalis, and Gedaliah had previously been made acquainted with the intended crime and put upon his guard by Johanan, but had put no faith in the information (Jer. xl 13–16).—Ver. 26. After Ishmael had performed this deed, and

had also treacherously murdered a number of men, who had come to the temple with a sacrifice from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria, he took the Jews who were at Mizpah prisoners, with some kings' daughters among them, intending to take them over to the Ammonites; but as soon as his deed became known, he was pursued by Johanan and the rest of the military chiefs and was overtaken at Gibeon, whereupon those who had been led away by him went over to Johanan, so that he was only able to make his escape with eight men and get away to the Ammonites (Jer. xli. 4-15). Johanan then went with the rest of the military commanders and the people whom he had brought back into the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, with the intention of fleeing to Egypt for fear of the Chaldeans. There they did indeed have recourse to the prophet Jeremiah, to inquire of him the word of the Lord; but they did not allow themselves to be diverted from their intention by the word of the Lord which he announced to them, that if they remained in the land they need not fear anything from the king of Babel, but if they went to Egypt they should all perish there with sword, hunger, and pestilence, or by the prediction that the Lord would also deliver Pharaoh Hophra into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xlii.). They went to Egypt notwithstanding, taking the prophet himself with them, and settled in different cities of Egypt, where they gave themselves up to idolatry, and did not suffer themselves to be drawn away from it even by the severe judgments which the prophet Jeremiah predicted as sure to fall upon them (Jer. xliii. and xliv.). In the verse before us we have simply a brief allusion to the eventual result of the whole affair. "Because they were afraid of the Chaldeans," namely, that they might possibly take vengeance upon them for the murder of the governor.

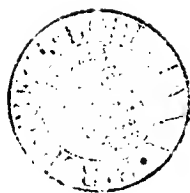
Vers. 27-30. *Jehoiachin delivered from prison, and exalted to royal honours* (cf. Jer. lii. 31-34).—In the thirty-seventh year after his deportation Jehoiachin was taken out of prison by Evil-merodach when he came to the throne. בְּשָׁנָה קָלְבֹהּ, in the year of his becoming king, probably immediately after he had ascended the throne, for it was no doubt an act of grace at the commencement of his reign. קָשָׁא אֶת־רֹאשׁוֹ, to lift up a person's head, i.e. to release him from prison and exalt him to civil honours and dignities (cf. Gen. xl. 13). On the coincidence of the thirty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's imprisonment and the

commencement of the reign of Evil-merodach see the remarks at ch. xxiv. 12. Instead of the 27th day of the month, the 25th is given in Jeremiah, again through the substitution of similar numeral letters (see at ver. 8). *Evil-merodach*: עִילִּמֶרֶדַּח, *Eūial Marōdax* or *Eūialmarōdēk* (LXX); Ἰλλοαροόδαμος, possibly a copyist's error for Ἰλμαροόδακος, in the *Can. Ptol.*, and in other forms also: see M. v. Nieb. *Gesch. Ass.* p. 42, and *Ges. thes.* p. 41; compounded from the name of the Babylonian god *Mero-dach* (see at ch. xx. 12) and the prefix *Evil*, which has not yet been explained with certainty. He reigned two years, according to Berosus in *Jos. c. Ap.* i. 20, and the *Can. Ptol.*; and according to the verdict of Berosus, προστὰς τῶν πραγμάτων ἀνόμως καὶ ἀσελγῶς; and was murdered by his brother-in-law Neriglissor. The statement in *Jos. Ant.* x. 11, 2, to the effect that he reigned eighteen years, and that of Alex. Polyh. in *Euseb. Chron. arm.* i. p. 45, that he reigned twelve years, are evidently false.—Ver. 28. "He spake kindly to him (cf. Jer. xii. 6), and set his throne above the throne of the kings who were with him in Babel." This is not to be understood literally, as signifying that he assigned him a loftier throne than the other kings (*Hitzig*, *Thenius*), but figuratively: *loco honestiore eum habuit* (*Ros.*). The "kings with him" were dethroned kings, who were kept at the court like Jehoiachin to add to its splendour, just as Cyrus kept the conquered Cræsus by his side (*Herod.* i. 88).—Vers. 29, 30. "And he (Jehoiachin) changed his prison garments," i.e. took them off and put other regal clothing on (cf. *Gen.* xli. 42). "And ate continually before him all his life," i.e. ate at the king's table (cf. *2 Sam.* ix. 7). Moreover a daily ration of food was supplied to him by the king for the maintenance of his retainers, who formed his little court. The כֶּלֶי יָמָיו of ver. 30, upon which *Thenius* throws suspicion without any reason, refers to Jehoiachin like that in ver. 29; for the historian intended to show how Jehoiachin had fared from the day of his elevation to the end of his life. At the same time, we cannot infer from this with any certainty that Jehoiachin died before Evil-merodach; for the favour shown to him might be continued by Evil-merodach's successor. We cannot make any safe conjecture as to the motives which induced Evil-merodach to pardon Jehoiachin and confer this distinction upon him. The higher ground of this joyful termination of his imprisonment lay in the gracious decree of God, that the seed of David,

though severely chastised for its apostasy from the Lord, should not be utterly rejected (2 Sam. vii. 14, 15). At the same time, this event was also intended as a comforting sign to the whole of the captive people, that the Lord would one day put an end to their banishment, if they would acknowledge that it was a well-merited punishment for their sins that they had been driven away from before His face, and would turn again to the Lord their God with all their heart.

THE END.

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